

# **Global Sustainability**

The Impact of Local Cultures

A New Perspective for Science and Engineering,  
Economics and Politics

*Edited by*

*Peter A. Wilderer, Edward D. Schroeder, Horst Kopp*



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*P. A. Wilderer, E. D. Schroeder,*

*H. Kopp*

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# Preface

In the year 2000, the European Academy of Sciences and Arts (EASA) in collaboration with the Bavarian Research Centers BayFORREST and FORAREA started a series of workshops to explore, by means of a cross-disciplinary and inter-cultural discourse, the interrelationships between technological advances, cultural heritage and religious concerns. The aim of these workshops was to assist in the enforcement of the general Sustainability Development (SD) guidelines, and in the realization of the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) of the United Nations. The basic question underlying the discussions was: What can scientists, and what can engineers do to turn words into action?

Development of technology readily acceptable by people living under the cultural, ecological and economical conditions specific to the very geographical area is assumed to be highly important. To be able to implement sustainable development measures people need to have ready access to fresh air, clean water and safe food in sufficiently high quantity. Pollution of atmosphere, soil and natural water bodies must be prevented or mitigated to provide and maintain sound living conditions for present and future generations. Education must be made accessible for all people irrespectively of gender, social status and wealth, and irrespectively of the local conditions under which people use to live, conditions prevailing in a metropolitan or a rural area in Europe, in Asia, Latin America, Africa or wherever. It appears that one cannot be achieved without achieving the other: Winning the Millennium Development Goals is a prerequisite of making progress in sustainable development.

The workshops were organized to address those needs, and to make clear that cross-cultural and cross-disciplinary approaches are required to satisfy basic requirements of man and nature. The first of these workshops was held on October 28 and 29, 2000 at the Wildbad-Kreuth resort in the heart of the Bavarian Alps. The second workshop took place at the monastery “Kloster Banz”, located in the North of Bavaria, Germany, on February 24 and 25, 2003.

36 scientists, engineers and entrepreneurs from 4 continents and 12 countries attended the workshop at Kloster Banz. Prior to the meeting overview articles were produced by 14 of the participants, and distributed among the attendees. With this information background an intensive dialogue began immediately. Except of two short introductory speeches, formal oral presentations were not given. At the beginning of the discussion session the various aspects of sustainability and sustainable development, culture and cultural diversity, needs and desiderates were discussed from a more general perspective. It was decided to focus during the further discussion on four specific areas:

- A: World cultures and world religions
- B: Poverty and economical development
- C: Global and temporal dimension of sustainability
- D: Technology, conflict and sustainability

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In the following session, the participants split into four groups and discussed these topics thoroughly. The conclusions drawn were then presented to the plenum during the following session and finally summarized. It was also decided to write, as a joint effort, a book focusing on the cultural dimension of sustainable development, based on the abstracts formerly produced by various participants. This book is the result of the workshop and many bilateral discussions held afterwards.

September 2004

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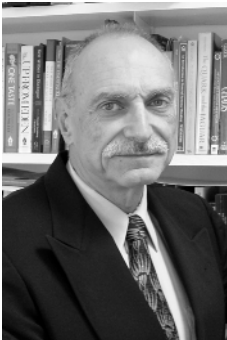
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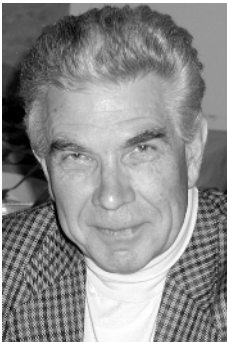


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