



THE BRUSSELS-EU CHAPTER

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Developments

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The Brussels EU-Chapter of the Club of Rome

Keeping the Momentum

The events that we presented in our previous newsletter (Al Gore and IPCC Nobel peace prize, Bali climate change conference...) seem to have created new energy for global collaboration and international co-operation. However, upcoming elections in the US, political problems in China, upcoming renewal of European leadership... still imply major uncertainties. Raw materials prices are increasing drastically, including food, and in particular cereals, whose culture is spread between bio-fuel purposes and feeding needs, resulting in crisis as shown recently in Egypt or Haiti. Sporadic phenomenon or first signs of an overshooting collapse?

Maybe this long-discussed "long term" is catching us up and is becoming rather short term and a rather urgent priority. Now would be a good time to transform electoral promises into consistent political agenda, to move from national economic reform to global sustainable economic governance, to turn roadmap into international treaties. Time to keep the momentum...

Recent Activities

"Europe After Lisbon - Intertwining Sustainability and Competitiveness"

Ljubljana, April 25-26, 2008

The conference is organized by the Slovenian, Austrian, Croatian Chapter, the European Support Centre of the Club of Rome and the World Academy of Art and Science, and in co-operation with the Slovenian EU Presidency.

Competitiveness has been a key concept of the Lisbon strategy. Efforts to strengthen European competitiveness influence many political decisions, those related to the economy as well as those related to the education system.

This conference "*Europe after Lisbon*" will discuss the long-term aspects of competition and competitiveness. How can competition support achieving sustainable development on the European and the global scale?

The conference will discuss successes and challenges of the Lisbon strategy and the concept of competition in promoting innovation for sustainable development of Europe and convert this vision into practical steps, in particular regarding its development paradigm after Lisbon.

The event will be organized as "Open Space". All participants are invited to contribute.

More information at: <http://www.clubofrome.at/events/2008/ljubljana/index.html>

Conference on Economic De-Growth for Ecological Sustainability and Social Equity, Paris, 18-19 April 2008

The objective of the conference was to provide an overview of the state-of-the-art of research on de-growth, stimulate debates, encourage research on de-growth and identifying de-growth research gaps, and explore tools for equity and sustainability. The Brussels-EU Chapter and the European Support Centre were partners of the event and presented 2 papers.

Presentations and papers of the conference can be found at:

<http://events.it-sudparis.eu/degrowthconference/en/>

"Reversing the trends in climate, population growth, poverty and ecosystems", by Lester Brown. March 4th 2008, European Parliament

In 1974 L. Brown (Washington) founded the Worldwatch Institute and became its President. In 2001 he founded as well the Earth Policy Institute. With more than 50 books, he became one of the world's most widely published authors. He is one of the global thinkers (www.earthpolicy.org) who links analyses with proposals for concrete action. During the 40 years since the birth of the modern environmental movement, there is a growing recognition that action has to be taken. Nevertheless the actions taken thus far have not succeeded in reversing the deterioration of the economy's environmental support systems.

Recent Activities and Relevant Global News

In his new book "Plan B 3.0" Lester Brown provides a comprehensive plan for reversing the trends that are fast undermining our future. Its four overriding goals are to stabilize climate, stabilize population, eradicate poverty, and restore the earth's damaged ecosystems. At the heart of the climate-stabilizing initiative is a detailed plan to cut carbon dioxide emissions 80 percent by 2020 in order to hold the future temperature rise to a minimum. In this conference, Mr Brown showed why ethanol production will drive world food prices even higher in 2008 with insecurity on a scale never seen before; the world is facing the most severe food price inflation in history. He argued how temperatures around the world are continuing their vertiginous upward climb. Mr Brown tried to show what is needed to save civilization, which may currently not be considered politically feasible.

Hellenic Club of Rome Chapter

The first General Assembly of the Hellenic Chapter of the Club of Rome convened with great success on Wednesday, March 26, 2008. Elections were held officially establishing the Chapter, its Board of Directors, and Board of Auditors. The Board of Directors assumed responsibility for the development of the Chapter and all its activities. Agni Vlavianos Arvanitis was elected president. Sincere congratulations!

Upcoming Events: Conference of the European National Associations of the Club of Rome

Conference "Which Forces are driving Europe", Bucharest, May 22-24th 2008

The conference is organized by the Romanian Association and the European Support Centre of the Club of Rome. There are initiatives for sustainable development and a joint legal framework but also short term economic interests and national egoism. And of course internal challenges like ageing of the population, lack of own energy resources and external ones like climate change and degradation of global ecosystems have a major impact. Many of these forces are competing and try to move Europe into opposite directions. The conference discusses the challenges and goes beyond the Eurocentric perspective. All humans are embedded in the same global biosphere and depend on its services - both on terrestrial and marine ecosystems. Europe has to get on a sustainable pathway - in co-operation with other continents. It takes a deeper look at the driving forces of Europe in a global context, analyses their direction and strengths, and discusses the adequacy of European and global political strategies.

The conference will result in the analysis of the situation and developments in Europe, highlight of the inter action with the global context, global ecosystems, global warming, socioeconomic trends, and will discuss the importance of co-operation with other world regions.

The conference website can be found at: <http://www.clubofrome.at/events/2008/bucharest/>

Relevant Global News and Publications

Energy Challenges: The Next Thousand Years - Foundation for the Future

The foundation for the Future released the conference proceedings of a workshop it held March 30-April 1, 2007 in Washington DC, USA, under the umbrella of their Humanity 3000 Program, focusing in three time periods on the thousand-year future (from now to the end of the present century; over the next few centuries; and over the next thousand years). The workshop considered all potential sources and technologies for energy production over these three time frames, and the challenges facing humans on the planet in developing and implementing self-sufficient strategies for energy. The 16 workshop experts reached a consensus on the three most critical issues related to energy for the long-term future: 1) energy system storage and distribution; 2) an international technical body to vet energy solutions; and 3) changing public perception and awareness about energy solutions.

Executive Report: http://www.futurefoundation.org/documents/HUM_ExecSum_EnergyChallenges_Web.pdf

Conference Proceedings: http://www.futurefoundation.org/documents/hum_pro_energychallenges.pdf

Humanity and the Biosphere: The Next Thousand Years - Foundation for the Future

Under the same Humanity 3000 Program, the Foundation for the Future and UNESCO organized a seminar in September 2006, whose report was released last year. It focused on biospheric issues and the significant impact of one part of the biosphere, humanity, on the biospheric future. Conference proceedings can be found here:

http://www.futurefoundation.org/documents/hum_pro_sem7.pdf

Aurelio Peccei Lectures



Past Aurelio Peccei Lectures & Dialogues (Winter 2008)

48th Aurelio Peccei Lecture (27th February 2008)

"OECD strategy review of Innovation Policies and their economic impact" by Dr. Jean Guinet

The OECD Headquarters has launched a set of country strategy reports on Innovation e.g. New Zealand, South Africa, Chile and the most recent one concerns the Chinese national innovation system and policy. Launched in Beijing last August 2007, this OECD report has already been the source of many discussions in the media and amongst the different stakeholders throughout the world who were consulted. Ahead of the full report for China, scheduled for the end of 2008, the Lecture introduced the main findings and presented the methodology followed by these reports.

How useful can such an "Atlas of Science" be and how can we develop it, in a rapidly changing world, at a time where not only the world is turning towards Asia, but also it is turning at an unprecedented and unanticipated speed?

Presentation and discussion forum can be found here: <http://www.clubofrome.at/events/lectures/48/>

49th Aurelio Peccei Lecture (29th February 2008)

"Looking at the UNEP Global Environment Outlook Report, GEO-4: The uses of modeling for analysing trends of the future." by Prof. Barry Hughes

The complex interactions of economic and social changes over many decades of global development require new systems of analysis to be able to simulate the possible impacts of policy frameworks over the next decades. The International Futures system is one of a new generation of computer-based simulation models, that attempts to reflect the combined effect of hundreds of interrelated parameters, both as a teaching tool in Universities, and as a basis for National and international simulations of economic and social development trajectories. These modelling systems were used to explore how current trends may unfold by 2050 in different possible scenarios (which are developed in the GEO-4 report) and shows how our future will be largely determined by the decisions individuals and society make today.

More information and discussion forum can be found here: <http://www.clubofrome.at/events/lectures/49/>

50th Aurelio Peccei Lecture (9th April 2008)

"Innovation – Concept and Relation with R&D" by Dr. Spyros Konidakis

The Information Age happens to coincide with new socio-economic and political patterns grouped under the collective name 'Globalisation' and making things even more complicated. A gradual awareness of environmental issues (climate, resources, pandemic threats etc.) started, at last, to be seriously recognised as vital issues. Transition from one specific era to another results in a (creative) chaos requiring new models, ideas and 'tools'. Dr. Konidakis presented a model of innovation resulting from three components: Education, R&D and Ideas. This model takes into account the environment in which these activities are embedded and a deeper analysis of the role of R&D in relation to Innovation was included.

Presentation and discussion forum can be accessed at: <http://www.clubofrome.at/events/lectures/50/>

Information Corner

Future Aurelio Peccei Lectures & Dialogues (Spring 2008)

51th Aurelio Peccei Lecture : Monday June 2nd , 2008

The topic deals with: **Renewable Energies: a dialogue for sustainability**. By Dr. Jaeger-Waldau from the Joint Research Center, Renewable Energy Unit, EC, Ispra-Italy. (<http://www.clubofrome.at/cor-eu/news/index.html>)

52th Aurelio Peccei Lecture : September 11th, 2008

The topic of Technology Assessment and Sustainability will be treated by experts of the EP and STOA, the Flemish Institute of TA (viWTA) and the Dutch Rathenau Institute. (<http://www.clubofrome.at/cor-eu/news/index.html>)

The Brussels EU-Chapter of the Club of Rome is organizing an average of 10 conferences per year in the framework of the Aurelio Peccei lectures. If you want to receive regularly the invitation for these lectures, which are taking place on a monthly basis (usually first week of the month at the Royal Flemish Academy of Belgium in Brussels), please send a request to our secretariat (cor.eu.secretary@gmail.com) who will add you to our distribution list.

Statutory Annual General Assembly CoR-EU

This year the AG takes place on Monday June 2nd at 16:45 till 17:45 prior to the 51st Aurelio Peccei Lecture. All full members of the Brussels EU Chapter are invited to this meeting; associated members are welcome as well, though without vote casting.

Club of Rome

Club of Rome International

<http://www.clubofrome.org>

Club of Rome European Support Center

<http://www.clubofrome.at>

tt30

<http://www.tt30.org>

Aurelio Peccei Foundation (Italy)

<http://www.clubofrome.at/peccei/>

EU

Information, calendar and events can be found at:

- <http://ec.europa.eu>
- http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/public/default_en.htm
- http://ec.europa.eu/energy/index_en.html
- <http://www.friendsofeurope.org>
- <http://www.bruegel.org/Public/WebSite.php?ID=2>
- <http://www.epc.eu/>
- <http://www.euractiv.com/en/HomePage>
- <http://www.agenceurope.com/EN/GobalFrameset.html>
- <http://www.robert-schuman.org/gb/index.htm>
- <http://www.greenfacts.org>

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FEEDBACK

For feedback about this newsletter please contact the Club of Rome secretariat at cor.eu.secretary@gmail.com