



THE EU-CHAPTER

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The EU-Chapter of the CoR
CoR-EU

The Crisis, Global Governance and the Road to Copenhagen

The end of 2008 has seen a major acceleration in the realization of unprecedented events: the spread of the global economic crisis, the election of Mr. Barack Obama as 44th President of the United-States and first African American in this position, the conference in Poznan, Poland about post-Kyoto protocol negotiations on greenhouse gas emissions... All these events call for change. All these events reflect the terrible contrast between where humanity should be at the dawn of the 21st century, and where it actually is.

In classical economic theory, perfectly free markets are supposed to lead to the best possible collective equilibrium by producing the right amount and variety of goods, while keeping the prices low. Advanced research in economics demonstrated that this can indeed be the case providing that the world is infinite, that the number of actors on the market is unlimited and that the quantity of exchanged goods is also unlimited. Forgetting these boundaries conditions can lead to dramatic mistakes, the global economic crisis of today probably being one of them. As quoted in the preamble of a new report by Thierry Gaudin "The World in 2025", French writer Paul Valery was saying in 1945 "the time of the finite world begins". The "glorious thirty" years of economic prosperity in the Western world after World-War II were indeed followed by 30 years of vanity during which humanity realized and observed the new global dangers (pollution, cyclic economic downturn, terrorism, nuclear proliferation...) without taking real globally-coordinated measures to correct them.

The recent events should generate the required lucidity to undertake for the 30 years to come a collective and reasonable management and allocation of natural resources. They should call for a drastic change in our way of living (which is different from our living standards). They should lead to the mutualiation of the planet resources with sound global governance; these resources should not be appropriated nor profit a minority of people, but be managed for the benefit of the whole humankind.

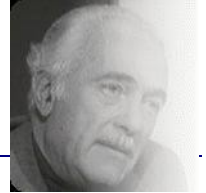
Otherwise there is a significant risk that humanity will fulfil Malthus' theories, where "natural" adjustment (in form of famine, disease, epidemic, natural catastrophes, war...) would put back the world population in line with the available resources.

We should not let any longer "laissez-faire" economic philosophy spill over and contain ambitious global policies. The survival of a great part of humankind is at stake. Do we need to wait for the date when the maximum number of human that the planet can bear will be reached? Or can we truly start planning with the physical and geographical constraints of our planet, while respecting the men and women who live on it?

Many measures leading to solutions of these problems are known and the Club of Rome has long been advocating for many of them: geo-engineering, zero waste & zero carbon policies, energy taxes, de-growth of consumption in many areas...

Coming close on the agenda is the perspective of a comprehensive climate change agreement at the UN Climate Change Conference (UNFCCC) in Copenhagen in December 2009. The present commitments under the Kyoto Protocol are only the first step in addressing the climate change threat. A global agreement in Copenhagen could lead to the stabilisation of the concentrations of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere at a level that avoids armful consequences from human interference with the climate system. A first step in the required global changes...

Aurelio Peccei Lectures and Other CoR Events



Past Lectures

53rd Aurelio Peccei Lecture (13th October 2008)

Sustainable Cities: Buenos Aires and the Challenge of Globalization

Silvia Zimmermann del Castillo, Director Argentina Chapter Club of Rome

During the last years of the past century, Buenos Aires became a global city. The process brought global dynamism but also the challenges of globalization in its three dimensions: environmental, economical and social. Ecological problems are, in a great measure, dysfunctions of social nature, generated by distortions in the economic functioning of a society. In Buenos Aires, environmental problems, such as waste, carbon emissions and water pollution, cannot be solved by a technological approach alone. There are socio-economical aspects involved and the City authorities are now committed to search sustainable solutions, such as waste and carbon reductions, fresh water treatment... . Speech from Silvia Zimmermann and discussion forum can be found here:

<http://www.clubofrome.at/events/lectures/53/>

54th Aurelio Peccei Lecture (4th December 2008)

The World in 2025 - Thierry Gaudin, President, Prospective 2100

In January 2008, DG Research of the European Commission launched a working group of fifteen experts from different countries, including non-European ones, in order to provide to the commission views on 2025 foresight world wide. One of these experts, Thierry Gaudin, who directed a similar task twenty years ago at the French Ministry for Research, came to comment and explain the present visions for the World in 2025. The full report can be found at:

<http://2100.org/World2025.pdf>. More information can be found here:

<http://www.clubofrome.at/events/lectures/54/>

55th Aurelio Peccei Lecture (14th January 2009)

Science, Scientists, a Sustainable World: Views from Down Under

Professor Penny D. Sackett, Chief Scientist for Australia

The lecture was excellent with an excellent presentation from Professor Sackett, convincing content and good policy explanation. The Embassy will take care of the publication.

More information can be found here: <http://www.clubofrome.at/events/lectures/55/>

56th Aurelio Peccei Lecture (19th February 2009)

Systemic Solutions for Today's World Challenges

Prof. Bernard A. Lietaer, Research Fellow at the Centre for Sustainable Resources, Berkeley

Several key dimensions of today's world problematic have a common structural cause: the imposition of a monopoly of one single type of medium exchange. For instance, short-term thinking with all its consequences (e.g. environmental degradation and climate change); poverty; and of course the instability of the financial system itself, are all programmed through some specific features of our conventional money. The on-going financial crisis is an opportunity to rethink our money so that it provides the incentives needed to address the challenges of the 21st century. Concrete examples of money innovations were presented and addressed how to make long-term thinking profitable, how learning can be accelerated at all levels in society, how to motivate carbon reductions at the consumer level... . More information can be found here: <http://www.clubofrome.at/events/lectures/56/>

Other Events: A [Global Contract](#) Based on Climate Justice – The Need for a New Approach Concerning International Relations – [Conference](#) on 11 November 2008, European Parliament.

Upcoming Lectures

- ❖ **#57:** *26th March*, Renewable Energy Outlook 2030 – Harry Lehmann, General Director at the German Federal Environment Agency
- ❖ **#58:** *23rd April*, Solar Energy – Johan Nijs, Ceo Photovoltech, Belgium



EU Research for the Environment

On September 3rd 2008 the Commission published its Work Programme 2009 with 49 research topics under the Environment theme. For the third time during Research Framework Programme 7, DG Research launched a major call for researchers from all Europe, associated countries and third countries to submit original research projects in areas such as climate change, environment and health, biodiversity, environmental technologies and earth observation, among others. A budget of €193.5 million has been allocated for this call, which was open till January 8th 2009. [More...](#) See also [EU Research for the Environment 2007-2013](#).

ICT for Energy Efficiency: High Level Event on ICT for Energy Efficiency

This conference will take place on March 19-20th 2009 in Brussels. [More...](#)

Sustainable development Conference Exhibition - Call for Proposals

This [conference](#) is organized under the Czech Presidency in Brussels, May 26-28 2009. Inside the conference building there will be an exhibition providing space for some 50 stands where organisations with activities related to the theme of sustainable development will be on display. Organisations willing to exhibit are invited to submit a request to the European Commission. Deadline was extended to 27 February 2009!

Global Earth Observation System of Systems Meeting Meeting

On November 20th 2008 in Bucharest, 300 delegates from the Global Earth Observation System of Systems (GEOSS) concluded a crucial meeting which paved the way for the next phase in the implementation of GEOSS, the new global monitoring network being built to support science-based decision-making about key environmental issues. This international initiative was launched following the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg; the Group on Earth Observation (GEO) is co-chaired by the European Commission, the US, China and South Africa, and gathers 76 countries over 50 participating organizations. [More...](#)

Group on Earth Observations (GEO) – 13th High-Level Group Meeting

The meeting was held on October 29th 2008 in Brussels. All presentations from the workshop are available [there](#) and the previous full report on GEO European Projects can be found [here](#).

Scientists set new record for solar cells efficiency

Researchers at the Germany-based Fraunhofer Institute for Solar Energy Systems (ISE) announced that they have succeeded in improving the efficiency of solar cells, which are designed to convert available light into electricity. The quantum electronic phenomenon called the photovoltaic (PV) effect makes this possible. [More...](#)

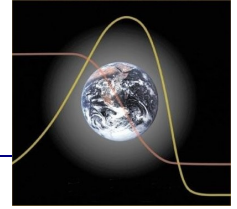
Sustainable Transport

Researchers, policy-makers and other stakeholders assembled in Lyon in December 2008 to hammer out a European vision for [sustainable transport](#) in the context of the 2020 vision for the European Research Area. Speaking at the ERTRAC event in Brussels on January 26th 2009, European Research Commissioner [Janez Potočnik](#) challenged the road industry to 'get green' and called on road transport stakeholders to come up with a clear vision for the next generation of transport solutions by the middle of 2010.

Climate Change Conference, Prague, October 31st 2008

[Speech](#) "Climate Change – International and EU action" from Stavros DIMAS, Commissioner in charge of Environment.

Books, Reports, Conferences and Other Events



Japan Scenarios towards Low-Carbon Society (LCS)

The Japan-UK Joint Research Project "Developing visions for a Low-Carbon Society (LCS) through sustainable development" produced a very interesting feasibility study to reduce by 70% the CO2 emissions by 2050 (vs. the level of 1990). This effort was made by the "2050 Japan Low-Carbon Society" scenario team. It makes clear recommendations with regards to structural changes in the industrial sector and investment in infrastructure, as well as development and use of energy-saving technologies and low-carbon energy technologies.

http://2050.nies.go.jp/interimreport/20070215_report_e.pdf



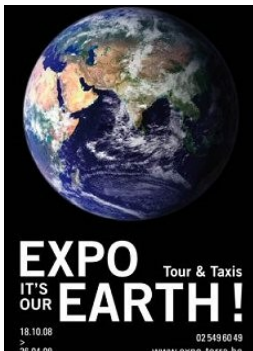
The **Earth Charter** is a declaration of fundamental ethical principles – comparable to the Universal Declarations of Human Rights – for building a just, sustainable and peaceful global society in the 21st century. It is centrally concerned with the transition to sustainable ways of living and sustainable human development. It also recognizes that the goals of ecological protection, the eradication of poverty, equitable economic development, respect for human rights, democracy, and peace are interdependent and indivisible. It provides a new, inclusive, integrated ethical framework to guide the transition to a sustainable future.

<http://www.earthcharterinaction.org/>

Energy Watch Group - Renewable Energy Outlook 2030

This [study](#) presents an alternative view of the chances of the future uses of renewable energies in the global energy supply. The scenarios are based on the analysis of the development and market penetration of renewable energy technologies in different regions in the last few decades, and how fast renewable technologies might be implemented worldwide.

<http://www.energywatchgroup.org/>



Exhibition – It's Our Earth! – Tour & Taxis, Brussels

This exhibition which is opened until April 2009 has the ambition to be the biggest ever exhibition on sustainable development in Europe. A mixture of artistic works, scientific explanations, environmental evidences in form of pictures and videos enable to immerse the visitor into stunning atmospheres, which should make him/her realize where humanity comes from and the grand challenges shortly ahead of us. If the exhibition explains well the world environmental issues, it is weaker in drawing possible solutions and calling for breakthrough policy changes at global level. Still a very worth visit. <http://www.expo-terra.be/>

ACIDD - Association Communication et Information pour le Développement Durable

This rather young French association born from the need to channel communication on sustainable development has chosen to focus on possible contributions of ICT to sustainable development and has launched for this purpose the international forum TIC21. It is also coordinating the European network ICT21-EE (ICT for energy efficiency). <http://www.acidd.com/>

It is organizing a [conference](#) on March 10th in Paris about digital planning and sustainable development in local territories.



Contact for Membership, Feedback, European Support Centre

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

A special thanks to our colleague from the European Support Centre in Vienna for his constant support, dedication and help. <http://www.clubofrome.at/>