

Dialogue on MCG – Club of Rome Comments

At 11:43 PM 1/29/2011, Prof. Dr. Ernst von Weizsaecker wrote:

Dear Mohan,

congratulations on the MCG concept. I think your four pages summary is absolutely worth distributing to the Club of Rome membership.

What is perhaps missing is technologies and policies to make it happen. This is what my co-authors and I have been treating in "Factor Five" - a report to the Club of Rome. In a nutshell it says the rich can stabilize or even slightly increase their well-being while reducing their carbon and other ecological footprints five-fold. And the poor can increase their wealth five-fold while stabilizing their footprints. That's the technological message. (Gunter Pauli's Blue Economy says the same using 100 lovely examples of cascading uses of resources!)

And in terms of policies, Chapter 9 of our book argues that a gradual increase of prices for energy, water and virgin mineral - in line with the increases of the average efficiency (or productivity) of energy, water, and virgin minerals - can trigger the Factor Five revolution. This would leave monthly expenditures for resources essentially stable while steadily reducing the use of resources. (Because technical innovations tend to reach the rich earlier than the poor, one should offer cheaper resources for the poor for some ten years) This thinking can be linked to the international justice agenda, e.g. using the "budget approach" for carbon dioxide emissions saying that the North is nearing exhaustion of its permitted carbon budget and should from now on buy rights from the South.

I am aware, of course, that present policies are oceans apart from MCG and from Factor Five. But the Club of Rome can help spearhead a movement in this direction.

Will you be able to come to the Resource Panel's Helsinki meeting (29-31 May)? If so, it might be a good idea meeting also with the people advising President Tarja Halonen on the Global Sustainability Panel, one of them being Professor Markku Wilenius, Member of the Club of Rome.

I shall be in New York 4 - 7 March, possibly until 8 March. If you are present at the Prep Com for Rio + 20, we could meet for a chat there. I might also go to the CSD meeting in May.

Kind regards

Ernst

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At 01:51 AM 1/30/2011, Prof. Heitor Gurgulino wrote:

Dear Mohan,

Since before 1992 when I was Rector of UNU in Tokyo, and after Rio's Summit, some of our UNU work, discussions and reports ("Five years after Rio: UNU's Responses to Agenda 21" - Small brochure published by UNU 1997), among other actions, the need for lower consumption by all societies had been raised as a goal but, in very general terms,

Your focus on the 20% of the rich, that consumes "over 80 % of global output" and should not be seen as a problem but "persuaded to contribute to the solution" is indeed a very sensible proposal - as outlined in the first two paragraphs of your paper on the MCG (complementary to the MDG's) .

If the UNCSD Rio + 20 could incorporate that concept we would move more quickly into a global sustainable development direction (The majority of the poor that MDG's wants to reach cannot read and write, but the 20% of the world's richest are much better educated, can read and easily assimilate those messages faster)

So, let's put your MIND and that of the CoR Members together to see how we can jointly put it in the Agenda of Rio +20 ! Time is short - we are only 18 months away from UNCSD.

I have seen that Ian has sent your paper to quite a few CoR Members so you will get additional comments.

Best regards,

Heitor.

At 16:05 29.01.2011, Mohan Munasinghe wrote:

Dear Colleagues,

I am getting great support for the proposal I made for "Millennium Consumption Goals (for the rich)", during my recent speech at the UN (prep. meeting for UNCSD 2012).

Attached is a short paper on the subject, also up on my web site, at:
<http://www.mohanmunasinghe.com/pdf/MCG-OpEd-Article-v5F-MIND1.pdf>

Would it be worthwhile circulating it to CoR members for their comments? I would value feedback greatly, as we move the UNCSD 2012 agenda forward.

Regards, Mohan.