

Global Green Governance

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Green leadership with a vision

To overcome today's multiple crises, it is essential to deliver a breakthrough on the international community's response to climate change and to rethink the entire structure of our society by placing the environment at the core of every endeavor. We are not only suffering from an environmental and economic crisis. A crisis in values, a crisis in ethics and, above all, a crisis in leadership are threatening the very survival of life on our planet.

Efforts to protect the environment cannot be fruitful in isolation. Global environmental governance is a key component of sustainable development. Timely and realistic steps to achieve meaningful reform are of the essence. As we reconsider our interdependence with the environment, we need to formulate and implement policies capable of bringing results. In this context, policy instruments, mechanisms, and procedures that regulate the processes of environmental protection must be based on ethics and guidelines for global green leadership with a vision.

International decision-makers are attempting to face the enormous problems of our times by implementing inadequate solutions of the past. However, what humanity needs today is for leaders to invest their political capital and public image to push for improved environmental governance and performance and also to demonstrate the political will to raise the profile of global green governance. To give world markets incentives to move toward sustainability, it is essential to provide encouragement and know-how. Opportunities range from developing and maintaining zero-emission infrastructure to improving and managing ecosystems, lifestyles and livelihoods. By setting the right priorities on the international leadership scene, we can focus the global agenda on the needed transition to a green economy, new energy models, health, environmental security and peace.

Global green governance with environmental sensitivity can encourage action-oriented programmes between governments, business and civil society. Technological developments provide numerous opportunities for the control of emissions from a wide range of sources, and for the remediation of waste sites and polluted waters. Nanotechnology revolutionises the development of green products and processes that minimise the production of undesirable by-products. Hydrogen energy production from algae adds new dimensions to the renewable energy sector. Cleaner production and low carbon technologies contribute to climate change mitigation and offer a win-win scenario for businesses everywhere. The concept of low-carbon cities brings new hope in urban management, while "green jobs" in areas as diverse as tourism, agriculture and transport improve quality of life, curb unemployment and boost the development of strategies for sustainable livelihoods.

Governments cannot achieve sustainability alone and need to work with citizens, international agencies, and all stakeholders. The 15th Eurasian Economic Summit can

provide a unique opportunity to advance global resolve on the environment and provide high visibility to the need for global green governance.

New energy models

The progress of technology has opened the pathway for the immediate implementation of environmental reforms in all sectors of society. A major priority for global green governance is the transition of the energy system to deal with climate change, specifically making the energy system independent from fossil fuels at the global level. Clean energy has been extensively discussed in previous Eurasian Economic Summits and is crucial in reversing climate change problems, opening the pathway for new employment and reducing risks to health and biodiversity.

The consumption of energy drives the engine of society. However, the impacts of energy based on fossil fuels on the global environment and its contribution to climate change make it imperative that we develop more sustainable energy sources. It is therefore more urgent than ever to devote greater resources to the development of new energy technologies, which do not contribute to global warming. Biological models can serve as paradigms for clean and renewable energy.

Algae are unicellular organisms engaged in photosynthesis and therefore convert CO₂ into biomass. From this biomass potential resources and active substances, as well as fuels like bio-diesel, may be produced. While growing, algae take up the amount of CO₂ that is later released again when they are used for energy production and can play a crucial role in carbon sequestration regimes.

Algae also produce hydrogen under certain conditions and can be used for the renewable and environmentally friendly generation of large quantities of hydrogen (H₂) gas. This method does not entail the generation of any undesirable, harmful, or polluting byproducts and it may even offer the advantage of value-added products as a result of the mass cultivation of green algae.

Hydrogen has unique potential for reducing our dependency on fossil fuels and helping to alleviate global warming. It can be produced from renewable resources, such as water and agricultural products, eliminating the net production of CO₂. The transition to a hydrogen based economy begins with the commercial production of hydrogen-based fuel cells, where it is efficient and intrinsically clean, for all end-use applications. Additional research is needed in this area to reduce the cost of hydrogen production, solve hydrogen storage problems and in the longer term, integrate renewable energy sources into hydrogen fuel production.

Redefining the concept of profit

Placing our world on a more sustainable path requires the right institutional and economic framework. In today's dynamically expanding society, environmental protection is a "genuine" profit for humanity and the only vehicle for achieving a better quality of life. The time is ripe for governments around the world to implement a new kind of economy, which is resilient, sustainable, operates within the limits of our planet's resources and creates a fairer society.

For decades the Biopolitics International Organisation (B.I.O.) has been bringing attention to the fact that gross domestic product is being used to measure economic success, but this does not account for environmental status, health, education or other forms of well-being. The preservation of the wealth and beauty of the natural world, the health of the Earth's population, fair rules of trade, and equal educational

opportunities for every country in the world can be a source of genuine profit, both monetary and social. The issue of “quality of life” needs to assume top priority in GDP, along with culture and education. Moreover, the concept of profit has to be redefined and encompass elements which constitute a long-term profit for society: culture, internal wealth, the preservation of natural resources, better health and the protection of biodiversity, as a measurable part of a nation’s prosperity.

Environmental education

Educational models with the environment at the heart of every academic discipline can inspire policy-makers to create institutions fostering innovative environmental thinking and action. A truly integrated environmental education can help us to reach a developmental framework that places people and the planet before profits. By allowing for cultural differences to emerge as the beauty and wealth of our planet, we can inspire society with new values for responsible and committed global green leadership.

International environmental education through e-learning, as practiced for years by B.I.O., can reach every citizen, and provide knowledge, infuse new thinking and encourage action and change. The goal is to promote environmental values and ethics in every academic discipline and professional initiative, and a truly civil society where people and organizations everywhere are motivated to respond to the urgency of combating global warming, protecting the environment and achieving sustainable development.

International University for the Bio-Environment

Launched by B.I.O. in 1990, the International University for the Bio-Environment (I.U.B.E.) inspires students and teachers in all academic areas to become environmentally conscious and responsible world citizens. It is a truly “universal” initiative, encompassing all educational levels, set up with an ambitious but happening agenda to act as a catalyst, seeking to infuse educational institutions and their graduates with new values and to encourage a deeper, internalized environmental awareness.

The I.U.B.E. focuses on the dissemination of environmental education to universities and training centers internationally, and to all the disciplines taught within them, rather than offering traditional diplomas or awards. It is designed as an open and distance learning initiative, whereby leading experts, scholars and educators from 150 countries actively engage in the promotion of environmental thinking. Fighting the trend towards over-specialization, the I.U.B.E. seeks to open up all areas of study and training to an appreciation of the environment and all life on our planet. It serves as a think-tank for the development of multidisciplinary environmental concepts, beyond the confines of conventional environmental science, with the aim of promoting a revised educational system that can offer new paradigms for sustainable development and meet the challenges of global green governance.

A view to the future

Opportunities for humanity to move forward and make progress in achieving global green governance have largely remained untapped. Lack of vision has led even the Olympic Games to become mere competitions of the body and shift into business

endeavors. There is a dire need for positive models that can serve as beacons of values to help achieve a society of hope. We need time-spanning ideals that can inspire leadership, hope and a new vision. New directions for professionals, volunteerism, the participation of youth, international education and global action.

As proposed by B.I.O. since 1985, the bio-assessment of technology, with the environment as a common point of reference, can provide a synthesis of new values for the future. The Olympic Games can also play a major role in this effort. Today, the Olympic Games are a reflection of the current crisis. The possibilities of the human body are finite. We need to draw inspiration from time-spanning ideals and focus the world's positively focused attention at the time of the Olympics on a vision that can have a real impact on society. For the past twenty years, B.I.O. imparts the message that the Olympics should involve the participation of every individual and every profession in the race to save the environment. There is not a moment to waste. Our true profit is a clean environment, better health, culture, education, international cooperation. This is the goal and vision for a brighter and hopeful future.

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