

# Victoria

UNIVERSITY OF WELLINGTON

Te Whare Wananga  
o te Upoko o te Ika a Maui



## “The End of Poverty”:

# The globalization of the unreal and the impoverishment of all

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**Date**              05.10.2005

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# LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

1	AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrom
2	CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
3	GDP	Gross Domestic Product
4	GNI	Gross National Income
5	GNP	Gross National Product
6	HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
7	IMF	International Monetary Fund (IMF)
8	IOC	International Olympic Committee
9	IT	Information Technology
10	MDG	Millennium Development Goals
11	NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
12	ODA	Official Development Assistance
13	OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
14	OPEC	Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries
15	p.a.	per annum
16	PRGP	Participatory Rural Governance Program
17	PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers
18	TRIPS	Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights
19	US	United States (of America)
20	UK	United Kingdom
21	UN	United Nations
22	UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development

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# *Introduction*

# 1 Introduction

In a world of affluence, roughly a sixth of humanity is too poor to live. Survival is a daily fight. Their plight, and the fortunes of those slightly better off, but far from prosperous, was addressed, not for the first time, in the Millennium Development Goals, ratified by all United Nations members in 2000.

Progress, in line with past development struggles, has been excruciatingly slow. In some poverty-clusters of the world, there has hardly been any progress at all. In 2005, renowned economist Jeffrey Sachs illustrated how extreme poverty can be overcome. *The End of Poverty: How we can make it happen in our lifetime*, is Sachs' analysis of prevailing poverty and a handbook for strategies to lift the entire world on the ladder of modern, economic growth.

This thesis sets out to explain why Sachs' nevertheless praiseworthy strategy globalizes the unreal and impoverishes us all. There are important lessons to be taken from Sachs' work, which's recommendations could become important stepping stones for a new development agenda, not aimed at the economic prosperity of all, but maximised, sustainable happiness. Under neo-liberalism, proposed in a benevolent manner by Sachs, economic growth has dubiously transcended its status as a means, and often appears to have turned into an end of its own.

In a first step, I will try to frame the term "poverty", its origins and alternative definitions. Afterwards, I will portray Jeffrey Sachs' *The End of Poverty* and ask whether it convinces. Is it clear and coherent? Are the ambitious objectives feasible?

In a next step, I will presume that his strategies are implemented and all of humanity is offered the opportunity to climb the ladder of modern, economic growth. *And then what?* What did Sachs miss?

I will try to answer this question from the marginalised position of environmentalism, more specifically focusing on Deep Ecology. By doing so, I wish to illustrate that humanity's regard of nature is fundamentally flawed and drastic cultural changes are needed for the sustainability of life. I will pay special attention to the Deep Ecologist's claim that economic development in growth-oriented societies does not buy happiness. Are we getting happier, or is economic growth worthless or even counterproductive? If we initiate the process of modern, economic growth worldwide, does the endpoint make sense?

*And now what?* In this thesis's final section, I will summarize my findings and explain why Jeffrey Sachs' *The End of Poverty* is globalizing the unreal, including an unreal self, an unreal well-being, an unreal rationality, unreal needs and an unreal world. If implemented, it will result in the ultimate impoverishment of all that is, non-human nature included. Nevertheless, I will briefly put forward some alternative ideas for development, as the plight of the world's poor is intolerable. These alternatives are in part based on strategies by Jeffrey Sachs, in part based on Deep Ecology's platform and last, but not least, on findings of happiness studies.

I do not claim that my recommendations coincide with ultimate wisdom, but that our present perceptions of favourable, predominately economic development, both for the extreme poor and everybody else, need fundamental rethinking.

||

*Poverty*

## 2 Poverty

Understanding Jeffrey Sachs' *The End of poverty* requires that the concept of "poverty" is relatively uncontested. Therefore, it is interesting to shed some light on the lives and times of poverty: where did poverty, as Sachs explains it, originate? Why have some parts of the world become rich, whereas others appear trapped in extreme poverty? How does Jeffrey Sachs explain these phenomena? More generally, is the concept of "poverty" contested? How is poverty defined? How does Sachs segment humanity and place it on different rungs of a ladder of modern, economic growth, ranging from the extreme poor to those living in widespread affluence? Is the economically globalizing world becoming more equal or not? Why are some left behind? Poverty is often explained by the poor's own faults or corrupt leadership, but do other issues justify poverty, issues the poor themselves cannot overcome on their own and the perceived "rich" never had to face? With a focus on Jeffrey Sachs' reasoning, these questions will be addressed in the forthcoming chapters.

### 2.1 Lives and times of poverty

"The move from universal poverty to varying degrees of prosperity has happened rapidly in the span of human history", Jeffrey Sachs argues, and "two hundred years ago the idea that we could potentially achieve the end of extreme poverty would have been unimaginable", plain simply because "just about everybody was poor"<sup>1</sup>. From a western, neo-liberal perspective, it appears possible to state that the challenge of today's globally widespread poverty is nothing fundamentally new in itself – it is just that some have managed to escape poverty, while others have not.

The era of "modern, economic growth" saw the gap between the rich and the poor's per capita income soar from a relatively favourable ratio of 4:1 in 1820, to 20:1 between the United States of America and Africa in 1998, Sachs notes, and adds that these relations are adjusted to the local purchasing power. In absolute comparison, the relations deteriorated even more: the CIA World factbook states the exemplary GDP per capita of Tanzania with 700 US \$ p.a.<sup>2</sup>, while GDP amounts to 40,100 US \$ per capita in the United States – a ratio of 1:58. Luxembourg ranks first

<sup>1</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: *The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime*, (Penguin Books, Great Britain, 2005), page 26

<sup>2</sup> Tanzania, The World Factbook, (Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), Washington DC, United States of America, 09.08.2005), <http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/tz.html#Econ> (04.09.2005)

with 58,900 US \$, East Timor last with 400\$<sup>3</sup>, a ratio close to 1:150. Clearly, the “era of modern economic growth” has changed the face of an “equally poor” world no more than two centuries ago, as the following graph illustrates. In simplistic terms, Sachs states that a) all regions were poor in 1820, b) all regions experienced economic progress and c) today’s rich regions experienced by far the greatest economic progress<sup>4</sup>.

Therefore, everybody has been moving along the “right path” ever since, with the small difference that the US economy steadily grew a “modest 1.7%”, while Africa’s economies grew at an average of 0.7% a year. Consequently, “today’s twenty-fold gap in income between the United States and Africa...results from a three-fold gap as of 1820, which was magnified seven times by the difference in annual growth rates of 1.7 percent in the United States versus 0.7 percent in Africa”, Sachs explains. As “the key for the United States to become the world’s richest major economy was not spectacularly fast growth...but rather steady growth”<sup>5</sup>, a reader of Sachs’ introductory description of poverty might come to the conclusion that economic growth is relatively linear and economic cycles, such as the well-provable Kondratiev waves, do not exist.

Additionally, it is comforting to know that “technology has been the main force behind the long-term increases in income in the rich world, not exploitation of the poor”, “indeed very good news”, as the game of economics is a “game that everybody can win”<sup>6</sup>.

The “great transformation” began with the industrial revolution, resulting in deep structural changes. As the frontrunners of industrial revolution optimized the division of labour and thus improved everybody’s well-being in an Adam Smithian kind of way, improved, sustainable long-term economic growth became possible. Obviously, this miraculous division of labour suffices to turn growth rates of 0.7% into growth rates of 1.7%, and explains the misery of those “left behind”: today’s marvellously talented “poor rural farmers in Africa...do it all, and their abilities are deeply impressive. They are also deeply inefficient”<sup>7</sup>. Other factors besides the en-masse appreciation of Adam Smith’s “tin manufacture” help to explain the frontrunner’s successes. Britain benefited from its relatively open society, “with more scope for individual initiative”, its strong institutions of political liberty, its private property rights, its being the centre of Europe’s scientific revolution, its “crucial geographical advantages”, being an island and having well

<sup>3</sup> Per Capita Income, (Wikipedia: The Free Encyclopaedia, Wikimedia Foundation Inc.), [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Per\\_capita\\_income](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Per_capita_income) (04.09.2005)

<sup>4</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime, page 29

<sup>5</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime, page 30

<sup>6</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime, page 31

<sup>7</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime, page 36-37

navigable rivers, its sovereignty and low risk of invasion and its possession of coal, which freed society from energy constraints<sup>8</sup>.

Basically, if economic prosperity is a game winnable by all and if every regions worldwide has seen economic growth, albeit at varying rates and for varying durations, Jeffrey Sachs' observation that "there are practical solutions to almost all their (the poor nations) problems"<sup>9</sup> might make us believe that eventually every citizen of the world can wish for an iPod for Christmas<sup>10</sup>.

It should be added that Sachs manages to mention that some of the world's poor, especially the poorest, often began their economic growth "under tremendous obstacles", as, "in some cases, they faced the brutal exploitation of dominant colonial powers". It might be interesting to add that these "some cases" incorporated more than half of humanity, and resulted in the creation of 105 new nation states – ensuing a tripling of the United Nations member states between 1945 and 1981<sup>11</sup>. Even though the exploitative tendency of colonial powers might have varied, the conscious use of the quantifier "some" in this regard appears questionable. But even if "some poor" suffered from colonial exploitation, the colonial powers seem not to have benefited decisively, as being a colonial power fails to make the list of six convincing reasons, listed two paragraphs above, Sachs states for Great Britain's early success. "Let me dispose of one idea right from the start", Sachs defends this underlying notion, "Many people assume that the rich have gotten rich because the poor have gotten poor. In other words, they assume that Europe and the United States used military force and political strength during and after the era of colonialism to extract wealth from the poorest regions, and thereby grow rich...however, this is not at all what happened."<sup>12</sup> Of course not, as economic growth is a "game everyone can win" and "all parts of the world had a roughly comparable starting point in 1820 – all very poor by current standards"<sup>13</sup>.

I do not want to loose myself in an extensive critique of Jeffrey Sachs's view of the live and times of poverty, which appears contradictorily and blurred, but it has to be noted that this interpretation of history underlies his concept of ending global poverty. It is the cornerstone of his rhetoric. It is not that the historical exploitation by the powerful goes entirely unmentioned,

<sup>8</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime, page 33-35

<sup>9</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime, page 50

<sup>10</sup> Or respective occasions of reciprocal gift exchanges in other cultures, in a best case scenario evenly spread out over the calendar year to avoid delivery bottlenecks.

<sup>11</sup> McMichael, Philipp: Development and Social Change: A Global Perspetive, (Pine Forge Press, California, USA, 2000), page 17

<sup>12</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime, page 31

<sup>13</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime, page 29

but equally often it is argued that the overhasty conclusion that Europe's wealth and progression depended on it is "not at all what happened". Some insights into an economic counter-history shall suffice to broaden what Sachs regularly mentions as an occurrence, but which's driving importance he vehemently denies: colonialism.

The colonial powers, Philipp McMichael argues, established global patterns of specialized extraction and the production of raw materials within their colonies, thus fostered an international division of labour. In effect, this stimulated European industrialization, as manufacturing grew based on imported "industrial inputs and foodstuffs for its industrial labour force", and forced non-Europeans into primary commodity production. Colonial powers as Britain subjugated native crafts, as the East India Company, which "succeeded in converting India from a manufacturing country into a country exporting raw produce". Obviously, such developments "fuelled European capitalist civilization", "forced more and more (colonial) subjects to work in cash cropping" and controlled their workforce first by slavery and subsequently by indentured labour schemes. Therefore, the conventional understand that "development is something that individual societies experience or pursue, one after another", is a fallacy when "industrial growth in Europe depended on agricultural monoculture in the non-European world"<sup>14</sup>.

## 2.2 Definitions of poverty

Various definitions of poverty, of being poor or impoverished, exist. Generally, poverty describes the "state of being without", often associated with need, hardship and a lack of resources across a wide range of circumstance<sup>15</sup>. The Encyclopaedia Americana describes poverty as "the insufficiency of means relative to human needs"<sup>16</sup>, which illustrates that the term "poverty" itself evokes its own contention. Even though it is obvious that being poor in country "A" might not be comparable to being poor in country "B", a quick example ought to exemplify the concept of relative poverty.

<sup>14</sup> McMichael, Philipp: *Development and Social Change: A Global Perspective* (Pine Forge Press, California, USA, 2000), page 8-13

<sup>15</sup> *Poverty*, (Wikipedia: The Free Encyclopaedia, Wikimedia Foundation Inc.), <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Poverty> (05.09.2005)

<sup>16</sup> *Poverty*, Encyclopedia Americana, (Encyclopaedia Americana Incorporated, Grolier Incorporated, United States of America, 1985), Vol. 23, page 495-498

<b>Table 1: Relative poverty</b>	
<b>Country A</b>	<b>County B</b>
Distribution of food: daily, local markets, most market participants walk	Distribution of food: large, centralized shopping centres, most market participants travel by car and buy a week's supply
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- little food is stored</li> <li>- lack of availability of funds for daily, basic purchases qualifies for poverty</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- food has to be stored, satisfaction of food needs difficult without refrigerator</li> <li>- automobile often a necessity</li> <li>- in addition to the funding of food itself, a car and a refrigerator have to be maintained</li> </ul>
	any product socially required in the distribution and consumption of basic needs is a necessity <sup>17</sup>

Jeffrey Sachs broadly distinguishes between three degrees of poverty: extreme, moderate and relative poverty. Of highest significance for *End of poverty* is the first category, extreme poverty, which is defined as a situation under which “households cannot meet basic needs for survival”. Core elements are chronic hunger, no access to health care, no secured access to safe drinking water and sanitation, the unobtainability of education for some or all of the household’s children and perhaps the lack of rudimentary shelter. Moderate poverty refers to conditions where most basic needs are barely met – the daily struggle for survival is won, but nothing more. Relative poverty only occurs in high-income countries, where prerequisites for upward social mobility are missing, whereas extreme poverty only occurs in developing countries<sup>18</sup>. In addition to moneylessness, powerlessness is another important characteristic of poverty, as many poor logically lack the opportunities and choices open to the nonpoor. For the powerless, life seems to be governed by forces or persons outside their control – life is shaped by authorities, “evil forces” or “hard luck”<sup>19</sup>.

<sup>17</sup> Poverty, Encyclopedia Americana Vol. 23, page 495-498

<sup>18</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime, page 20

<sup>19</sup> Poverty, Encyclopedia Americana Vol. 23, page 495-498

Internationally, extreme and moderate poverty are expressed by the statistical standard of an income of at least one (extreme) or one to two (moderate) US dollars per day, measured at purchasing power parity<sup>20</sup>. These poverty lines are referred to as absolute (by comparison to the aforementioned example of relative poverty), as they are “thought to be independent of time and place”<sup>21</sup>. The concept is not without faults. Whereas it might be quite a challenge not to die with monthly funds of thirty or even thirty to sixty US dollars within the United States of America, a relatively self-sufficient Tanzanian farmer with satisfying kin relations outside an organized market economy might find it relatively easy to survive without an exchange medium as money. Poverty, measured in terms such as purchasing power, is socially constructed. Just the fact that it represents the contemporary status quo in international poverty discussion does not mean that it is by any means natural. Poverty is what humans make of it.

I do not want to argue that the poor are not really poor, which they often are, both in absolute and relative terms, but to illustrate that poverty, as we know, perceive and understand it, is often constructed. The mainstream conception of poverty could equally well contain the strength of communities, the intactness of nature or the freedom from excessive work. It might be too romantic and simplistic to imagine the aforementioned Tanzanian subsistence farmer cracking jokes about the “poor”, lonely, western individual; poor in terms of kin relations, in terms of an alienation from nature by all-encompassing office-work and eternally purchasing short spurts of happiness at the mall, especially if we compare the personal outcome in the face of a disease as malaria or HIV/Aids. Nevertheless, it is also too simplistic to accept and globally apply a westernized definition of poverty in terms of mere purchasing power and consumption ability.

In 1973, Leopold Kohr tried to illustrate the same by an approximated comparison of costs for a series of basic living-standard items in the Soviet Union, the United States and “a paradisiacal primitive village such as Loiza Aldea on the north coast of Puerto Rico”. Kohr concluded that it takes about “15 years to acquire a unit of dwelling in the Soviet Union, and 5 in the United States”, whereas “in Loiza Aldea (the cost) is probably in the neighbourhood of two weeks”. In conclusion, the housing standard of America is three times higher than in Russia, but the standard of Loiza Aldea 140 times higher than that of America.

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<sup>20</sup> as goods and services have different prices in different countries, the purchasing power parity is used to calculate the amount of goods obtainable in local currency fixed to an agreed-upon ceiling after conversion to another currency, usually US dollars. [Purchasing Power Parity \(PPP\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Purchasing_power_parity), (Wikipedia: The Free Encyclopaedia, Wikimedia Foundation Inc.), [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Purchasing\\_power\\_parity](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Purchasing_power_parity) (05.09.2005)

<sup>21</sup> [Poverty Line](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Poverty_line), (Wikipedia: The Free Encyclopaedia, Wikimedia Foundation Inc.), [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Poverty\\_line#Absolute\\_poverty](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Poverty_line#Absolute_poverty), (05.09.2005)

*“Similarly, if it takes a Russian the sacrifice of 20 minutes of labour to acquire a unit of food, and an American 5 minutes, it may take the man from Loizga Aldea 10 seconds. All he has to do is to give the hammock on his porch in which he rests in air-conditioned comfort a gentle swign, and snatch a delicious unit of banana from the bush outside his door”.*

Kohr recognizes that such comparisons open the door for broad-based criticism. He admits that a “thatched-roofed bamboo hut, however romantic, cannot be put on the same footing as a bathroom-equipped stone house”, and that it is therefore possible to claim that the standard of living could be considered infinitely higher in both America and Russia, but also that this is not necessarily so. “When an Italian, savouring a plate of spaghetti and a bottle of wine, was told that the British standard of living was five times higher than his”, he would not be impressed at all, Kohr argues. Therefore, Kohr concludes that various living standards are not necessarily lower than others, but merely different and cheaper. Thus, as long as various communities aspire to different modes of life and different conceptions of perfection, living-standard comparisons have only meaning by comparison within communities – not between. Problems arise, “only when different communities begin chasing the same worldly idols”, for then all are “on the rungs of the same ladder”<sup>22</sup>.

### **2.3 Poverty as we know it: contemporary world poverty**

“If economic development is a ladder with higher rungs representing steps up the path to economic well-being”, Jeffrey Sachs<sup>23</sup> appears to take up Leopold Kohr’s metaphor, it becomes possible to analyze the global spread of prosperity in broad terms – or rungs of the ladder. Furthermore, I will portray the metaphor of the United Nations’ unstable “global village”.

#### **“Off the ladder”**

The world’s extreme poor, the “poorest of the poor”, constitute roughly a sixth of humanity, or one billion people. They are “too ill, hungry, or destitute even to get a food on the first rung of the development ladder”. Daily life is dominated by a never-lessening struggle for mere survival,

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<sup>22</sup> Kohr Leopold: Development without aid, (Schoken Books, USA, 1979), page 26-29

<sup>23</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime, page 19

cash earnings amount to pennies per day and slight disturbances of their everyday life, such as floods or illness result in extreme suffering or even death.<sup>24</sup> Their mere existence has been labelled “an affront to our common humanity” in the United Nations Millennium Report<sup>25</sup>.

### “A few rungs up the ladder”

A few rungs up the development ladder the upper end of the low-income world can be found. 1.5 billion people fall into this category, which can be labelled “the poor”. Daily live is above subsistence, and “death is not at their door”<sup>26</sup>. In terms of income, they have to make do on less than 2\$ per day<sup>27</sup>

### “Yet another few rungs”

2.5 billion people constitute the “middle-income world”. For Sachs, a classic example is the Indian IT worker. Typical households cannot be compared to “middle-income” ones in rich countries, but most middle incomers reside in cities, might enjoy indoor plumbing and can “purchase a scooter and someday even an automobile”. Children go to school and clothes are adequate. For some, even unhealthy fast food dominates their nutrition<sup>28</sup>. In many cases, these middle-incomers benefit from globalization, as the world is “becoming flat”<sup>29</sup> and modern technologies lower entry barriers to global markets, but the bottom half of this rung, together with those below, a whopping 3.5 billion people, earn less than 20% of the world’s income<sup>30</sup>. This rung’s people benefit if Walmart massively starts to import its supplies from up-and-coming China<sup>31</sup>, and it can be argued that a global equivalent of the “American dream” myth might lies within their reach.

<sup>24</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime, page 18

<sup>25</sup> Annan, Kofi A.: United Nations Millennium Report, (United Nations, Department of Public Information, New York, United States of America, 2000), page 19

<sup>26</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime, page 18-19

<sup>27</sup> Annan, Kofi A.: United Nations Millennium Report, page 19

<sup>28</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime, page 19

<sup>29</sup> Pink, Daniel H.: Why the world is flat (Wired Magazine, Conde Nast Publication, San Francisco, United States of America, 13.05.2005, <http://www.wired.com/wired/archive/13.05/friedman.html>) (05.09.2005)

<sup>30</sup> Annan, Kofi A.: United Nations Millennium Report, page 19

<sup>31</sup> Zakaria, Fareed: ‘The World Is Flat’: The Wealth Of Yet More Nations, (New York Times, New York, United States of America, 01.05.2005),

<http://www.nytimes.com/2005/05/01/books/review/01ZAKARIA.html?pagewanted=1&ei=5070&en=67a0b3bb896635b7&ex=1119326400> (01.05.2005)

## “Still higher up the ladder”

Roughly a sixth of the world’s population finds itself at the top of the global ladder of economic development, earning a combined sixty percent of the world income<sup>32</sup>. Relative affluence is widespread, and most reside in rich countries, even though the ranks of those “that made it” from the “middle-income world” is steadily growing<sup>33</sup>. The relative poor within rich, western societies ought to be included within this group, which, by Sachs simplifying metaphor of our common ladder, appears far more homogenous than it really is. Just as the world ought to be affronted by its extreme poor, the top of the top-sixth “should be ashamed of themselves” in regard to the “Life in the bottom 80% (of the top sixth of humanity)”, the New York Times commented in the aftermath of hurricane Katrina in August 2005<sup>34</sup>, when those most heavily struck by disaster were the least “white” of society. Apparently, life at the top is still far from utopia.

## The village’s survival

What appears missing from Jeffrey Sach’s ladder of development is the observation that the status quo, no matter that many people seem to be able to get a hold of the next rung, is inherently unstable. In addition, every thought of theoretical, environmental unsustainability goes unmentioned. Sachs’ devotes himself to the question of security in his justification of aid (see 3.6), but never poses the question of survivability as directly as the UN’s “village” metaphor, or Mexican President Vincente Fox. Fox, at the 2005 UN summit, stated that “the survival of small islands of prosperity surrounded by seas of destitution is not viable”, as poverty “provokes conflict which respect no borders”<sup>35</sup>, whereas the UN Millennium Report does not directly focus on imminent threats, but highlights that the status quo’s inherent instability is uncontrollable. “There is no predictable way to keep the peace in this village”, the United Nations Millennium Report comments concerning the “global village”, a better suited metaphor to explain the real world than Sach’s ladder of modern, economic prosperity.

<sup>32</sup> Annan, Kofi A.: *United Nations Millennium Report*, page 19

<sup>33</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: *The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime*, page 19

<sup>34</sup> *Life in the bottom 80 percent*, (New York Times Editorial, New York, United States of America), 01.09.2005, [http://www.nytimes.com/2005/09/01/opinion/01thu2.html?incamp=article\\_popular](http://www.nytimes.com/2005/09/01/opinion/01thu2.html?incamp=article_popular) (01.09.2005)

<sup>35</sup> *Poor nations call for aid at U.N.*, (Associated Press, United States of America, 15.09.2005), <http://www.cnn.com/2005/POLITICS/09/15/un.wrap.ap/index.html> (16.09.2005)

*“Let us imagine, for a moment, that the world really is a “global village” – taking seriously the metaphor that is often invoked to depict global interdependence. Say this village has 1,000 individuals, with all the characteristics of today’s human race distributed in exactly the same proportions. What would it look like? What would we see as its main challenges?”*

*Some 150 of the inhabitants live in an affluent are of the village, about 780 in poorer districts. Another 70 or so live in a neighbourhood that is in transition. The average income per person is \$ 6000 a year, and there are more middle income families than in the past. But just 200 people dispose of 86 per cent of all the wealth, while nearly half of the villagers are eking out an existence on less than \$2 per day. Men outnumber women by a small margin, but women make up a majority of those who live in poverty. Adult literacy has been increasing. Still, some 220 villagers – two thirds of them women – are illiterate. Of the 390 inhabitants under 20 years of age, three fourths live in the poorer districts, and many are looking desperately for jobs that do not exist. Fewer than 60 people own a computer and only 24 have access to the internet. More than half have never made or received a telephone call. Life expectancy in the affluent district is nearly 78 years, in the poorer areas 64 years – and in the very poorest neighbourhoods a mere 52 years. Each marks an improvement over previous generations, but why do the poorest lag so far behind? Because in their neighbourhood there is a far higher incidence of infectious diseases and malnutrition, combined with an acute lack of access to safe water, sanitation, health care, adequate housing, education and work. **There is no predictable way to keep the peace in this village...**”<sup>36</sup>*

Despite a global tendency towards economic growth<sup>37</sup>, “the persistence of income inequality over the past decade is also troubling”. People living in Africa, especially south of the Sahara, are almost as poor today as they were twenty years ago<sup>38</sup>. Even though the overall number of people living in extreme poverty has receded in East Asia and South Asia, the numbers of extreme poor have risen in sub-Saharan Africa.

Much growth appears fragile, as natural disasters temporarily reversed China’s poverty reduction by an increase of 800,000 extreme poor in 2004<sup>39</sup>. Between 1981 and 2001, the proportion of extreme poverty in East Asia plummeted from 58% to 15%, in South Asia from 52% to 31%, remained flat at 10% in Latin America and, in Sub-Saharan Africa, increased from 40 to 45%<sup>40</sup>

<sup>36</sup> Annan, Kofi A.: United Nations Millennium Report, page 14-15, boldface added

<sup>37</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime, page 19

<sup>38</sup> Annan, Kofi A.: United Nations Millennium Report, page 19

<sup>39</sup> China Logs Rise in Extreme Poverty, (The Epoch Times, New York, United States of America, 20.07.2004), <http://english.epochtimes.com/news/4-7-20/22548.html>, 06.09.2005)

<sup>40</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime, page 20-22

(graph 22). In absolute numbers, the decrease of people living under conditions of extreme poverty has been painfully slow.

Some academics challenge assertions by the UN or Jeffrey Sachs concerning the persistence of poverty. Surjit S. Bhalla “reveals the truth”, which is “that we have just witnessed the twenty best years in world history – and doubly certainly the twenty best years in the history of the poor people”. Using complex mathematical formulas, he reveals that the official World Bank figure of 1.15 billion people living at or below the 1.08\$ poverty line is wrong, as his book finds “the same level of poverty (1.15 billion people), but for a poverty line that is 85 percent higher (exclamation mark)”. According to Bhalla, conventional research on poverty is marked by methodological mistakes, leading “researchers to take another fork and miss another forest” on their quest towards a scientific analysis of poverty. Overall, “the world is becoming more equal”, as “if one believes that there are more than 1 billion people in China and that their incomes are rising at a faster rate than the average”, then “the conclusion of increasing world equality is even more inescapable”. Also, “the average person in a poor country is gaining ground because her income is increasing at a faster rate than the income of the average rich person in a rich country<sup>41</sup>”, thus “there is no room for fiction that the world is becoming more unequal”.<sup>42</sup>

In conclusion, despite aforementioned differing definitions of what constitutes poverty and huge gaps within the orthodox perception of poverty, it appears safe to state that extreme poverty, understood as poverty which ought to affront global society, exists on a tremendous scale, mostly clustered in Sub-Saharan Africa, East and Southeast Asia. No convincing, conclusive evidence regarding promising equality improvements on a global scale or the problem’s lasting solution by economic globalization exist, even though economic development is real and globally widespread for all that have at least reached the first rung of Jeffrey Sachs’ “ladder of modern,

<sup>41</sup> The logic is blatantly obvious if we blindly ignore a widening income gap and a recent increase in the number of those living in extreme poverty due to natural disasters (China Logs Rise in Extreme Poverty, The Epoch Times, 20.07.2004). Following those assumptions of equal growth within exemplary China, we then compare what would happen to the income gap between today’s average Chinese income of 316 US \$ p.a. to a fictive, “rich country” average income of 30,000 US \$ p.a.. Assuming fictions future growth rates of 8% for Chinese incomes and a modest 2% increase for the rich country (steady growth, no economic cycles and no environmental trap), the gap would change from 29.684 US \$ to more than 42.000 US \$ over the course of the next twenty years. The income ratio would have decreased from 1:94 to 1:32. Thus, it would have become more equal, but it would need a total of 56 years of consecutive growth rates along the lines of 8% vs. 2% before the absolute income gap would actually begin to shrink. After approximately 80 years, salaries would level off. But there is hope for the Chinese grandchildren. Sticking to Mr. Bhalla’s mathematics, Chinese salaries would be more than threefold those of the former “rich” country (695.000 p.a. to 217.000 p.a.) after a mere 100 years of steady growth. Today’s Chinese, Vietnamese and Tanzanian should celebrate that “much of the conventional wisdom surrounding the global poverty issue is wrong”, and that growth is sufficient, as globalization leads to “big-time convergence”.

<sup>42</sup> Bhalla, Surjit S.: Imagine there is no country: Poverty, Inequality, and Growth in the Era of Globalization, (Institute for International Economics, Washington D.C., United States of America, 2002), page 201-206

economic development". More than a billion, a sixth of humanity, have not, and especially those in Sub-Saharan Africa have dim chances of doing so at current trends. For Sachs, "the good news is that well more than half of the world, from the Bangladesh garment worker onward, broadly speaking, is experiencing economic progress", but the "greatest tragedy of our time is that one sixth of humanity is not even on the development ladder...they are tantalized by images of affluence from halfway around the world. But they are not able to get a first foothold on the ladder"<sup>43</sup>. The next section will try to explain this phenomenon from his perspective.

## 2.4 "Left behind": the rising tide of globalization and the boatless

Untrammelled globalization, Friedrich von Hayek-sympathizers as Mr. Bhalla appear to boast, is able to solve the remaining problem of extreme poverty clusters on its own. Economic development eventually spreads everywhere. Every corner of the world just has to find its niche and deploy its comparative advantage. Therefore, globalization is a rising tide, lifting all boats. If the rising tide fails to lift one's boat, it is probably one's own fault, as the forces of globalization are sufficiently strong for everyone who behaves accordingly. This, Jeffrey Sachs explains, is a myth, as "the rising tide of globalization has lifted most economies that lie at the water's edge", but still left a sixth without boats utterly behind<sup>44</sup>.

The underlying secrets behind economic development are changes over time in GDP per capita, which I will explain using Sachs' rhetoric before focusing on the justifications of poverty. Sachs uses the example of a typical, extremely poor but self-sufficient third world family to explain this basic framework, albeit simplified. Summarized, the 6-headed household produces four tons of maize per year, which needs consumption for survival. As the maize has a theoretical market value of 150 dollars per ton, the GDP per capita hovers at 100 dollars per annum. Under certain conditions, the GDP per capita can increase, or decrease<sup>45</sup>.

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<sup>43</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: [The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime](#), page 19-20

<sup>44</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: [The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime](#), page 326

<sup>45</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: [The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime](#), page 52

## Changes in GDP per capita: an increase

An increase in GDP per capita requires savings, trade, new technologies or a resource boom. If the family would consume less maize and sell a fraction, capital could be accumulated and invested in new streams of income – livestock for example. The family could also learn that the production of vanilla as a cash crop earns 800 dollars a year, thus enough to buy four tons of maize and have 200 dollars extra. Reliable patterns of trade are required. New technologies, e.g. the planting of nitrogen-fixing trees and the use of improved grains, could lead to increased crop yields – more than enough maize for subsistence plus a little extra income from the sale of the excess. A resource boom would require new farmland, e.g. after the government’s success in controlling the breeding of dangerous black flies in previously unusable areas<sup>46</sup>.

## Changes in GDP per capita: a decrease

A reduction in GDP per capita is the antithesis to those four scenarios of growth. A lack of saving could ruin the household. For example, the family’s plow breaks down and proves impossible to replace, subsequently the crop yield shrinks and death knocks on the door. An absence of trade could result in a situation where the household knows about the prospect of vanilla as a cash crop, but cannot make use of it. Savings become impossible. Technological reversal could set in if the children lose their parents to HIV/Aids<sup>47</sup>. The UN projects that by 2010, Sub-Saharan Africa has become the home of forty million orphans<sup>48</sup>. If the oldest children take charge of the household, they might not have the necessary experience to master proper farming techniques, thus crop yields shrink. Natural disasters can wreck havoc to existing farmland and its soil quality might decline, especially as the “effects of climate change are expected to be greatest in developing countries in terms of loss of life and relative effects on investment and economy”<sup>49</sup>. Last but not least, the population might increase, as the family’s four children each form families of their own, resulting in a dramatic loss of GDP per capita, or more bluntly speaking maize per mouth, if no additional farmland becomes available<sup>50</sup>. By 2025, the

<sup>46</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime, page 52-53

<sup>47</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime, page 54-55

<sup>48</sup> Annan, Kofi A.: United Nations Millennium Report, page 27

<sup>49</sup> Oxfam, Africa: Up in smoke? (Oxfam, Oxford, United Kingdom, June 2005)

[http://www.oxfam.org.uk/what\\_we\\_do/issues/climate\\_change/africa\\_up\\_in\\_smoke.htm](http://www.oxfam.org.uk/what_we_do/issues/climate_change/africa_up_in_smoke.htm) (07.09.2005), page 2

<sup>50</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime, page 55-56

world population is expected to increase to more than eight billion people, up from six billion in 2000, with most of the increase taking place in the poorest countries of the world<sup>51</sup>.

## **The justification of poverty**

The justifications for the poor's en-masse poverty often focus on their own faults, as poverty is most likely perceived as a result of corrupt leadership and retrograde cultures, opposed to modern development<sup>52</sup>. This appears even more so, if we believe that economic development is a game everyone can win, as many neo-liberals do. Jeffrey Sachs focuses on eight major categories of problems holding more than a billion of people "behind", unable to benefit from the rising tide of globalization or reach the first rung of the ladder of development. He states that poor governance is just a tiny fraction of the problem at hand. Development is a game everyone can win, but only if certain obstacles are overcome. No boat. No ladder. Why?

## **Poverty Trap**

The key problem is the trap of poverty itself. As explained by the example of the 6-headed family, circumstances might impoverish the family's members to a degree where any ability to right the ship is lost. If human capital is low, natural capital decreasing and physical capital unobtainable, life becomes a dead end. Without any margin of income above survival, little can be invested for future use<sup>53</sup>.

## **Physical Geography**

Another main problem is physical geography. Just as the United States did not become wealthy on its own, but relied on a naturally rich continent, ample rainfall, immense navigable rivers and thousands of miles of coastline, other countries are not as favoured. Landlocked countries face enormous transportation costs, resulting in economic isolation. Tropic diseases pose another challenge, but Sachs argues that "fortunately, none of these conditions is fatal to economic

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<sup>51</sup> Annan, Kofi A.: United Nations Millennium Report, page 19-21

<sup>52</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime, page 56

<sup>53</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime, page 56-57

developments”, it is just that they “require countries to undertake additional investments that other, more fortunate, countries did not have to make”<sup>54</sup>.

## **Fiscal Trap**

Which often happen to be problematic, as poverty traps and fiscal traps tend to go hand in hand. Impoverished people often yield little taxes, a government might indeed be corrupt or a tremendous load of debt might choke public investments. If poor, often landlocked countries have to make the aforementioned extra investments, but do not have the means to do so, the provision of public goods necessary for growth becomes impossible<sup>55</sup>. Notably, corruption is just one reason among many for “poor governance”, as it is obviously not possible to provide good governance without the necessary financial resources to do so.

## **Governance Failure**

Additionally, governments might fail in creating “an environment conducive to investments by private business”. Rights of property need securing, peace needs maintenance and contracts have to be honoured, otherwise “state failure and economic failure can chase each other in a dizzying and terrifying spiral of instability”<sup>56</sup>.

## **Cultural Barriers**

Equally important, but difficult to address, are cultural barriers biased against economic growth. Jeffrey Sachs particularly criticises patriarchal societies, as “leaving half of the population without economic or political rights and without education” undermines half the population’s potential contribution to economic prosperity<sup>57</sup>. Even worse, the demographic transition from high fertility to low fertility is often blocked, if the uneducated women’s role in life is limited to child-rearing<sup>58</sup>. The impending discussion focuses on the rights of the individual, as articulated in the Universal

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<sup>54</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: [The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime](#), page 58-59

<sup>55</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: [The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime](#), page 59

<sup>56</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: [The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime](#), page 59-60

<sup>57</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: [The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime](#), page 60-61

<sup>58</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: [The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime](#), page 60

Declaration of Human Rights<sup>59</sup>, and the self-asserted rights of communities, which feel threatened by westernized, cultural imperialism. In contemporary world affairs, cultural discussions are often framed in terms of “us” and “them”, especially regarding Christianity and Islam. Sri Lankan politician Vickramabahu Karunaratne questions the freedom the “Coalition of the willing” forcefully tries to import into Iraq, asking whether people are really free in a society based on the free market, as the market itself “needs people as free individuals, free of ancestral bonds, social commitments and cultural prohibitions”<sup>60</sup>. Other traditional cultures, as Confucianism, can be equally obstructive to westernized, economic growth. They requires a “feudal state, and a self-conception that is essentially sociocentric” in addition to the self’s being “a function of a universal hierarchical order”<sup>61</sup>. Jeffrey Sachs does not question the superiority of individuated societies, even though I am tempted to agree with him, as I will explain in chapter 5. Nevertheless, entrenched cultural barriers might indeed prohibit a boat for everyone.

## Lack of innovation

A lack of innovation is equally damning for the impoverished, as Sachs contemplates the “plight of inventors in an impoverished country”. With no or little chances of recouping investments in research and development, the size of the markets prohibits adapted innovations to take place. As the local innovation processes never get started, “the rich move from innovation to greater wealth to further innovation; the poor do not”<sup>62</sup>. Nevertheless, innovations can be imported, but might prove prohibiting expensive. Not surprisingly, the “massive investments in biomedical research in the rich countries, more than \$ 70 billion, largely overlook the challenges of tropical diseases such as malaria”<sup>63</sup>. Foreign investments are crucial for the import and diffusion of knowledge, but geographical disadvantages for landlocked countries add obstacles. Clearly, Sachs believes that the protection of private, intellectual property rights is a prerequisite for the generation of new knowledge, and that the adaptation of first world technologies to third world circumstances does not take place in the light of missing, monetary incentives. Chang & Grabel challenge this assertion on the ground of contrary examples, such as open software programs, and argue that individuals are quite capable of pursuing knowledge for its own sake or public good. Therefore, under certain conditions, patents of increasingly minute pieces of knowledge

<sup>59</sup> United Nations: Universal Declaration of Human Rights (United Nations, New York, United States of America, 1948), <http://www.un.org/Overview/rights.html>

<sup>60</sup> Karunaratne Vickramabahu: Postmodernism, Liberal Democracy and the War in Iraq (Centre for Islamic Studies, Colombo, Sri Lanka, 25.04.2003), <http://socialism.com/currents/postmodernism.html> (07.09.2005)

<sup>61</sup> Morris, Brian: Anthropology of the Self: The Individual in Cultural Perspective (Pluto Press, London, United Kingdom, 1994), page 113-117

<sup>62</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime, page 62

<sup>63</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime, page 63

might slow down the pace of development due to administrative and financial reasons, eventually turning the third world into nothing but users, as TRIPS<sup>64</sup> “reduce the opportunities for incremental innovation in developing countries”<sup>65</sup>. In 2000, the world’s low-income countries had 37% of the world’s population, 11% of world GDP and accounted for less than 1% of all U.S.-registered patents<sup>66</sup>.

## Demographic trap

The demographic trap often hinders economic development. Even though half of the world, including the entire rich world, is at or near a replacement rate of fertility, the “poorest of the poor countries, by contrast, are struck with fertility rates of five or more”<sup>67</sup>. Populations double each generation. Naturally, the demographic trap results in a poverty trap, as impoverished families choose to have lots of children. As many children die, parents overcompensate in a statistical sense<sup>68</sup>. Understandable choices have disastrous consequences, as most families cannot invest equally into their children. Farm sizes and environmental resources degrade.

## Geopolitics

Geopolitics are another stumbling-stone towards economic development, as “it takes two to trade”. Trade barriers erected by foreign countries can impede a poor country’s economic development. In general, many additional factors to trade may affect a country’s development and are manipulable from abroad. “Punishment was severe – for his subjects. The tyrant however, escaped unscathed and was further strengthened by the sanctions regime then imposed by his former friends”, Noam Chomsky comments the sanctions aimed at Iraq’s former Baath party regime<sup>69</sup>. Even though unmentioned in Jeffrey Sachs “top-eight”, distorted trade relations between potential trading partners affect economic growth severely. Typical examples are the

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<sup>64</sup> Agreement on trade-related aspects of intellectual property rights. International WTO treaty setting down minimum standards for most forms of intellectual property, especially copyrights. Heavily criticised by developing countries and NGOs “on the basis that the WTO system in general and the TRIPs system in particular encapsulates all that is socially, politically and economically unjust about globalisation“ [Agreement on trade-related aspects of intellectual property rights](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Agreement_on_trade-related_aspects_of_intellectual_property_rights). (Wikipedia: The Free Encyclopaedia, Wikimedia Foundation Inc.), <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/TRIPS> (07.09.2005)

<sup>65</sup> Chang, Ha-Joon and Grabel, Ilene: [Reclaiming Development: An alternative economic policy manual](#) (Zed Books, London & New York, 2004), page 92-105

<sup>66</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: [The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime](#), page 62

<sup>67</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: [The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime](#), page 64

<sup>68</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: [The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime](#), page 324

<sup>69</sup> Chomsky, Noam: [Hegemony or Survival: America’s quest for global dominance](#) (Allen & Unwin, Crows Nest, Australia, 2004), page 16-17

first world's agricultural subsidies, which "inflict enormous damage on producers in developing countries"<sup>70</sup>.

### **No boat? No ladder? Why?**

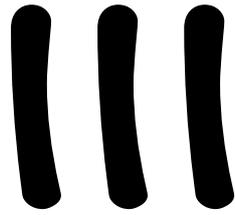
In conclusion, these eight major categories of problems contribute to the plight of the world's poor and hamper any advancement of the world's extreme poor. Noticeably, the common perception of self-inflicted poverty by insufficient governance receives little attention, as Jeffrey Sachs tends to believe that "higher incomes leads to improved governance", and not the other way around, thus "Africa's governance is poor because Africa is poor"<sup>71</sup>. Certain countries might be held back by few categories, others by most, some by all. If extreme poverty is to be ended, "a good diagnosis is crucial"<sup>72</sup>.

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<sup>70</sup> Oxfam: [Stop the Dumping](http://www.oxfam.org/eng/pdfs/pp020111_Stop_the_Dumping.pdf), Briefing Paper 31 (Oxfam International, Oxford, United Kingdom, 2002), [www.oxfam.org/eng/pdfs/pp020111\\_Stop\\_the\\_Dumping.pdf](http://www.oxfam.org/eng/pdfs/pp020111_Stop_the_Dumping.pdf) (07.09.2005)

<sup>71</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: [The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime](#), page 312

<sup>72</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: [The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime](#), page 56



# Jeffrey's "End of poverty"

*"All of us who work toward a brighter future are intellectually indebted to the awe-inspiring geniuses of the Enlightenment, who first glimpsed the prospect of conscious social actions to improve human well-being on a global scale"<sup>73</sup>*

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<sup>73</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime, page 347-348

### 3 Jeffrey's end of poverty

*"Hunger, disease, the waste of lives that is extreme poverty are an affront to us all. To Jeff it's a difficult but solvable equation...he's angry...The plan Jeff lays out is not only his idea of a critical path to accomplish the 2015 Millennium Development Goal of cutting poverty by half...It's a handbook on how we could finish out the job."*<sup>74</sup>

*"We can banish extreme poverty in our generation – yet 8 million people die each year because they are too poor to survive. The tragedy is that with a little help, they could even thrive. In a bold new book, Jeffrey D. Sachs shows how we can make it happen."*<sup>75</sup>

*"President Bush's favourite philosopher Jesus Christ once declared, "The poor we will always have with us." Jeffrey Sachs is a man on a mission to prove him wrong."*<sup>76</sup>

*The end of poverty*, Jeffrey D. Sachs "handbook" on the end of poverty, albeit it's solely focus on ending extreme poverty, is often praised as powerful, visionary or innovative. Its egalitarian attitude towards life only proceeds to the lowest rung of the development ladder, it is therefore misleading if U2's Bono praises it as fostering the "idea of equality"<sup>77</sup>. Of course, in a world where millions die because they are too poor to live, this would be quite an accomplishment and certainly relatively equalizing in the sense of a basic right to live, but the global responsibility of egalitarianism stops at the first rung. After the poor have been led to the first rung on the development ladder, after they have been handed their first boat, after the preconditions of basic infrastructure and human capital have been erected, "markets are powerful engines of development"<sup>78</sup>, Sachs insists. He underscores this point by stating that "the goal is to end extreme poverty, not to end all poverty, and still less to equalize world incomes or to close the gap between the rich and the poor"<sup>79</sup>. A strong believer of benevolent neo-liberalism, he, with a vengeance, promotes the inclusion of all in a game everyone can win<sup>80</sup> by strongly advocating development aid. The following chapters ought to reveal, comment and critique Sachs' proposal for a global compact to end (extreme) poverty, which focuses on the achievement of the United

<sup>74</sup> Bono, Foreword; in Sachs, Jeffrey D.: The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime, page XVII

<sup>75</sup> Time Magazine: The End of Poverty, (Time Magazine, Time Inc., March 14 20005), page 44

<sup>76</sup> Cole, Robert: The Evolution of Jeffrey Sachs, (AlterNet, San Francisco, CA, 18.05.2005), (08.09.2005)

<sup>77</sup> Bono, Foreword; in Sachs, Jeffrey D.: The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime, page XVI

<sup>78</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime, page 3

<sup>79</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime, page 289

<sup>80</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime, page 31

Nations Millennium Development Project's goals. Firstly though, his new proposals for development ought to be embedded within the wider context of past development struggles. Without paying attention to the historic context of Mr. Sachs's "global compact" to end poverty, the global acceptance of what is nowadays perceived as "good governance" appears natural, but it has to be kept in mind how such a world came about.

### 3.1 A short history of modern development

Since the early days of colonialism, predominating projects of national development have been Western. At first, Europeans tried to "civilize" their colonies<sup>81</sup>. During the era of decolonization, resistance on the part of the formerly subjugated and a worldwide liberatory upsurge led to the making of a new world, with 105 new states joining the ranks of the United Nations between 1945 and 1981<sup>82</sup>. Newfound political independence triggered off the development era, with the European experience serving as the obvious model form<sup>83</sup>. The subdivision of the world into three geopolitical segments occurred. The capitalist Western (First World) and the communist Soviet (Second World) blocks coexisted with the rising Third World; mostly previously European owned "poor" countries inhabited by non-Europeans.<sup>84</sup> The modern concept of underdevelopment began in 1949, when US President Truman suggested a new paradigm for the postwar era, namely the division of humanity's sphere into the "developed" and "underdeveloped" regions, which implied some kind of universal, linear path of development.

Based on this new paradigm, development strategies evolved. An underlying assumption was that "no matter how diverse was the cultural heritage of Third World nations, the Western experience became the universal model for their development" and "conditions in the Third World were but early stages on a universal path to modern society."<sup>85</sup> In addition, the "linking of human development to national economic growth...imposed an essentially economic understanding of

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<sup>81</sup> As an example of western perception of indigenous people, a quote by the American travel-writer Poultney Bigelow in the context of a visit to South Africa in 1900 shall suffice, as he refers to the state of the Blacks as "savages", or compares their work ethic with that of children, which need motivation by "the leadership of a cheery white man who knows how to rouse (their, the negros) vanity"; Bigelow, Poultney: White Man's Africa, (London and New York, Harper & Brothers, 1900), p. 124 & 225

<sup>82</sup> McMichael, Philipp: Development and Social Change: A Global Perspective, 14-17

<sup>83</sup> McMichael, Philipp: Development and Social Change: A Global Perspective, page 18

<sup>84</sup> McMichael, Philipp: Development and Social Change: A Global Perspective, page 21

<sup>85</sup> McMichael, Philipp: Development and Social Change: A Global Perspective, page 23-24

social life”<sup>86</sup>, and assumptions of development in terms of an income of \$ 1,000 per capita or “a car in four” crept in.<sup>87</sup>

The 60s and 70s were years of significant early gains for much of the Third World. Generally, private ownership of land, resources, and enterprises was the rule, but government intervention in economic life was, by western standards, pervasive. The perception of a global imbalance between the North and South gave rise to the idea of increased Southern cooperation<sup>88</sup>, united behind a vision formulate by Raul Prebisch, an Argentine economist, who, from his base at the United Economic Commission for Latin America, developed a theory concerning the worsening terms of trade between the world’s “haves” and “have-nots”<sup>89</sup>.

The Singer-Prebisch theory, better known as “dependency theory”, implied that the structure of the world market itself is responsible for the existence of inequalities in the world system, as, over time, more of the South’s raw materials and agricultural products are needed to purchase fewer Northern manufactured products. Therefore, instead of following the Ricardian concept of comparative advantages, which would determine the South’s role as the provider of such primary commodities, developing countries should instead promote the development of manufacturing industries, for example by a, from a Ricardian point of view, “unefficient” policy of import substitution industrialisation<sup>90</sup>.

The prevailing system of “bloodless but inexorable exploitation”<sup>91</sup> gave birth to Third World Organizations such as the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) or the Group of 77, a loose coalition of developing nations designed to promote collective interests and create a joint negotiating capacity within the United Nations<sup>92</sup>. It would be wrong to assume the Group of 77 to be a homogenous group. Nationalistic motives were the cornerstone of this unlikely union of socialists, capitalists and fascists. They were sub-divided into groups such as “OPEC, the Most Seriously Affected, the Least Developed, the Newly Industrialized Countries, the

<sup>86</sup> McMichael, Philipp: *Development and Social Change: A Global Perspective*, page 25

<sup>87</sup> McMichael, Philipp: *Development and Social Change: A Global Perspective*, page 27

<sup>88</sup> Bello, Walden: *Dark Victory: The United States and Global Poverty*, (Food First Books, Chicago, United States of America, 1994), page 7-9

<sup>89</sup> Bello, Walden: *The Iron Cage: The WTO, The Bretton Woods Institutions, and the South*, in Walden Bellow, *The Future in the Balance, Essays on Globalization and Resistance*, (University of the Philippines Press, Quezon City, Philippines, May 2001), page 2-3

<sup>90</sup> *Singer-Prebisch Thesis*, (Wikipedia: The Free Encyclopaedia, Wikimedia Foundation Inc.), [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Singer-Prebisch\\_Thesis](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Singer-Prebisch_Thesis) (08.09.2005)

<sup>91</sup> Bello, Walden: *The Iron Cage: The WTO, The Bretton Woods Institutions, and the South*, page 3

<sup>92</sup> *Group of 77*, (Wikipedia: The Free Encyclopaedia, Wikimedia Foundation Inc.), [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Group\\_of\\_77](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Group_of_77), (08.09.2005)

Landlocked, and so on...”, all not defined by any common economic, social or ideological category. However, all were united by the experience of being “ashamed to admit (their status as dependencies),...semi-colonies at best – not sovereign states”, as Julius K. Nyerere, Tanzania’s president, pointed out in 1979<sup>93</sup>. Despite the establishment of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) in 1964, aimed at the maximisation of trade, investment and development opportunities of developing countries in order to assist their integration efforts into the world economy, no fundamental change was achieved.<sup>94</sup>

Instead, the First World’s response to the muscle-flexing of Group 77-subdivision such as the OPEC, most notably in the two oil shocks of the 70s, led to a fear of a unified Southern bloc controlling most strategic commodities<sup>95</sup>. Advocates of Walden Bello’s “iron cage” analogy, namely the subsequent imprisonment of Southern development by Northern institutions such as the IMF, World Bank and World Trade Organization, insist that the process of independent, Southern development was deliberately halted by the scared North, once the golden opportunity of the global debt crisis of the early 80s unfolded.

In this context, the instruments chosen to “roll back” the South were the aforementioned World Bank and IMF, which were used as “disciplinary mechanisms”<sup>96</sup> by the means of structural adjustments.

The underlying logic is simple. By reducing government’s control over their economies and prioritizing liberal trade practices, Southern “strike options”, as exercised by the OPEC, could be eliminated, while at the same time First World corporations were granted access to new markets. Subsequently, Bello argues that the Newly Industrialized Countries, the North’s former ideological frontline weapons of the Cold War era, the “Asian Tigers”, were successfully resubordinated during the Asian financial crisis in 1997<sup>97</sup>.

The hegemonic justification for the worldwide use of structural adjustment programs differs. Both explanations, the often voiced Southern’s charge against the deliberative iron-cage

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<sup>93</sup> Nyerere, Julius K.: Unity for a New International Economic Order, (Address to the Ministerial Conference of the Group of 77, Arusha, Tanzania, 12.02.1979), <http://www.southcentre.org/info/southbulletin/bulletin49-50/bulletin49-50-03.htm> (08.09.2005)

<sup>94</sup> UNCTAD, (Wikipedia: The Free Encyclopaedia, Wikimedia Foundation Inc.), [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United\\_Nations\\_Conference\\_on\\_Trade\\_and\\_Development](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_Nations_Conference_on_Trade_and_Development) (08.09.2005)

<sup>95</sup> Bello, Walden: The Iron Cage: The WTO, The Bretton Woods Institutions, and the South, page 8

<sup>96</sup> Bello, Walden: The Iron Cage: The WTO, The Bretton Woods Institutions, and the South, page 10

<sup>97</sup> Bello, Walden: The Iron Cage: The WTO, The Bretton Woods Institutions, and the South, page 14

confinement by the North or the Northern explanation of securing mankind's wellbeing, make sense. I shall not attempt to lean either side. Based on the interwar years between the World Wars, the U.S. developed a concept of global security through economic security. Cordell Hull, U.S. Secretary of State from 1933 to 1944, believed that the fundamental causes of the two world wars lay in trade warfare and economic discrimination<sup>98</sup>. Fifty years later, Thomas Friedman still argued in *The Lexus and the Olive Tree* (1999) that no two countries with McDonald's stores had ever gone to war, because "people would rather buy hamburgers than take up arms"<sup>99</sup>.

Decades of structural adjustment policies proved frustratingly unsuccessful. "Today's development economics is like eighteenth-century medicine...the main IMF prescription has been budgetary belt tightening for patients much too poor to own belts"<sup>100</sup>, as the IMF and World Bank "presumed that each episode of fever is just like the others", and wrongfully focused on a very narrow range of issues to be universally addressed, Sachs observes.<sup>101</sup> In 2000, a World Bank study discovered that "Structural adjustment, as measured by the number of adjustment loans from the IMF and World Bank, reduces the growth elasticity of poverty reduction... (there is) no evidence for a direct effect of structural adjustment on growth. The poor benefit less from output expansion in countries with many adjustment loans than in countries with few adjustment loans", but in part the poor have to blame themselves, as the author "speculate(s) that the poor may be ill-placed to take advantage of new opportunities created by structural adjustment reforms"<sup>102</sup>. In 2003, the IMF issued a paper revealing that globalization may actually increase the risk of financial crisis in the developing world<sup>103</sup>, a clear signal that the universal neo-liberal medicine of structural adjustment might not always prove beneficial. To quote from the report's summary, "The principal conclusions that emerge from the analysis are sobering"<sup>104</sup>. Basically, the IMF "sounded more like its critics when making this admission"<sup>105</sup>. The World Bank's "Annual Report on Development Effectiveness, 2000" showed that 28 countries treated by the Bank

<sup>98</sup> Bretton Woods System, (Wikipedia: The Free Encyclopaedia, Wikimedia Foundation Inc.), [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bretton\\_Woods\\_system](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bretton_Woods_system) (09.09.2005)

<sup>99</sup> Veseth, Michael: Globaloney: Unraveling the Myths of Globalization, (Rowman & Littlefield Publishers Inc., Lanham, United States of America, 2005), page 26-27; it needs mentioning that NATO's intervention and bombing during the Kosovo war faulted the theory

<sup>100</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime, page 74

<sup>101</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime, page 79

<sup>102</sup> Easterley, William: The effect of IMF and World Bank programs on poverty, (World Bank, 31.10.2000), <http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/staffp/2000/00-00/e.pdf> (09.09.2005)

<sup>103</sup> Shah, Anup: Structural Adjustment: A Major Cause of Poverty, (Global Issues That Affect Everyone, 16.07.2003), <http://www.globalissues.org/TradeRelated/SAP.asp#MaintainingDependencyandPoverty>, (09.09.2005)

<sup>104</sup> Easterley, William: The effect of IMF and World Bank programs on poverty

<sup>105</sup> Shah, Anup: Structural Adjustment: A Major Cause of Poverty

deteriorated between 1981 and 1997, an effect the World Development Movement attributed to Structural Adjustment Programs<sup>106</sup>.

Consequently, the IMF and World Bank abandoned the path of “one size fits all” structural adjustment programs in 1999, introducing Poverty Reduction Growth Facilities (PRGF) and their Policy Framework to Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSP) instead. Trying to lessen accusations of imperialism, these poverty reduction strategies are to be developed by the recipient of aid, albeit in cooperation with the IMF and World Bank. They are also a move away from a reductionist approach to economic policymaking, as the emphasis is explicitly placed on poverty reduction and, to a limited degree, wider development priorities<sup>107</sup>. Following this path, poor countries are urged to develop independent strategies towards poverty reduction, but critics of the often “ingenious”<sup>108</sup> strategies claim that ownership of the strategies is weakened by the continued influence of the International Monetary Fund and World Bank. Furthermore, critics claim that the policy content of these strategies does not constitute a major change from the past<sup>109</sup>. Whereas in the past, the IMF’s and World Bank’s “patients” were told what to do, they have now been mentally transformed into willing neo-liberals by the past structural adjustment regimes and know what to want in order to secure the necessary funding. It is, as Tan points out, “the poverty of amnesia” that gives the outward appearance of ownership towards contemporary poverty reduction strategies, as the poor countries realization of what changes are needed are the “legacy of structural adjustment”<sup>110</sup>.

Taking into account this short history of modern development, one can conclude that the general willingness of the South to participate in neo-liberal development projects is actively cultured by the North. The recent, indigenous “knowledge” of “best-practice”-policies is a construct of past, externally enforced policies. The cooption of the South is a far cry from the New International Economic Order the Third World aspired to in the 1970s, when it became blatantly obvious that legal independence did not lead towards economic freedom<sup>111</sup>. Without these processes, no matter the differing, widely contested, underlying assumptions regarding the world’s shapers’

<sup>106</sup> Abugre, Charles: Still sapping the poor : A critique of IMF poverty reduction strategies, (World Development Movement, London, United Kingdom, June 2000,  
<http://www.wdm.org.uk/campaigns/cambriefs/debt/PRSPcrit.htm> (09.09.2005)

<sup>107</sup> Tan, Celine: The Poverty of Amnesia: PRSPs in the Legacy of Structural Adjustment (School of Law, University of Warwick, United Kingdom, April 2005), [www.ceu.hu/cps/eve/eve\\_wbank\\_tan.pdf](http://www.ceu.hu/cps/eve/eve_wbank_tan.pdf) (09.09.2005)

<sup>108</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime, page 270

<sup>109</sup> World Development Movement: Debt-Poverty Reduction Paper, A debt policy report by the World Development Movement, (World Development Movement, London, United Kingdom, April 2001),  
<http://www.wdm.org.uk/campaigns/cambriefs/debt/PRSProllbackstate.htm> (09.09.2005)

<sup>110</sup> Tan, Celine: The Poverty of Amnesia: PRSPs in the Legacy of Structural Adjustment

<sup>111</sup> Nyerere, Julius K.: Unity for a New International Economic Order

motives, it has to be kept in mind that Jeffrey Sachs's roadmap to a world without extreme poverty is only possible due to the South's transformation to a willing participant in a global quest for economic growth and prosperity.

## 3.2 Clinical economics

As past, universal policy prescriptions have performed inadequately regarding the prospects of increased economic prosperity for the world's poor, Jeffrey Sachs proposes a new method for development economics: "clinical economics". He could not have chosen a better term to highlight the unnaturalness of his proposal, as "good development economics" are full of similarities to "good clinical medicine". Development ought to "take on some key lessons of modern medicine, both in the development of the underlying science and in the systematization of clinical practice"<sup>112</sup>. It has to be kept in mind that alternative medical approaches have been labelled "alternative" within the sphere of modern, western medicine, even though "alternative is a misnomer, as these indigenous systems were mainstream and were in vogue for centuries in some countries and to this day are widely practiced"<sup>113</sup>.

Nevertheless, the following key-concepts differentiate Mr. Sachs' proposals from past IMF and World Bank prescriptions. Quite fittingly, Sach's attitude in his crusade against former and current, insufficiently rigorous<sup>114</sup>, development programs has been described as "Me Tarzan. Me save Africa"<sup>115</sup>.

First of all, just as "the human body is a complex system", the same is equally true for "sick" nation-states. For such "patients", "one failure can lead to a cascade of additional failures", thus a limited approach along the lines of few key issues, as in past development policies, based on the assumption that neo-liberal reforms and policy changes will suffice to deliver, is inherently insufficient<sup>116</sup>. Second of all, "complexity requires a differential diagnosis", and whereas past

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<sup>112</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: *The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime*, page 75

<sup>113</sup> Nanduri: *Comparison with other forms of medicine* (Dr. Nanduri, Online Homeopathic Clinic), <http://www.drnanduri.com/comparisonmedicine.html> (09.09.2005)

<sup>114</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: *The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime*, page 270

<sup>115</sup> Barnett, Anthony: *Me Tarzan. Me Save Africa: Jeffrey Sachs, the G8 and poverty* (Open Democracy: Free thinking for the world, London, United Kingdom, 04.07.2005), [www.opendemocracy.net/globalization-G8/poverty\\_2645.jsp](http://www.opendemocracy.net/globalization-G8/poverty_2645.jsp), 14.09.2005

<sup>116</sup> The message appears to fall on deaf ears, as John A. Simon, senior director for development at the US National Security Council, used the September 2005 UN Summit for stating that, in regard to development strategies, "If we do the right things from a policy perspective, the results will speak for themselves". The US might not be solely responsible for international development strategies, but has the single-largest voting power

policies were often confined to symptomatic treatments, the ownership of new poverty reduction strategies, combined with the knowledge of western institutions, is far more capable of identifying specific causes of symptoms<sup>117</sup>. Thirdly, “all medicine is family medicine”, therefore the social setting of a problem needs analyzing. Are a countries’ symptoms related to an accident or continuous mistreatment by the surrounding or international community? As an example, “it is not enough to tell Ghana to get its act together if Ghana faces trade barriers in international markets that prevent it from selling its goods and services to world markets”<sup>118</sup>. Fourthly, “monitoring and evaluation are essential” for successful treatment, as even a careful initial diagnosis can prove wrong, not revealing underlying reasons for the “illness”. In the past, the IMF and World Bank judged countries in regard of policy inputs, not outputs. “The result is a descent into formalistic debates on whether or not a particular policy has been carried out or not, not on whether the policy was the right one in the first place”. Fifthly, “medicine is a profession”, requiring “strong norms, ethics, and codes of conduct”. The “doctor has a unique relationship with a patient, one that gives the doctor an entry into the most private condition of an individual and family”. Therefore, “a doctor literally has life and death sway”, and “must offer judgements in the interests of the patient, not for personal (economic) gain”. If a doctor, such as Dr. Sachs, is allowed to go to work, chances of growth’s achievement increases in comparison to past, “simplistic, even simpleminded”, IMF or World Bank prescriptions are likely, but the newfound ownership of poverty reduction strategies becomes a charade. Not surprisingly, Sachs observes “some truths in the structural adjustment agenda”, as “too many countries had chosen closed trading systems”<sup>119</sup>.

Clinical economics need application to all significant major categories of problems, as described more thoroughly in chapter 2.4. Only with a “thorough differential diagnosis”, an “appropriate treatment regimen” can follow. In short summary and with key examples, the main fields of clinical economics’ application are the extent of extreme poverty (poverty maps, key risks), the economic policy framework (trade policy, trade barriers, incentives for domestic and foreign investors, human capital), the fiscal framework (levels of budget spending and revenues, share of spending in various categories, debt struggles), the physical geography and human ecology (transporting conditions, proximity to air-/seaports, state of agronomic conditions, state of ecosystems, diseases), the patterns of governance (beyond the budget, corruption, form of

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in IMF and World Bank decisions. Dugger, Celia W.: U.N. vs. Poverty: Seeking a Focus, Quarrelling over Vision (New York Times, New York, United States of America, 14.09.2005),

<http://www.nytimes.com/2005/09/14/international/14poverty.html?th&emc=th> (14.09.2005)

<sup>117</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime, page 76-77

<sup>118</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime, page 79-80

<sup>119</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime, page 77-81

government, accessibility of public services), the cultural barriers (classes, religions or castes, gender-equality, diaspora) and geopolitics (security and economic relations with rest of world, cross-border threats, trade barriers or sanctions).<sup>120</sup>

### 3.3 The Millennium Development Goals

In September 2000, “the largest gathering of world leaders in history”<sup>121</sup> took place at the United Nation’s Millennium Assembly. Promisingly, the world leaders convincingly, yet not for the first time, expressed a shared determination to end some of mankind’s most challenging problems, which were outlined in Kofi Annan’s *We the Peoples: The Role of the United Nations in the 21st century*. Based on Annan’s document, the Millennium Declaration evolved, including the eight Millennium Development Goals. Early optimism arose, but was swiftly swept aside by 9/11. Sachs observes that “it would be a huge mistake to direct all our energies, efforts, resources, and lives to the fight against terrorism while leaving vast and even greater challenges aside, as ten thousand unnecessary deaths could be prevented – daily”<sup>122</sup>. For Sachs, development and the war on terror go hand in hand, as extreme poverty and degrading human conditions are the seeds of even more of what has been labelled “terrorism” since 9/11<sup>123</sup>. Therefore, the post-9/11-world must have been a frustrating one for Sachs, as the 2<sup>nd</sup> track of the “war on terror”, the “war on poverty”, has been widely neglected. Sachs also correctly predicted that the US invasion of Iraq, a political “misadventure”<sup>124</sup>, would backfire and put the positive momentum of development programs on hold. Jeffrey Sachs does not pretend to know what will happen, but wants “to help shape the future”<sup>125</sup>, based on the “bold set of commitments that is halfway to that target (the end of extreme poverty): the Millennium Development Goals”<sup>126</sup>. This should not come as a surprise, as Mr. Sachs serves as special advisor to UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, but it ought to be clarified that his handbook for ending poverty is based upon the following eight

<sup>120</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: [The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime](#), page 83-88

<sup>121</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: [The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime](#), page 210

<sup>122</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: [The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime](#), page 215

<sup>123</sup> Terrorism, “as we know and fear it“, is socially constructed. Too often, the term appears interwoven with Islam, fully neglecting what I personally perceive of equal nature: the rich world’s constant tolerance of extreme poverty and severe living conditions for those unfortunately not born within more privileged, albeit often historically quite arbitrary, nation-states, and the relatively careless attitude of the world’s rich towards climate degradation. Additionally, as Noam Chomsky argues, it appears irrefutable that the world distinguishes between “terrorism” and “counterterrorism”, despite virtually exchangeable definitions, and states’, sometimes proactive, “counterterrorism” has a long and widely accepted history, even though recent “counterterrorism”, as the US invasion of Iraq, has been widely criticised. Chomsky, Noam: [Hegemony or survival: America’s quest for global dominance](#), page 188-191

<sup>124</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: [The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime](#), page 221

<sup>125</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: [The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime](#), page 2

<sup>126</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: [The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime](#), page 25

Millennium Development Goals, agreed upon by the signature of all 191 UN member states in September 2000<sup>127</sup>. For Sachs, the achievement of these goals depends on the successful application of “clinical economics” and the following formulation of MDG-based, “nationally owned” poverty reduction strategies.

**Table 2: The Millennium Development Goals<sup>128</sup>**

1.	Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger	Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people whose income is less than one dollar a day.
		Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people who suffer from hunger.
2.	Achieve universal primary education	Ensure that by 2015 children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling.
3.	Promote gender equality and empower women	Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education, preferably by 2005, and to all levels of education no later than 2015.
4.	Reduce child mortality	Reduce by two thirds, between 1990 and 2015, the under-five mortality rate.
5.	Improve maternal health	Reduce by three quarters, between 1990 and 2015, the maternal mortality rate.
6.	Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases	Have halted by 2015 and begun to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS
		Have halted by 2015 and begun to reverse the incidence of malaria and other major diseases.
7.	Ensure environmental stability	Integrate the principle of sustainable development into country policies and programs and reverse the loss of environmental resources.
		Halve by 2015 the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation.
		By 2020 to have achieved a significant improvement in lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers

<sup>127</sup> [Millennium Development Goals](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/UN_Millennium_Development_Goals), (Wikipedia: The Free Encyclopaedia, Wikimedia Foundation Inc.), [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/UN\\_Millennium\\_Development\\_Goals](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/UN_Millennium_Development_Goals) (10.09.2005)

<sup>128</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: [The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime](#), page 211-213

8.	Develop a global partnership for development	Develop further an open, rule-based, predictable, non-discriminatory trading and financial system. Includes a commitment to good governance, development, and poverty reduction – both nationally and internationally.
		Address the specific needs of the least developed countries. This includes: tariff- and quota-free access for least developed countries' exports; an enhanced program of debt relief for HIPC and cancellation of official bilateral debt; and more generous ODA for countries committed to poverty reduction.
		Address the special needs of landlocked countries and small island developing states.
		Deal comprehensively with the debt problem of developing countries through national and international measures in order to make debt sustainable in the long term.
		In cooperation with developing countries, develop and implement strategies for decent and productive work for youth.
		In cooperation with pharmaceutical companies, provide access to affordable, essential drugs in developing countries.
		In cooperation with the private sector, make available the benefits of new technologies, especially information and communication.

For critics of neo-liberalism, the Millennium Development Declaration and its goals, achievable through poverty reduction strategies requiring IMF and World Bank consent, are just more nails in the coffin of national independence. For them, it should be another chapter of the North's "Dark Victory", including the "rollback of the South" and the North's "war on the homefront"<sup>129</sup>, as it further enshrines globalization along the lines of neo-liberalism in the field of development. Even though all humanitarian development goals, which are just a stepping stone towards Jeffrey Sachs' vision of the eradication of extreme poverty by 2025 and the fostering of all nation's ability to "make reliable progress up the ladder of economic development"<sup>130</sup>, are

<sup>129</sup> Capitalism vs. the domestic workforce, as „the point of capitalism is not to provide decent jobs at decent wages but to make as large a profit as possible“, Bello, Walden: Dark Victory: The United States and Global Poverty, page x-xi

<sup>130</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime, page 25

universally desirable, they nevertheless shape the world along a Northern, elitist vision. At the end of the day, it is the Northern's ladder that ought to be climbed.

### **3.4 Indigenous neo-liberalism: For God's sake, please stop the aid!**

“For god's sake, please stop the aid”, James Shikwati, an Kenyan economic expert, recently proclaimed in an interview with the German magazine *Der Spiegel*, as the poor ought to help themselves. His vision of an independent, but highly market-oriented Africa, is just as neo-liberal as Jeffrey Sachs' vision of global prosperity, but with a different agenda, freed of the shackles of sustainability “white NGOs” demand, as the wealth to afford sustainability has not been created yet<sup>131</sup>. By relying on UN institutions such as the United Nations Food Program, whose functionaries would face unemployment if the world were ever be freed from starvation, African countries in crisis reflexively cry out for help in times of stress, thus neglect the development of strong intra-African trade relations. By neglecting aid, “national borders – drawn by Europeans...(would become) more permeable”, laws favouring market economy would be easier to institute and infrastructure would improve independently, based on mere necessity. Shikwati fails to see any benefit in what Sachs or the Millennium Development Goals proclaims, or aid in general. “Why do we get these mountains of clothes?”, he exemplifies in regard to clothes donations, as “no one is freezing here...instead, our tailors lose their livelihoods”, just as Africa's farmers cannot compete with donated exports. Aid, even if it were increased to the scale of an African Marshall plan, is doomed to fail, as Africa “must take the first steps into modernity on its own”, before such aid could ever prove beneficial. Mentality has to change. Numerous aid organizations also hamper African entrepreneurship, as “when an aid organization needs a driver, dozens apply...so we end up with some African biochemist driving an aid worker around, distributing European food”. Therefore, “if (the Germans, or Sachs; the first world in general) they really want to fight poverty, they should completely halt development aid and give Africa the opportunity to ensure its own survival. Currently, Africa is like a child that immediately cries for its babysitters when something goes wrong.”<sup>132</sup>

The point to be made is that it would be an oversimplification to understand Jeffrey Sachs' and

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<sup>131</sup> Shikwati, James: *I Do Not Need White NGOs To Speak For Me* (Inter Region Economic Network, Kenya, 03.09.2002), <http://www.aworldconnected.org/article.php/235.html> (03.10.2005)

<sup>132</sup> Thielke, Thilo: *For God's Sake, Please Stop the Aid: Interview with James Shikwati*, (Der Spiegel, Hamburg, Germany, 27/05, 04.07.2005), <http://service.spiegel.de/cache/international/spiegel/0.1518.363663.00.html> (10.09.2005)

the UN's concept to end poverty as correlating to contemporary, neo-liberal development doctrines. Instead, it is one of many, but not considerable *the* neo-liberal development doctrine per se.. Critics along the lines of Walden Bello's "iron cage" analogy would quickly conclude that such radically, neo-liberal voices are nothing but the offsprings of former IMF and World Bank intrusions, but matter of factly, outspoken voices as Shikwati's exhibit that it is no longer sufficient for anti-globalization movements to focus solely on the North, but also to address cultural changes within the South. Shikwati does not want to be handed a boat to enjoy the rising tide of globalization – he wants to be free to construct his own vessel. Whereas Sachs states that "when the preconditions of basic infrastructure and human capital are in place, markets are powerful engines of development"<sup>133</sup>, Shikwati states that the mere necessity to develop such infrastructures independently in the face of crisis will propel African development forward, freed from arbitrarily created nation-states, Sachs-like blueprints, extensive governments and driven by the force of rational markets.

### 3.5 Does aid work?

The question whether the world's poor should be given a boat, or left completely alone in order to figure out how to construct one, underlies Sachs' and Shikwati's unequal paths towards universal prosperity in a globalized, neo-liberal world. For Shikwati, it is obvious that, faced with the perilous decision to "sink and die" or "get a raft afloat", the poorest would naturally figure out how to do so. An absolute answer to the question whether aid works or not lies beyond the scope of this paper, but Jeffrey Sachs' opinion ought to be clarified. Does Sachs belief that aid works?

For Sachs, aid has become a shadow play along the lines of the old Soviet workers' joke: "We pretend to work, and you pretend to pay us"<sup>134</sup>. While Shikwati argues that no aid is the best aid, renowned professor of economics William Easterley observes huge problems and a tremendous lack of accountability in the area of orchestrated development in addition to huge financial missteps, as "from 1960 to 2003, we spent \$ 568 billion (in today's dollars) to end poverty in Africa. Yet these efforts still did not lift Africa from misery and stagnation" – strong words if

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<sup>133</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime, page 3

<sup>134</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime, page 267

published as an op-ed contribution in the New York Times<sup>135</sup>. Such numbers, frequently used in public discussions, are powerful, yet without inherent explanatory power, as the two-year-old US led war in Iraq currently cost 9 billion dollars per month and is approaching an interim price tag of 200 billion by October 2005<sup>136</sup>. Even such a comparison does not carry much meaning, but indicates that Sachs' conclusion that "there has in fact been so little aid to Africa"<sup>137</sup> might be right on the mark. Sachs' development framework, called the "Millennium Development Goals-Based Poverty Reduction Strategy", needs to be freed from "the chronic lack of donor financing"<sup>138</sup>. Even though \$ 568 billion appears impressive, Sachs calculates that for 2006 alone, \$ 135 billion are needed, and \$ 195 billion p.a. by 2015<sup>139</sup>, but adds that "there is not a high degree of precision in these estimates"<sup>140</sup>. Of course, actual numbers could be lower, "since it (the outlay of funds) would cover only those countries with sufficiently good planning and governance to justify the aid."<sup>141</sup> Bluntly speaking, those without "self-owned" poverty reduction strategies accepted by the IMF and World Bank would be left out, no matter what. In the end, it apparently comes down to the institution's criteria. Debt relief is not included in such figures, as, generally speaking, "debts (of the heavily indebted poor countries) should simply have been cancelled" twenty years ago<sup>142</sup>, and debt cancellation "does not add to actual resource flows if the debts could not be served anyway."<sup>143</sup>

If aid were available on such a meaningful magnitude, approximately \$ 65 dollar per capita in annual assistance for each of the world's 1.1 billion left behind<sup>144</sup>, basic infrastructure and human capital could be financed. Aid would work and allow the poor to escape from the poverty trap. In order to showcase the feasibility of eradicating extreme poverty with sound strategies and sufficient funding, Jeffrey Sachs' Earth Institute launched an inaugural first Millennium Village in 2004. Sauri, a typical, impoverished third world village of 4,648, "a region beset by hunger, AIDS, and malaria"<sup>145</sup>, was chosen as the project' first showcase. Koraro, an equally sized village in

<sup>135</sup> Easterley, William: Tone Deaf on Africa, (New York Times, New York, United States of America, Op-Ed Contribution, 03.07.2005),

[www.nyu.edu/fas/institute/dri/Easterly/File/tonedeaf%20on%20africa%20NYT.pdf](http://www.nyu.edu/fas/institute/dri/Easterly/File/tonedeaf%20on%20africa%20NYT.pdf) (11.09.2005)

<sup>136</sup> Matsakis, Niko et al.: Cost of War (National Priorities Project, Northampton, Massachusetts, United States of America, April 2003), <http://costofwar.com/> (11.09.2005)

<sup>137</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime, page 310

<sup>138</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime, page 266-267

<sup>139</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime, page 300

<sup>140</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime, page 299

<sup>141</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime, page 295

<sup>142</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime, page 280

<sup>143</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime, page 298

<sup>144</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime, page 295

<sup>145</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime, page 227

Ethiopia, joined in February 2005<sup>146</sup>. So far, first results appear impressive. Sauri's "subsistence farmers are expecting their best crop in decades". Hence, the project, simultaneously targeting several poverty-causing factors such as poor health, lack of education and clean water, could be a vital instrument to show donor countries that even a "modest" amount of focused aid can help the poorest nations meet their development goals<sup>147</sup>, even though the sum of all modesty would be historically unprecedented.

Made available on a grand scale, such aid would lift the extreme poor out of poverty, as these, according to World Bank figures, have an average income of \$ 0.77 per day, thus \$ 0.31 less than the World Bank's current poverty line at \$ 1.08 a day<sup>148</sup>, rendering any kind of capital accumulation and subsequent economic growth impossible. Aid of a lower magnitude does not necessarily work, and leads to common observations claiming that billions have been spend, but nothing can be shown for it. Sachs explains that Africa, in general, currently receives aid of about \$ 30 per annum and per capita, a "modest amount", out of which \$ 5 goes to consultants from donor countries, \$ 3 to food aid and other emergency aid, \$ 4 to debt services, \$ 5 towards debt relief operations and \$ 12 to Africa itself<sup>149</sup>. Obviously, this represents just a sixth of the amount the Earth Institute currently uses for the development of its Millennium Villages. Official development assistance, as a vehicle to jump start economic growth for those unable to reach the lowest ladder of development, requires a certain threshold of financial aid. Unless this threshold is reached, growth does not become self-sustaining through household savings and public investments, as poverty- and fiscal traps cannot be broken. Therefore, "foreign assistance is not a welfare handout, but is actually an investment that breaks the poverty trap once and for all"<sup>150</sup>. Thus, insufficient aid can only ease the symptoms of poverty, but sufficient aid would defeat the underlying causes, and post-2015 needs for foreign assistance are set to fall, if all Millennium Development Goals are reached<sup>151</sup>.

The effectiveness of aid also rests on improved donor performance, beyond aid's sheer magnitude. Contemporarily, aid is rarely well timed, often not predictable enough not to jeopardize long-term investment programs and insufficiently harmonized, as "aid must support

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<sup>146</sup> The Earth Institute: The Millenium Villages Project: Koraro, Ethiopia, (The Earth Institute, Columbia University, New York, United States of America, 2005), <http://www.earthinstitute.columbia.edu/mvp/locations/koraro/index.html>, (11.09.2005)

<sup>147</sup> Rice, Xian: From dirt poor to soil rich in five years (The Times, London, United Kingdom, 05.07.2005), [http://www.theaustralian.news.com.au/common/story\\_page/0,5744,15825432%255E2703,00.html](http://www.theaustralian.news.com.au/common/story_page/0,5744,15825432%255E2703,00.html) (11.09.2005)

<sup>148</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime, page 290

<sup>149</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime, page 310

<sup>150</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime, page 246

<sup>151</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime, page 303

the MDG-based poverty reduction strategy, and specifically the investment plan, rather than the pet projects of aid agencies”. In order to harmonize aid, it ought to be pooled at the World Bank. When needed, money could be issued as a single grant, supporting the country’s budget instead of individual programs, as the budget would be aimed at the explicit reduction of poverty and economical development, outlined in the nations’ individual poverty reduction strategy. By doing so, countries would be freed from time-consuming negotiations with dozens of independent agents<sup>152</sup>, and aid’s effectiveness could be measured by the country’s progress towards the Millennium development goals.

Contemporarily, the too little aid impoverished nations receive rarely arrives without strings attached, as recent, exemplary, columns in the New Zealand Herald and New York Times illustrate.

### **New Zealand Herald**

*“If you want to know why our aid often goes bad, look to the two great Western dogmas: Christian fundamentalism and market fundamentalism”, Johann Hari states, as “if you are an organisation in Africa seeking a single dollar of US funds, you have to agree that – across your entire organization – you will sign up to the evangelical agenda”, and “if you want money for hospitals, you have to agree to undemocratically privatise great chunks of your economy”. Even though “markets are an essential tool among many to achieve development”, “blindly promoting markets as the answer to every problem is absurd”<sup>153</sup>.*

### **New York Times**

*Uganda, the African leader in fighting AIDS by waging an all-fronts war, reduced its adult HIV prevalence from 15% in 1991 to 5% within a decade, as the government and a network of citizens' groups promoted abstinence, faithfulness and consistent condom use. Over the last few years, more than half of Washington's funds for preventing the sexual transmission of AIDS have been redirected to groups promoting abstinence only, thus “the most important development of the past year is the disappearance of free condoms” and “no one knows better than the Ugandans that lives are saved when AIDS is treated as*

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<sup>152</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime, page 276-277

<sup>153</sup> Hari, Johann: Aid a waste? Tell that to the poor (New Zealand Herald, Auckland, New Zealand, Comment, 13.06.2005)

*a public health challenge, not a moral crusade“, as “abstinence-only teaching does not work in the United States, and there is no reason to think it will work in Uganda“<sup>d54</sup>.*

James Petras and Henry Veltmeyer; authors of *Globalization Unmasked*, come to similar conclusions, stating that “most European, North American and Japanese foreign aid agencies (and most of their non-governmental organizations) speak of cooperation between the North and the South”. This cooperation, the authors explain, means that “aid is tied to purchases of goods produced by the donor countries at prices often higher than market figures”. In addition, aid is often tied to favourable investment and trading arrangements, mostly benefiting the donor countries transnational corporations. Petras and Veltmeyer conclude that “cooperation means subordination of the aid recipient to the donor, the reproduction of imperial relations under another name.”<sup>155</sup>

Without a doubt, Jeffrey Sachs is also in favour of attaching fundamental strings to aid. Furthermore, aid has to be based upon poverty reduction strategy papers designed in collaboration with the IMF and World Bank, strictly aimed at the Millennium Development Goals and the enshrined agenda of moderate neo-liberalism. Nevertheless, sound poverty reduction strategies need financial backing by harmonized, untied aid<sup>156</sup>. The aforementioned “market fundamentalism” and wide-ranging privatization of formerly state-run assets is clearly one of Sachs’ key features<sup>157</sup>. Sachs states that “the general lesson of successful economies is that governments are wise to stick mainly to general kinds of investments”, and only ought to intervene in the light of the risks associated with an exaggerated privatization resulting in natural monopolies in markets concerning a country’s key infrastructure, education- and health system. In comparison to neo-liberal “hardliners” as James Shikwati, Sachs clearly insists on state-run social safety nets. Extreme neo-liberals as Shikwati, on the other hand, take the “correct insight, that market economies outperform centrally planned economies...to the extreme”<sup>158</sup>. As an example, Shikwati argues in regard of Kenya’s healthcare, that “economic empowerment is essential in tackling (Kenya’s) healthcare” and “it is a well-known fact that nobody spends somebody else’s money as carefully as he spends his own”. The planned National Social Health Insurance Fund meant to make healthcare affordable and accessible to all is an example of a

<sup>154</sup> The missing condoms (New York Times, New York, United States of America, Editorial, 04.09.2005), <http://www.nytimes.com/2005/09/04/opinion/04sun2.html> (11.09.2005)

<sup>155</sup> Petras, James and Veltmeyer, Henry: Globalization Unmasked (Zed Books, New York, United States of America, 2001), page 121

<sup>156</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime, page 276

<sup>157</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime, page 115

<sup>158</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime, page 318

strategy that shows lack of faith in Kenyans' ability to spend their own money"<sup>159</sup>. Sachs favour a limited welfare state, ensuring "that everybody has an adequate level of access to key goods and services", based upon the Universal Declaration of Human Rights<sup>160</sup>. Nevertheless, Sachs is strictly opposed to businesses run by governments, as "private entrepreneurs do a much better job", and "governments rarely have the in-house expertise to manage complex technologies, and they should not, aside from sectors where the government's role is central"<sup>161</sup>.

In conclusion, Jeffrey Sachs is absolutely convinced that aid above a certain threshold, far above current aid levels, works and can eventually overcome the need for aid by self-sustained growth on the universal ladder of economic development. Additionally, neo-liberal reforms are a given in order to make aid work – countries unwilling to know what is best for them shall not have access to pooled development funds. Self-sustaining growth through market mechanisms has to be accompanied by a lean government, providing a safety net based upon the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and ensuring the country's successful participation in an "open, rule-based, predictable, non-discriminatory trading and financial system"<sup>162</sup>.

### 3.6 Why Aid?

As the concept of aid is not without contention within neo-liberal circles, Jeffrey Sachs' answer to the "why?"-question needs answering. Additionally, the observation that vastly expanded aid would work has exclusively altruistic appeal, and needs stronger backing to convince, if "the ("rich") public is already feeling squeezed economically"<sup>163</sup>.

Appealing to his predominantly American readership, he highlights the correlation between economic assistance and national security, blaming an increased threat of international instability and terrorism on the mistaken idea that military interventions are the international relations policy of choice. Consequently, post-9/11 U.S. policies have been "veering wildly off track". These policies devastated the U.S.'s credibility and amplified the "lack of the second track of U.S. foreign policy": international development, and thus "the power to help shape the global

<sup>159</sup> Shikwati, James: Can we trust the state with our health? (East African Standard, Nairobi, Kenya, 2004), <http://www.yellowpageskenya.com/Kenya/localnews/story2004.6.6.asp>, 11.09.2005

<sup>160</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime, page 253

<sup>161</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime, page 254

<sup>162</sup> UN Millenium Development Goal "8", in Sachs, Jeffrey D.: The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime, page 211-213

<sup>163</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime, page 329

cooperation institutions on which we will depend for our livelihoods and our long-term prosperity”<sup>164</sup>. He states that the US public generally overestimates the amount of federal funds spend on foreign aid – by ratios roughly 24 times higher than they actually are<sup>165</sup>. Another underlying fallacy is that “the U.S. military can achieve security for Americans even in the absence of a stable world”, which “is the same mistake that led Americans to believe that the United States would be greeted as liberators in Baghdad”<sup>166</sup>. No matter the origin of terrorists, their staging areas “are unstable societies beset by poverty, unemployment, rapid population growth, hunger, and a lack of hope”<sup>167</sup>, and as harsh evidence links extreme poverty abroad to threats to national security, “small amounts spent on promoting Africa's economy can save billions and make the West more secure”<sup>168</sup>. As a result, “acts of altruism...are also acts of enlightened self-interest”<sup>169</sup>. Terrorism requires failing or weakened states as a breeding ground<sup>170</sup>, just as the war in Iraq has done little to increase the U.S. safety, as predicted by George W. Bush, who claimed that “U.S. troops fighting overseas are laying the foundations of peace for generations to come”<sup>171</sup>. Instead, the war helped creating “a haven for them (terrorists) in the chaos of war”, providing a training ground for terrorism and the likelihood “that some of the jihadists who are not killed there will, in a sense, go home, wherever home is, and will therefore disperse to various other countries”<sup>172</sup>. Quoting Sachs, major factors contributing to state failures are the infant mortality rate, suggesting that overall low level of material well-being are a significant contributor to state-failures, the degree of economic openness, as better linked, thus more globalized, countries face a lower risk of state failure and democracy, as democratic countries are far less likely to fail than authoritative ones. As “the probability of a country’s being democratic rises significantly with its per capita income levels”, the aid-based initiation of economic growth fosters international security<sup>173</sup>. The solution of individual poverty traps (accumulation of capital initiates self-sustaining growth) leads to the solution of fiscal traps (the government can begin to tax) and lessens the burden of the demographic trap (girl’s education, another vital MDG, empowers women to more easily make fertility choices<sup>174</sup>), if cultural barriers are removed. Sachs acknowledges that the US administration appears well aware of such

<sup>164</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime, page 220

<sup>165</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime, page 329

<sup>166</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime, page 330

<sup>167</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime, page 330-331

<sup>168</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: Developing Africa’s economy, (The Economist, London, United Kingdom, 20.05.2004), <http://www.businessdevelopment.nl/article-1012.1338.html>, 12.09.2005

<sup>169</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime, page 331

<sup>170</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime, page 333

<sup>171</sup> Stearns, Scott: Bush Says War in Iraq Makes America More Secure, (Voice of America News, Washington, United States of America, 20.08.2005), <http://www.voanews.com/english/2005-08-20-voa12.cfm> (12.09.2005)

<sup>172</sup> Priest, Dana: Iraq New Terror Breeding Ground: War Created Haven, CIA Advisers Report (Washington Post, Washington, United States of America, 14.01.2005), <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A7460-2005Jan13.html> (12.09.2005)

<sup>173</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime, page 333

<sup>174</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime, page 60-66

connections, when George W. Bush remarks that “when governments fail to meet the most basic needs of their people, these failed states can become havens for terror”<sup>175</sup>, but “a disconnect between foreign policy rhetoric and foreign policy follow-through” exists<sup>176</sup>. George W. Bush’s 2002 pledge for \$ 5 billion more aid money per year<sup>177</sup> represents little of the needs of the poor countries, which are “on the order of \$ 100 billion more per year between 2006 and 2015 to meet the MDG”<sup>178</sup>, Sachs remarks. Interestingly, little of the new founded, insufficient U.S. aid fund was actually distributed, as “Paul Applegarth, the chief executive of the Millennium Challenge Corporation, who, with an entire world of poverty, disease and wretchedness to consider, managed to find only two countries worthy of aid” and handed out \$ 323 million between 2002 and 2005<sup>179</sup>, the New York Times reported.

In conclusion, Sachs’ answer to the “why” question of development aid rests on assumptions along the lines of Francis Fukuyama’s “End of history”, thus the end of social evolution by the worldwide triumph of liberal democracy<sup>180</sup>. As increased incomes and material well-being contribute to the democratisation of states, Sachs attitudes are equally well reflected in Thomas Friedman’s “Golden Arches Theory of Conflict Prevention” and “Globalution”. Similar to Sachs’ arguing that open and interlinked economies lessen the potential of state failures, Friedman far more eloquently observes that “no two countries with McDonalds stores had ever gone to war, as people would rather buy hamburgers than take up arms”. “Globalution”, a combination of globalization and revolution, on the other hand, refers to the phenom that transnational corporations and private investors take care of corrupt governments, driven by self-interest, as the invisible hand of prosperity naturally promotes democracy<sup>181</sup>.

In *The End of Poverty*, Sachs calls upon the world’s rich to utilize their “breathtaking opportunity to be able to advance the Enlightenment Vision”. Therefore, he quotes the pillars of his convictions, namely Immanuel Kant’s statement that “the spirit of commerce, which is incompatible with war, sooner or later gains the upper hand in every state”, Thomas Jefferson’s

<sup>175</sup> Bush, George W.: President Proposes \$5 Billion Plan to Help Developing Nations, (The White House, Washington, United States of America, 14.03.2002),

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2002/03/20020314-7.html> (12.09.2005)

<sup>176</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime, page 335

<sup>177</sup> Bush, George W.: President Proposes \$5 Billion Plan to Help Developing Nations

<sup>178</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime, page 336

<sup>179</sup> A Timely Departure (Editorial, New York Times, New York, United States of America, 19.06.2005),

[http://www1.worldbank.org/education/efafti/documents/nyt\\_editorial\\_june05.pdf](http://www1.worldbank.org/education/efafti/documents/nyt_editorial_june05.pdf) (13.09.2005)

<sup>180</sup> Scholte, Jan-Alert: The Globalization of World Politics (in Baylis, John and Smith, Steve (eds), *The Globalization of World Politics: An Introduction to International Relations*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, United Kingdom, 1997), page 20

<sup>181</sup> Veseth, Michael: Globalony: Unraveling the Myths of Globalization (Rowman & Littlefield Publishers Inc., Oxford, United Kingdom, 2005), page 25-28, it needs mentioning that NATO’s intervention and bombing during the Kosovo war faulted the “Golden Arches Theory of Conflict Prevention”-theory

observation that “governments are instituted among men” to secure the rights of “Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness”, Adam Smith’s belief that the state has powerful responsibilities outside the control of the “invisible hand” and the overarching vision of the enlightenment, “that science and technology, fuelled by human reason, can be a sustained force for social improvements and human betterment”.<sup>182</sup>

### 3.7 How to finance?

Sachs is well aware of the problem to secure the financial backing needed for his strategy to end extreme poverty and fulfil the world’s commitment towards the Millennium Development Goals, especially as “impressive” sums spend in the past - \$ 568 billion (in today’s dollars) towards Africa between 1960 to 2003<sup>183</sup> - are roughly enough to finance a three-year span of worthwhile aid.

But it is not just about vastly more aid, as wide-ranging debt cancellations are needed to end the mayhem of the debt regime – historically, Nigeria borrowed \$ 17 billion, paid back \$ 18 billion, but now owes \$ 34 billion<sup>184</sup>. A partial success occurred at the 2005 G8 summit, when “a new deal between the rich and the poor of the world” was announced and \$ 40 billion of debt were cancelled<sup>185</sup>, freeing a total of 30 countries. Eligibility for debt relief relied on the completion of the IMF and World Bank’s initiative for Highly Indebted Poor Countries. According to the IMF, one condition is the establishment of “a track record of reform and sound policies through IMF- and World Bank-supported programs”<sup>186</sup>. George Dor, the Jubilee South Africa General Secretary, sarcastically remarks that the total debt of African countries stands at \$ 300 billion and the G8’s relief has little in common with “total and unconditional debt cancellation“. Debt relief depends on the successful implementation of poverty reduction strategies, he argues, “new

<sup>182</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime, page 347-351

<sup>183</sup> Easterley, William: Tone Deaf on Africa,

<sup>184</sup> Steel, Mark: How to solve world poverty in one easy step (Comment, New Zealand Herald, Auckland, New Zealand, B4, 03.06.2005)

<sup>185</sup> Relief for Africa: Poor cast off debt’s shackles (New Zealand Herald, Auckland, New Zealand, World, B1, 13.06.2005)

<sup>186</sup> International Monetary Fund: Debt Relief under the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative. HIPC, (International Monetary Fund, Factsheet, New York, United States of America, March 2005), <http://www.imf.org/external/np/exr/facts/hipc.htm> (13.09.2005)

initiatives...quickly exposed for what they really are, structural adjustment in new guise”<sup>187</sup>. Once again, the gap between rhetoric and action is appalling.

“The level of required effort is, in truth, so modest”, Sachs pledges, and most of all “the rich world today is so vastly rich”, as the effort to end extreme poverty “is now well within reach because the costs are now such a small fraction of the vastly expanded income of the rich world”. Therefore, “the question isn’t whether the rich can afford to help the poor, but whether they can afford not to”<sup>188</sup>. How does the world respond?

At the 2005 G8 summit, the rich elected to give it at least a try, as a mere \$ 50 billion increase in yearly aid by 2010 was agreed upon, boosting overall 2010 aid to no more than \$ 100 billion dollar<sup>189</sup>, far less than the \$ 135 billion Sachs calculated necessary for 2006 alone, with increasing amounts afterwards<sup>190</sup>. To make matters worse, “the G8's promise of US\$48 billion boost to aid in five years is mostly made up of money already pledged”, NGO amalgamation “Make Poverty History” laments, as “only around US\$20 billion is new money”<sup>191</sup>. Coming to similar conclusions, BBC’s Evan Davis remarked, that “The G8 love to make their modest steps sound like giant leaps. They are adept at getting big headlines for little money”<sup>192</sup>. Additionally, any positive public momentum and poverty’s extensive media presence leading up to the July 2005 G8 summit, never mind that Bob Geldof’s “Live 8” concerts received heavy criticism for relying predominantly on white, non-African artists<sup>193</sup>, was immediately shattered on the 7<sup>th</sup> of July, when suicide-bombers killed 56 people in London<sup>194</sup> and refocused the world’s attention on its misguided war on terror. NY Times columnist Nicholas Kristof states that New York is welcoming “the fakers” for the September 2005 UN summit, a summit meant to review past progress on MDG, and comments past achievements on health goals with the bitter statement that, “rather than toasting themselves, these leaders should apologize for this continuing

<sup>187</sup> Dor, George: G8, Tony Blair’s Commission for Africa and Debt (Pambazuka News, United Kingdom, 07.07.2005), <http://www.globalpolicy.org/soecon/bwi-wto/g7-8/2005/0707tony.htm#author> (13.09.2005)

<sup>188</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime, page 288-289

<sup>189</sup> Gray, Andrew: G8 leaders agree \$ 50 billion aid boost (Reuters, 08.07.2005), <http://www.tiscali.co.uk/news/newswire.php/news/reuters/2005/07/08/topnews/g8leadersagree50billionaidboost.html> (13.09.2005)

<sup>190</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime, page 300

<sup>191</sup> Make Poverty History: Response to G8 Communiqué, (Make Poverty History, London, United Kingdom, 2005), <http://www.makepovertyhistory.org/response.shtml> (13.09.2005)

<sup>192</sup> Davis, Evan: Will G8 money match the rhetoric? (BBC News, UK Edition, United Kingdom, 11.07.2005), <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/business/4670957.stm> (13.09.2005)

<sup>193</sup> Klüsener, Edgard: Mieses Klima für Aktivisten (Der Spiegel, Online Edition, Hamburg, Germany, 29.06.2005), <http://www.spiegel.de/kultur/musik/0,1518,362871,00.html> (13.09.2005)

<sup>194</sup> Barnett, Anthony and Townsend, Mark: Al Qaeda “link to 7/7” found in Iraq in Special Report: Attack on London (Guardian Unlimited, Guardian Newspaper Limited, United Kingdom, 11.09.2005), <http://www.guardian.co.uk/attackonlondon/story/0,16132,1567307,00.html> (13.09.2005)

holocaust”<sup>195</sup>. Regrettably, John R. Bolton, US ambassador to the summit, initially proposed expunging any reference to specific goals for reducing poverty, hunger, child mortality and combating pandemics of AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria, a disheartening admission that at current trends the Millennium Development Goals are probably unachievable, and ought to be scrapped to avoid later embarrassment. Kaluki Ngilu, the Kenyan health minister, stated that “the thing that shocked me personally was that they're trying to shift and change goal posts”. This should not come as a surprise considering the US's intentions to “make it plain that the administration, while agreeing on the need for increased aid, has not and will not promise to give 70 cents of every \$100 of national income”<sup>196</sup>. “AIDS kills three million people a year and devastates countries like nothing since the Black Death in the 14th century. Yet annual world spending to fight AIDS amounts to three days of military expenditures”, Kristof remarks<sup>197</sup> and thus highlights the “terrorized” world's awful priorities. Not surprisingly, reviewing the progress towards the on-time achievements of the MDG, the World Bank states that “the picture is not encouraging”, as huge gaps between targets and outcomes are unavoidable<sup>198</sup>.

The harrowing truth, Sachs argues, is that the rich world would not even have to fulfil its longstanding promise of 0.7% GNP spending towards development, as 0.7% would be “closer to an average of \$ 235 billion” between 2005 and 2015. Instead, only about 0.44% and 0.54% of the rich-world's GNP are actually needed, therefore “the point is that the Millennium Development Goals can be financed within the bounds of the official development assistance that the donor countries have already promised”<sup>199</sup>. Arguing similarly, the World Bank reports that “the \$ 7 billion needed annually over the next decade to provide 2.6 billion people with access to clean water is less than Europeans spend on perfume and less than Americans spend on elective surgery. This for an investment that would save 4,000 lives a day”<sup>200</sup>.

The question whether rich countries such as the US can afford this “is silly on its face”. By the year 2010, a US devotion to such levels of development would result in nothing but a four-month lag “in attaining a higher level of consumption”, but “would mean that a billion people would be given an economic future of hope, health, and improvement rather than a downward spiral of despair, disease, and decline”<sup>201</sup>. As past tax cuts overwhelmingly favoured the rich, “a 5

<sup>195</sup> Kristof, Nicholas D.: Meet the fakers (New York Times, New York, United States, 13.09.2005), <http://www.nytimes.com/2005/09/13/opinion/13kristof.html?th&emc=th> (13.09.2005)

<sup>196</sup> Dugger, Celia W.: U.N. vs. Poverty: Seeking a Focus. Quarrelling over Vision

<sup>197</sup> Kristof, Nicholas D.: Meet the fakers

<sup>198</sup> World Bank: Human Development Report 2005 (World Bank, New York, United States, 2005), page 5

<sup>199</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime, page 299

<sup>200</sup> World Bank: Human Development Report, page 8

<sup>201</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime, page 304

percent income tax surcharge on incomes above \$ 200,000 directed toward the U.S. contribution to end global poverty” would seal the deal<sup>202</sup>. Globally, the world’s richest 10% would have to forfeit 1.6% of their income to lift the poorest billion above the \$ 1.08 per day poverty line, the World Bank argues, and “the world’s richest 500 individuals”, the tip of the iceberg of affluence, “have a combined income greater than that of the poorest 416 million.”<sup>203</sup>

Quoting U2’s Bono, the most important question is mankind’s will, as “we are the first generation that can look extreme poverty in the eye, and say this and mean it – we have the cash, we have the drugs, we have the science. Do we have the will to make poverty history?”<sup>204</sup> Oxfam observes that governments spend less than ever on aid, with a further, dramatic downturn in percentage of GNI since the end of the cold war, as figure 5 illustrates. Even though 12 out of the 22 OECD donors increased their absolute aid levels again in 2003, “the UN target of 0.7 percent is not even on their agenda yet”. Just five OECD donors currently achieve 0.7%, while the “richest of the rich”, such as the United States or Japan, devote less than 0.2%. From 1960 to 1965, rich countries spent 0.48 percent of their combined national incomes on official development, 0.34 percent from 1980 to 1985 and 0.24 percent by 2003<sup>205</sup>. Officially, the 0.7% target for aid as a percentage of GNI was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1970<sup>206</sup>, reappeared in the “Agenda 21”, adopted at the Rio Summit on Sustainable Development in 1992 and was once again adopted by all heads of State and Government in March 2002’s Monterey Consensus<sup>207</sup>.

In conclusion, the execution and financing of Sachs’ agenda, despite its apparently horrendous costs, if perceived out of relative context, is merely a matter of will. “Let the future say of our generation that we sent forth mighty currents of hope, and that we worked together to heal the world”, Sachs pledges in his closing words<sup>208</sup>, a world of “enlightened globalization”<sup>209</sup>. U2’s Bono describes Sachs as “not just animated, he’s angry”<sup>210</sup>, and taking into account the First World’s endless litany of “making concrete efforts towards the target of 0.7 per cent of gross

<sup>202</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime, page 307

<sup>203</sup> World Bank: Human Development Report, page 4

<sup>204</sup> Oxfam: Paying the price: Why rich countries must invest now in a war on poverty, (Oxfam International, Oxford, United Kingdom, 2005), page 5

<sup>205</sup> Oxfam: Paying the price: Why rich countries must invest now in a war on poverty, page 32-34

<sup>206</sup> BOND: Broken aid pledge to Brown, (BOND Press Release, British Overseas NGOs for Development, London, United Kingdom, 30.03.2004), <http://www.bond.org.uk/press/0.7launch.htm> (13.09.2005)

<sup>207</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime, page 338

<sup>208</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime, page 368

<sup>209</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime, page 358

<sup>210</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime, page xvi

national product (GNP) as official development assistance to developing countries<sup>211</sup>, it is easy to understand.

### 3.8 Does *The End of Poverty* work?

Does Jeffrey Sachs' "handbook" for ending poverty work? In order to answer this question, it has to be asked whether his strategy is able to fulfil his goals. The question is not whether doing so would be good or bad, at least not at this stage. The fourth section of this paper is devoted towards such an analysis, when I will critique Sachs' *End of Poverty* from the position of environmentalism, with a special focus on the further marginalized position of "Deep Ecology". Doing so from a wider array of perspectives lies beyond the scope of this paper.

Nevertheless, it is once again important to mention that the concept of assisted development is not without criticism, even from less marginalized positions within the field of international relations than environmentalism or deep ecology. Most criticism focuses on the alienating nature of imported spirits and technologies, well argued by Leopold Kohr, who stated that "however effective hatred may be as a group builder, it cannot prevent the gradual erosion of the traditional native identity under the assimilating pressure of imported progress. For whoever begins to sip Coca Cola, and switches too rapidly from a mule to a car and television civilization, is eventually bound to become in habit and taste an American irrespective of whether his subtitles and instruction labels are written in Spanish or Singhalese"<sup>212</sup>. Kohr, himself by far no neo-liberal, and James Shikwati, nothing but a neo-liberal, agree that independence is a necessity for growth. Kohr states that "by far the fastest way of developing is by going it alone – unintegrated, unaffiliated, uncoordinated"<sup>213</sup>, whereas Shikwati insists that "Africa existed before you Europeans came along" and Europe's devotion to its suffering "taught (Africans) to be beggars and not to be independent."<sup>214</sup> Neo-Marxists as Immanuel Wallerstein would put forward that the capitalist world system Sachs' wishes to enlarge is riddled with fundamental contradictions, as it consists of constant crises, core & periphery struggles and the cooption of the underprivileged by those benefiting from it<sup>215</sup>. All these critiques deserve attention, but as this lies beyond this paper's scope, the mentioning of some analytical languages offering the potential for an extensive

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<sup>211</sup> quoted from Monterrey Consensus, in Sachs, Jeffrey D.: [The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime](#), page 338

<sup>212</sup> Kohr Leopold: [Development without aid](#), (Schoken Books, USA, 1979), page 9-10

<sup>213</sup> Kohr Leopold: [Development without aid](#), (Schoken Books, USA, 1979), page 16

<sup>214</sup> Thielke, Thilo: [For God's Sake, Please Stop the Aid: Interview with James Shikwati](#)

<sup>215</sup> Wallerstein, Immanuel: [The Capitalist World Economy](#) (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, United Kingdom, 1979), page 33-35

critique of Sachs' *End of Poverty* has to suffice. I encourage interested readers to pursue such critical confrontations.

## **So, does Jeffrey Sachs' "End of Poverty" work? Is it clear and coherent?**

Overall, this question has to be answered with a clear "yes". Sachs does an excellent job of mapping poverty, at least it is understood in contemporary world affairs, marginal perspectives excluded. His explanations for being "left behind" are coherent, as poverty, demographic and fiscal traps go hand in hand. His argument that overcoming the poverty trap will put the world's poor on a path of self-sustained, economic growth appears reasonable. Economic growth leads to fiscal strength. Growing prosperity, education and equal opportunities result in lower fertility rates. A comparison of contemporary fertility rates proves Sachs right<sup>216</sup>. The accepted poverty line of \$ 1.08 per day is out of reach for roughly a sixth of humanity, Sachs analyses. While global, economic growth is real, an unassisted end of extreme poverty might be out of reach for the world's poorest, especially clustered in Sub-Saharan Africa, East Asia and South Asia. Few would argue that the persistence of poverty within a world of affluence is an affront to humanity. Sachs does not blame the poor for being poor, as for him neo-liberalism alone, despite its "virtue of simplicity"<sup>217</sup>, is insufficient to secure everyone's seat for the rising tide of globalization. Therefore, past "simplistic, even simpleminded"<sup>218</sup> development concepts need replacement by clinical economics. New development concepts need measuring by their ability to achieve the MDG, not whether certain policies are introduced or not, even though the overall concept ought to match with relatively neo-liberal blueprints. States need strengthening, as failing states pose threats to the world's security and their population – the global village's security is at risk. Therefore, material well-being, an open, globally linked economy and a democratic society, respecting human rights as agreed upon by the United Nations are necessary. Poor countries need empowerment and thus need to be able to present the world community with individual strategies, aimed exclusively at the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. Poor governance and corruption are both problematic, but of a lesser magnitude than commonly perceived. Additionally, better educated and wealthier, no longer poverty-trapped societies, lead

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<sup>216</sup> The following fertility rates are exemplary: Czech. Rep 1.1, Italy 1.3, Sweden 1.5, Singapore 1.6, France 1.9, United States 2.1, Fiji 3.3, Iraq 5.3, Ghana 4.3, Tanzania 5.6 Uganda 6.9 Niger 7.5; Students of the world: [Countries of the World: Fertility rates](http://www.studentsoftheworld.info/infopays/rank/fecondite2.html) (Students of the World, Chambray, France, 27.11.2004), <http://www.studentsoftheworld.info/infopays/rank/fecondite2.html> (14.09.2005)

<sup>217</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: *The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime*, page 319

<sup>218</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: *The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime*, page 81

to better governance – “Africa’s governance is poor because Africa is poor”<sup>219</sup>. Donors have to move away from project-based donations, instead provide funds for sound budgets. If budgets and policies are coherent and aimed at the achievement of the MDG, necessary aid has to be provided. Realistic amounts are not what donors are willing to give, but what is needed. If aid passes a certain threshold, it works. Achieving the MDG would require a massive increase in overall aid spending, but nothing above the already agreed upon 0.7 percent of GNP. The overall impact on First world economies would be negligible. *The End of poverty* aims at the ending of extreme poverty, not the end of all poverty. The sketched strategy is not about equalizing world incomes or closing gaps between the rich and the poor. Instead, the poor need lifting onto the ladder of development, so that they can proceed on their own. As a result, the world could achieve “enlightened globalization” – “a globalization of democracies, multilateralism, science and technology, and a global economic system designed to meet human needs”<sup>220</sup>.

In conclusion, there appear few faults within Sachs’ arguing. He dismisses the importance of colonialism for the economic growth of the First World, but then again it could be argued that the massive aid he proposes is comparable to the kind of development “aid” the First world took by force and oppression. In addition, the third world’s empowerment is restricted to certain boundaries, set by what is perceived as “good” by hegemonic powers. Critics use comparisons along the lines of “if children are spared the duplication of everything through which the parents had to go, they will not grow up faster but suffer even longer from dependence on those who did take the trouble of doing the experience and learning themselves”<sup>221</sup>, but in regard to nation states and human tragedies such tales appear dismissible – a drastic example would be the South’s deprivation of modern medicine required to combat malaria or HIV/Aids. Of course, in reality they are often deprived, but not if Sachs gets his way. Sachs’ aim – to place all of humanity on the ladder of modern development – appears within reach. The quest of ascension becomes the poor’s, but no longer extremely poor’s, responsibility. He does not insist that his strategy produces more global equality, he just wants to allow all of humanity to participate in a game everyone can win. Sachs’ strategies aim at the successful achievement of globally agreed-upon targets within promised budgets. *The end of poverty* does so in a concise and coherent manner. No matter whether such strategies are perceived as “good” or “bad”, or whether the globalization of the American Dream is a myth or not, *The End of Poverty*, as measured by its clear-cut aims and paths towards those, strongly appears to work.

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<sup>219</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: *The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime*, page 312

<sup>220</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: *The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime*, page 358

<sup>221</sup> Kohr Leopold: *Development without aid*, (Schoken Books, United States of America, 1979), page 12

An interesting, subsequent question ought to be: *And then what?*

# IV

## And then what?

*"In some remote corner of the universe, poured out and glittering in innumerable solar systems, there once was a star on which clever animals invented knowledge. That was the highest and most mendacious minute of "world history" - yet only a minute. After nature had drawn a few breaths the star grew cold, and the clever animals had to die."<sup>222</sup>*

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<sup>222</sup> Kaufmann, Walter and Breazeale, Daniel: Nietzsche: On Truth and Lie in an Extra-Moral Sense (The Nietzsche Channel, 2005), <http://www.geocities.com/thenietzschechannel/> (04.10.2005)

## 4 What Sachs missed

“The greatest defect of utopian writers is their inability to ask: *And then what?*”, Garrett Hardin put forward in a critique of Karl Marx’s “From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs”. Hardin comes to the eventual conclusion that “it is not capitalism but the system of the commons that fails to furnish adequate incentives” to evade the “tragedy of the commons”. *And then what are the consequences?* “We have trouble recognizing a major root when we see it”, Hardin observes, and as “human beings are social animals, sensitive to the need of others, and fearful of their envy”, global prosperity opportunities, as mapped out by Sachs, are a predisposed path for humanity, if driven by what is perceived as common sense. “Good intentions are not enough” Hardin reflects, “and we must remember that time has no stop”. What did Sachs miss? Did he miss the tragedy of the commons? What is the outcome of redirecting Hardin’s criticism of Karl Marx on Jeffrey Sachs? *The end of poverty: And then what?*<sup>223</sup>

How come Vandana Shiva, director of the Delhi-based Research Foundation for Science, Technology and Ecology, refers to Jeffrey Sachs with the telling statement that “unfortunately, he’s not a here-today, gone-tomorrow celebrity/politician, but one of the world’s leading economists...in charge of a UN panel to set up to promote rapid development”<sup>224</sup>

Plain simply, environmentalists are scared of humanity climbing Jeffrey Sachs’ ladder of modern development and economic growth. If everybody on “spaceship earth”<sup>225</sup> is given the chance to proceed to what Sachs’ refers to as the “middle-income world”, consequences are dire. “They can purchase a scooter and someday even an automobile”, Sachs explains the living conditions of those 2.5 billion people in the “middle income world”. 40% of humanity are below such levels of consumption, and if Sachs gets his way, if “the greatest tragedy of our time” (one sixth of humanity not even on the development ladder) is eradicated, *then what?*<sup>226</sup>

Humanity has to replace its wasteful “cowboy economy” of the past with the frugal “spaceship economy”, Hardin quotes Kenneth Boulding, a new economy “required for continued survival in

<sup>223</sup> Hardin, Garrett: What Marx Missed in Hardin, Garrett and Baden John: Managing the Commons (W.H. Freeman and Company, San Francisco, California, United States of America, 1977), page 4-6

<sup>224</sup> Shiva, Vandana: New Emperors, Old Clothes (The Ecologist Online, London, United Kingdom, 01.07.2005), [http://www.theecologist.org/archive\\_detail.asp?content\\_id=447](http://www.theecologist.org/archive_detail.asp?content_id=447), (18.09.2005)

<sup>225</sup> Hardin, Garrett: Living on a Lifeboat (1974) in Hardin, Garrett and Baden John: Managing the Commons (W.H. Freeman and Company, San Francisco, California, United States of America, 1977), page 261

<sup>226</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime, page 19

the limited world we now see ours to be”<sup>227</sup>. “The evidence against the belief that the dynamics of markets are harmonious with the dynamics of ecosystems is substantial and growing”, as “the dynamics of markets do not include the dynamics of ecosystems”, Deep Ecologist Andrew McLaughlin states<sup>228</sup>. “All of the world, including today’s laggard regions, has a reasonable hope of reaping the benefits of technological advance”<sup>229</sup> and “all of us who work toward a brighter future are intellectually indebted to the awe-inspiring geniuses of the Enlightenment, who first glimpsed the prospect of conscious social actions to improve human well-being on a global scale”<sup>230</sup>, Sachs states, whereas McLaughlin responds that “the actual results of the enlightenment project could, in fact, be used to suggest that the whole project is a mistake”, as “the fundamental threats posed by ecological problems suggest doubt about the application of reason to the rest of nature.”<sup>231</sup>

### ***And then what?***

“We may be tempted to try to live by the Christian ideal of being “our brother’s keeper”, or by the Marxian ideal of “from each according to his abilities, to each according to his needs”, Hardin wrote in 1974. Nowadays, living and giving as Sachs prescribes would fall into the same category, and Hardin’s rhetoric is useful to question his strategies. Referring to “lifeboat ethics”, Hardin stated that we could swamp the lifeboat of the rich world with those swimming in the water outside. *And then what?* “The boat is swamped, and everybody drowns. Complete justice, complete catastrophe”<sup>232</sup>. “The promise cannot be kept”, McLaughlin observes in regard to the myth of a globally applied, “indefensible linear model which sees industrialism as an end point in a desirable process of change”. Bringing all the people of the world up to the consumption levels of industrial people, something which, according to Sachs’ best-case scenario, “may eventually happen”<sup>233</sup>, “would require truly massive increases in energy use and manufacturing output. This would foreclose any chance, slim as it may already be, of coping well with problems such as global warming”.<sup>234</sup> Additionally, “the traditional cultural beliefs and practices of much of the

<sup>227</sup> Hardin, Garrett: Living on a Lifeboat, page 261

<sup>228</sup> McLaughlin, Andrew: Regarding Nature: Industrialism and Deep Ecology (State University of New York Press, Albany, United States of America, 1993), page 33

<sup>229</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime, page 31

<sup>230</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime, page 347-348

<sup>231</sup> McLaughlin, Andrew: Regarding Nature: Industrialism and Deep Ecology, page 117

<sup>232</sup> Hardin, Garrett: Living on a Lifeboat (1974) page 263

<sup>233</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime, page 289

<sup>234</sup> McLaughlin, Andrew: Regarding Nature: Industrialism and Deep Ecology, page 15

world are favourable to the norms of the deep ecological movement<sup>235</sup>, Deep Ecologist Arne Naess observes, and accordingly “by their very nature economies based on sustenance ensure a high quality of life”<sup>236</sup>. Hence, the globalization of a ladder of modern, economic growth threatens not only our environment, but humanity’s well-being. Development aid, Leopold Kohr argues, inevitable results in the importation of the donor’s spirit<sup>237</sup>. “We have progressed”, Arne Naess concludes, “to the point where the objectives of the good life must be considered threatening...the privileges are regionally reserved because a similar increase of affluence in Africa, Asia or South America is not intended and would hasten the advent of an environmental Armageddon”<sup>238</sup>.

*And then what?* Does the “justice” Jeffrey Sachs aims at sink us all? Is the act of lifting all on the universal ladder of economic development fast-forwarding humanity towards an environmental Armageddon? Does the mere idea of taking onboard those left behind by modern, economic growth eliminate humanity’s chances to cope with nature’s backlashes? From an environmentalist perspective, even more so from marginalized positions as Deep Ecology, *The end of poverty* impoverishes us all.

The following chapters will illustrate the environmentalists’ perspective, with a special focus on Deep Ecology and constant reference to Jeffrey Sachs’ *End of Poverty*. Firstly, I will focus on these world affairs, the world as we know it and the state of the environment. How dire are these world affairs for nature and humanity? Afterwards, humanity’s attitude towards nature will be analyzed. I will focus on the question how nature ought to be regarded, and how it is regarded by the modernist project, going back to Descartes’ spirit, which allowed for the perception of animals and nature as automata, governed by the laws of physics and free of intrinsic value<sup>239</sup>. Subsequently, contemporary, reactive environmentalism’s myth of theoretical control will be questioned, before I will focus on Deep Ecology and its platform. Finally, Deep Ecologies’ chances to convince will be analyzed, as deep Ecologists bank on contradictions within the system of perpetual economic growth as seeds for an ecologically rational, social change. Eventually, it is argued, our troubles of recognizing major roots for our dismal state will be solved by the conclusion that big isn’t beautiful after all. Afterwards, humanity thus proceed along a new path, whose “direction is revolutionary”, but whose “steps are reformatory”<sup>240</sup>.

<sup>235</sup> Rothenburg, David: *Arne Naess: Ecology, community and lifestyle* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, Great Britan, 1989), page 212

<sup>236</sup> Shiva, Vandana: *New Emperors, Old Clothes*

<sup>237</sup> Kohr Leopold: *Development without aid*, page 9

<sup>238</sup> Rothenburg, David: *Arne Naess: Ecology, community and lifestyle*, page 25

<sup>239</sup> Russell, Bernard: *History of Western Philosophy* (Routledge, London, United Kingdom, 2000), page 551

<sup>240</sup> Rothenburg, David: *Arne Naess: Ecology, community and lifestyle* page 156

## 4.1 How dire are these world affairs?

Broad-ranging agreements on environmental issues require a consensus about the state of the world. Regarding an environmental decline or issues as global warming, such a consensus has proven hard to find. Intuition might tell us that *The End of Poverty* impoverishes us all, as the mere thought of an extra 40% of humanity aspiring towards a scooter or a car, or more material possessions in general, sends shudders down our spine. It is scary. Intuition appears to tell us that it cannot work; if everybody wants to drive, we will fasten our journey towards the universal stop-sign. From an anthropocentric, environmentalist point of view, the question of “*And then what?*” in regard of a successful implementation of *The End of Poverty* and subsequent globalized growth appears to lead to a doomsday scenario, as “there is no universalisability (of living standards) present, no planet available for that”<sup>241</sup>. Yet, if we take the stance of “all living creatures are fundamentally one”, and regard humanity as a “mere drops in the stream of life”, as Deep Ecologists do, doomsday has long arrived<sup>242</sup>. Before focusing on Deep Ecology in subsequent chapters, I will try to contrast answer to the question “How dire are these world affairs?”, as the perception of “something being wrong” is the cornerstone of any environmental movement and legitimizes its mass appeal. As the magnitude of varying opinions disables me to state a conclusive answer in regard of the world affair’s direness, a wide range of opinions regarding the state of the world will be briefly highlighted. I will try to arrive at a set of recommendations in the final segment of this paper, but at this stage, the portrayal of various positions ought to illustrate the wide array of “rational” opinions and attitudes and to embed Deep Ecology within the context of other perceptions of reality. Laying a grounding for his Deep Ecology proposal, Andrew McLaughlin sums up the uncertainty regarding our state of nature with the following, introductory sentences:

*“Some think that we are already in the midst of a crisis, and that we have already exceeded the global carrying capacity for human life. Others believe that the crisis will occur sometime in the intermediate future unless drastic changes in our modes of interacting with the rest of nature are undertaken now. Either analysis leads to a need for a fundamental social change. On the other hand, some believe that environmental problems have been grossly exaggerated, which implies that no major social change is necessary. Such divergence of opinion leads to little agreement on prescriptions for cure. In the midst of this uncertainty, it is not surprising that the solutions proposed by governments have been piecemeal and of small consequence. Reigning politicians rarely seek fundamental social change.”*<sup>243</sup>

<sup>241</sup> Rothenburg, David: Arne Naess: Ecology, community and lifestyle, page 100

<sup>242</sup> Rothenburg, David: Arne Naess: Ecology, community and lifestyle, page 165

<sup>243</sup> McLaughlin, Andrew: Regarding Nature: Industrialism and Deep Ecology, page 17

## Jeffrey Sachs: *The End of Poverty*

For Jeffrey Sachs' concept of clinical economics, the state of nature is of tremendous importance, as past development policies have widely ignored a nation's physical geography and human ecology. His perspective is exclusively anthropocentric, as can be seen by clinical economics' checklist questions as "Is the loss of biodiversity threatening ecosystem functions (for example, by reducing the pollination for agricultural products)?" or "Is the introduction of toxins into the environment threatening the air and drinking water?"<sup>244</sup> Clearly, his main concern is for human products and living conditions. Conservation is predominately aimed at resource management for future, economic activities. He acknowledges that "many of the world's poorest places are at risk of being overwhelmed by climate shocks coming from outside their borders", and that "the poorest of the poor are mostly innocent victims in this drama", which is "disproportionately the result of rich-country action". Consequently, the "rich countries", firstly, have to live up to their longstanding commitment under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. According to this convention, the "stabilization of greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system" needs achievement. Secondly, the world's rich have to add financial assistance to the poor countries, "to enable them to respond efficiently to, or at least cope with, the changes ahead". Thirdly, more investments in climate science are necessary, in order "to gain a clearer understanding of how the changes already underway are likely to affect the world's poorest people, as well as the rest of us"<sup>245</sup>. For Sachs, climate change is clearly occurring, predominately caused by the rich world and mostly a threat to the poor, "who rarely have the financial means to undertake these (environmental investments) on their own"<sup>246</sup>, but equally clearly no damning limit to economic growth. For uprising nations as China, the potential for human destruction is profound, and China "will have to become a serious manager of environmental threats, a task that will require government leadership far beyond market reforms"<sup>247</sup>, but if China does so, growth can continue. Nature is little more than one of the six sorts of capital<sup>248</sup> the extreme poor are regularly lacking. Natural capital consists of "well-functioning ecosystems that provide the environmental service needed by human society"<sup>249</sup>, but natural degradation, under the assumption of adequate resources management, poses no devastating limits to growth. Exemplary, farmland may give way to environmental decline because a household has not been

<sup>244</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: *The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime*, page 86

<sup>245</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: *The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime*, page 284

<sup>246</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: *The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime*, page 255

<sup>247</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: *The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime*, page 166

<sup>248</sup> Besides human capital, business capital, infrastructure, public institutional capital and knowledge. Sachs, Jeffrey D.: *The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime*, page 244-245

<sup>249</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: *The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime*, page 244

able to afford fertilizer or does not know about nitrogen-fixing trees<sup>250</sup>, but the construction of farmland in the first place is hardly perceived as environmental decline in itself. How dire are these world affairs? It depends, but as “science has been the key to development from the very start of the industrial revolution”<sup>251</sup>, environmental challenges can be overcome.

## **George W. Bush: President of the United States of America**

How dire are these world affairs for George W. Bush? Apparently, not tremendously, and influences by human’s activities are hard to qualify. “We do not know how much our climate could, or will change in the future...(we do not know) how some of our actions could impact it”, the US President stated his general position on global warming in 2001. Bush’s main objective is to constantly recapitulate how little is known by frequently insisting that knowledge is severely limited and scientific uncertainties remain. Consequently, actions or interventions are rigorously scrutinized by costs-benefits analysis, and with the benefits basically unknown, statements as we “have not yet developed cost-effective ways to capture carbon emissions at their source” fail to surprise. For George W. Bush, environmental degradation and issues of climate change have to be stopped once a level of dangerous human interference with the climate is reached, “but no one knows what that level is”. Additionally, compliance with the Kyoto protocol “would have a negative economic impact, with layoffs of workers and price increases for consumers...(therefore) most reasonable people will understand that it is not sound public policy”<sup>252</sup>. On another occasion, Bush restated that “I will not commit our nation to an unsound international treaty that will throw millions of our citizens out of work” and cost the U.S. economy \$ 400 billion and 4.9 million jobs<sup>253</sup>.

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<sup>250</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime, page 55

<sup>251</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime, page 367

<sup>252</sup> Bush, George W.: President Bush Discusses Global Climate Change (The White House, Office of the Press Secretary, United States of America, 11.06.2001), <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2001/06/20010611-2.html> 18.09.2005

<sup>253</sup> Bush, George W.: President Announces Clear Skies & Global Climate Change Initiatives (The White House, Office of the Press Secretary, United States of America, 14.02.2002), <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2002/02/20020214-5.html> (18.09.2005)

**Ross Gelbspan:**      *Boiling Point: How Politicians, Big Oil and Coal, Journalists, and Activists Have Fueled the Climate Crisis – and What We Can Do to Avert Disaster*

“It is an excruciating experience to watch the planet fall apart piece by piece in the face of persistent and pathological denial”, Ross Gelbspan puts forward. He claims that *Boiling Point*, his recent book dealing with the looming climate crisis, “is a last-grasp attempt to break through the monstrous indifference of Americans to the fact that the planet is carving around us”<sup>254</sup>. These world affairs are dire, and the real question is whether “it is already too late to salvage a coherent future”?<sup>255</sup> For Gelbspan, the coal and oil industries are the root of the problem, and the motivations “behind the disinformation campaign” are financial interests<sup>256</sup>, therefore “the White House has become the East Coast branch office of ExxonMobil and Peabody coal”<sup>257</sup>, and follows the strategy of making “the lack of scientific certainty a primary issue”<sup>258</sup>. Politics are “corruption disguised by conservatism”<sup>259</sup>, and the denial by the fossil fuel lobby “now constitutes a crime against humanity..(and) amounts to the privatization of truth”<sup>260</sup>. By late 2003, “the signals were undeniable”, as global climate change began to threaten to “spiral out of control”, a crisis far beyond an environmental issue, but instead a “civilisational issue”<sup>261</sup>. “In a time of war, truth is the first casualty”<sup>262</sup>, Gelbspan bitterly remarks regarding the dire state of our planet. Nature is panicking, as human activities have accelerated “the migration of species around the globe”, as “species are travelling toward the poles in an effort to maintain temperature stability”<sup>263</sup>. The only hope is “rapid and unprecedented mobilization of humanity around this issue”, as “virtually all the evidence points toward the increasing inevitability of catastrophe”, leaving us with “no choice”<sup>264</sup>. Problematically, it is currently hard to get people focused on climate change, as “there is so much competition from other problems”<sup>265</sup>. Technology is the answer, as “a globally coordinated, properly framed reconstitution of global energy infrastructure

<sup>254</sup> Gelbspan, Ross: *Boiling Point: How Politicians, Big Oil and Coal, Journalists, and Activists Have Fueled the Climate Crisis – and What We Can Do to Avert Disaster* (Basic Books, New York, United States of America, 2004), page xvi

<sup>255</sup> Gelbspan, Ross: *Boiling Point*, page x

<sup>256</sup> Gelbspan, Ross: *Boiling Point*, page xi

<sup>257</sup> Gelbspan, Ross: *Boiling Point*, page 38

<sup>258</sup> Gelbspan, Ross: *Boiling Point*, page 41

<sup>259</sup> Gelbspan, Ross: *Boiling Point*, page 43

<sup>260</sup> Gelbspan, Ross: *Boiling Point*, page 61

<sup>261</sup> Gelbspan, Ross: *Boiling Point*, page 1

<sup>262</sup> Gelbspan, Ross: *Boiling Point*, page 19

<sup>263</sup> Gelbspan, Ross: *Boiling Point*, page 33

<sup>264</sup> Gelbspan, Ross: *Boiling Point*, page 204-205

<sup>265</sup> Gelbspan, Ross: *Boiling Point*, page 175

contains the seeds for a wealthier, more democratic, and ultimately more peaceful world”<sup>266</sup>. The rich world ought to create a “new \$ 300-billion-a-year fund to help transfer renewable energy resources to poor countries”, as “virtually all poor countries would love to go solar; but virtually none can afford it”<sup>267</sup>. The fund would be none of “the usual North-South giveaways”, but instead “a transfer of resources...to the industrial sector, in the form of intensely productive, wealth-generating, job-creating investments”, “raising the living standards abroad without compromising ours” and representing “a critical investment in our own national security”<sup>268</sup>. The main aim is “to expand the overall wealth in the global economy without destroying the physical environment on which it depends”<sup>269</sup> and to profoundly shift our values in the rich nations, as our gratification “must come from sources other than the acquisition and consumption of an endless stream of products, most of which depend on artificially created demand and many of which are superfluous to our happiness”<sup>270</sup>.

### **Bjorn Lomborg: *The Sceptical Environmentalist***

For Bjorn Lomborg, our “ever-deteriorating environment” is nothing but a litany, shaped by the images we are constantly confronted with, but nevertheless not the real state of the world, as “things are getting better”<sup>271</sup>. The messages of impending catastrophe or limits of growth might appear pervasive, but Lomborg “need(s) to challenge our usual conception of the collapse of ecosystems, because this conception is simply not keeping with reality.”<sup>272</sup> The most important notion is to focus on trends and science, as we need “the best evidence to allow us to make the most informed decisions as to where we need to place most of our efforts”<sup>273</sup>. Regarding nature and the environment, “we are on the right track”, “perhaps not at the right speed”, “but the basic approach is not wrong”<sup>274</sup>. What is often lacking is a “realistic conception of the world”, as “people debate and participate in decision-making processes, whereas penguins and pine trees do not”, and “these plants and animals cannot to any great extent be given particular rights”<sup>275</sup>.

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<sup>266</sup> Gelbspan, Ross: [Boling Point](#), page 169

<sup>267</sup> Gelbspan, Ross: [Boling Point](#), page 185-186

<sup>268</sup> Gelbspan, Ross: [Boling Point](#), page 188

<sup>269</sup> Gelbspan, Ross: [Boling Point](#), page 197

<sup>270</sup> Gelbspan, Ross: [Boling Point](#), page 199

<sup>271</sup> Lomborg, Bjorn: [The Sceptical Environmentalist](#) (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, United Kingdom, 1996), page 1

<sup>272</sup> Lomborg, Bjorn: [The Sceptical Environmentalist](#), page 4

<sup>273</sup> Lomborg, Bjorn: [The Sceptical Environmentalist](#), page 5

<sup>274</sup> Lomborg, Bjorn: [The Sceptical Environmentalist](#), page 5

<sup>275</sup> Interestingly, „March of the Penguins“, a French nature documentary turned out to be the surprise 2005 U.S. box office “blockbuster”, as the emperor penguins appeared as “monogamous upholders of traditional family values” or “model parents”, showcasing “universal truths about parenting and bonding with offspring”, giving predominately Christian audiences a felling of “anthropomorphic kinship”; Smith, David: [How the penguin’s life](#)

Humanity has to act selfish, but “what alternatives do we have?”<sup>276</sup> Activist groups as Greenpeace are distracting from more pressing, non-environmental issues in public discourse, as their construction of an unstable environment is an unfounded “assumption that everything is going to hell”, which the movement needs in order to retain its credibility<sup>277</sup>. “In general we need to confront our myth of the economy undercutting the environment”, Lomborg argues, as the choice between “higher economic welfare and a greener environment” is constructed<sup>278</sup>.

## **Tony Blair: Prime Minister of the United Kingdom**

For Tony Blair, these world affairs are much bleaker. According to his 2004 speech on the state of the environment, it is “now plain” that emissions of greenhouse gases, “associated with industrialisation and strong economic growth from a world population that has increased sixfold in 200 years, is causing global warming at a rate that began as significant, has become alarming and is simply unsustainable in the long-term”. By comparison to US president Bush, scientific uncertainties do not exist. Also, unsustainability in the long-term does not refer to centuries ahead, but instead “within the lifetime of my children certainly, and possibly within my own”. Unsustainability, according to Blair, is also not only “a phenomenon causing problems of adjustment”, but “a challenge so far-reaching in its impact and irreversible in its destructive power, that it radically alters human existence”. Blair also acknowledges that likely effects of climate change do not match up with legislative periods, as “there is a mismatch in timing between the environmental and electoral impact”, and “timely action can avert disaster”. “The time to act is now”. In comparison to Mr. Bush, Mr. Blair recognises an “immense business opportunities in sustainable growth and moving to a low carbon economy”. By focusing on such entrepreneurial challenges, Tony Blair sees opportunities where George Bush sees obstacles, as, “just as British know-how brought the railways and mass production to the world, so British scientists, innovators and business people can lead the world in ways to grow and develop sustainably”, as “recent experience teaches us that it is possible to combine reducing emissions with economic growth”. Regarding the question of uncertainty, Blair states “if there were even a 50% chance that the scientific evidence I receive is right, the bias in favour of action would be

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story inspired the US religious right (The Observer, London, United Kingdom, 18.09.2005), [http://observer.guardian.co.uk/uk\\_news/story/0,6903,1572642,00.html](http://observer.guardian.co.uk/uk_news/story/0,6903,1572642,00.html) (20.09.2005)

<sup>276</sup> Lomborg, Bjorn: *The Sceptical Environmentalist*, page 12

<sup>277</sup> Lomborg, Bjorn: *The Sceptical Environmentalist*, page 18

<sup>278</sup> Lomborg, Bjorn: *The Sceptical Environmentalist*, page 33

dear. But of course it is far more than 50%...and, in this case, the science is backed up by intuition.”<sup>279</sup>

## **Arne Naess, David Rothenberg: *Ecology, community and lifestyle***

These world affairs are “dark”, “and the old rough equivalency of GNP with “Gross National Pollution” still holds.<sup>280</sup> “Hundreds of millions of years of evolution of mammals and especially of large, territory-demanding animals will come to a halt”<sup>281</sup> and perceptions, as by Jeffrey Sachs, that “that which is not of value to any human being is not of value at all”, are egocentric. “Newton’s laws were made by Newton, but stones fall without him”, and value statements are only uttered by Homo sapiens, but not necessarily the only values, just because values are formulated not “by mosquitos in mosquito language”<sup>282</sup>. Humanity uses its uniqueness and “special capacities among millions of kinds of other living beings” for constant domination and mistreatment<sup>283</sup>, but “life is fundamentally one”<sup>284</sup>. For millions of animals, disasters feared by humans are commonplace, as “these animals live and die in a nuclear war today”, locked away in laboratories and tortured for experiments<sup>285</sup>. A lack of identification leads to indifference<sup>286</sup>. Wilderness has become so scarce that many national parks are “so overloaded with people that extremely strict regulations have been introduced” – “instead of entering a realm of freedom, one feels that one is in some kind of museum ruled by angry owners”<sup>287</sup>. Responsible participants of contemporary societies have “slowly but surely begun to question whether we truly accept this unique, sinister role we have previously chosen”, our roles within a “global culture of a primarily techno-industrial nature”<sup>288</sup>. How dire are these world affairs? The threat of ecocatastrophe has become apparent<sup>289</sup>. “Apocalypse now” is happening all around, and only continued deterioration of human life conditions may strengthen and deepen the deep ecological movement, hopefully resulting in major changes in economic, political and ideological structures<sup>290</sup>. Then, human

<sup>279</sup> Blair, Tony: [Blair’s Climate Change Speech](http://www.guardian.co.uk/climatechange/story/0,12374,1305090,00.html) (Guardian Unlimited, Guardian Newspaper Limited, United Kingdom, 15.09.2004), <http://www.guardian.co.uk/climatechange/story/0,12374,1305090,00.html>, (18.09.2005)

<sup>280</sup> Rothenburg, David: [Arne Naess: Ecology, community and lifestyle](#), page 211

<sup>281</sup> Rothenburg, David: [Arne Naess: Ecology, community and lifestyle](#), page 212

<sup>282</sup> Rothenburg, David: [Arne Naess: Ecology, community and lifestyle](#), page 176; I wish to add that even this is appears highly questionable, as there is little reason to think that animal languages or gestures are free of communicable values.

<sup>283</sup> Rothenburg, David: [Arne Naess: Ecology, community and lifestyle](#), page 171

<sup>284</sup> Rothenburg, David: [Arne Naess: Ecology, community and lifestyle](#), page 166

<sup>285</sup> Rothenburg, David: [Arne Naess: Ecology, community and lifestyle](#), page 160

<sup>286</sup> Rothenburg, David: [Arne Naess: Ecology, community and lifestyle](#), page 174

<sup>287</sup> Rothenburg, David: [Arne Naess: Ecology, community and lifestyle](#), page 180

<sup>288</sup> Rothenburg, David: [Arne Naess: Ecology, community and lifestyle](#), page 23

<sup>289</sup> Rothenburg, David: [Arne Naess: Ecology, community and lifestyle](#), page 1

<sup>290</sup> Rothenburg, David: [Arne Naess: Ecology, community and lifestyle](#), page 211

development might follow another path and abandon Jeffrey Sachs' ladder of modern, economic growth. The process is probably slow and its "direction revolutionary", but its "steps are reformatory"<sup>291</sup>.

## 4.2 How we regard nature

*"Natural capital: arable land, healthy soils, biodiversity, and well-functioning ecosystems that provide the environmental services needed by human society."*<sup>292</sup>

For Jeffrey Sachs, nature is one sort of capital required to improve human well-being on a global scale. With such an almost universally shared attitude, "it is true that modern industrial people, in practice at least, presume that there are no moral issues involved in (their) treatment of animals and forests", Andrew McLaughlin assesses<sup>293</sup>. Concerning nature, we have "no option but to use humans as a point of reference", and if nature would be attributed with inalienable rights, we would be unable to avoid ethical dilemmas, sceptical environmentalist Bjoern Lomborg puts forward. Instead of inalienable rights, people attribute preferences towards nature, following few rational schemes, as sometimes emissions are cut to save sea-bed dwelling animals, while at "the same time we slaughter cattle for beef"<sup>294</sup>. On the other hand, economies are the dominant factor in determining a society's interaction with all of nature, and the compelling need to secure a living by earning wages "propels most people to participate in activities that they might otherwise avoid", but cannot, as their economic system rewards ecologically destructive practices, Deep Ecologist McLaughlin appears to counter to such claims<sup>295</sup>. If we assume that "the traditional cultural beliefs and practices of much of the world are favourable to the norms of the deep ecological movement"<sup>296</sup> and our modern ways of regarding nature are wrong, spreading the word of Jeffrey Sachs' universal ladder of development will globalize incentives for humans to participate in activities that they might otherwise avoid. For reasons as these, it comes as little surprise that "human employment" is the first consideration New Zealand's Department of Conversation lists in regard to its opposition towards increased commercial or "scientific" whaling:

<sup>291</sup> Rothenburg, David: Arne Naess: Ecology, community and lifestyle page 156

<sup>292</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime, page 244

<sup>293</sup> McLaughlin, Andrew: Regarding Nature: Industrialism and Deep Ecology, page 17

<sup>294</sup> Lomborg, Bjorn: The Sceptical Environmentalist page 12

<sup>295</sup> McLaughlin, Andrew: Regarding Nature: Industrialism and Deep Ecology, page 19

<sup>296</sup> Rothenburg, David: Arne Naess: Ecology, community and lifestyle page 212

*“Even if, eventually, clear evidence were developed that some whale populations had rebuilt to levels at which a sustainable harvest might be possible, the question of whether such a harvest should be undertaken should be weighed carefully against other considerations. These should include the availability of satisfactory and more readily sustainable alternative sources of employment, such as whale watching, for communities currently involved in whale killing for commercial gain.”<sup>297</sup>*

The message is clear: even though “whales have now come to symbolise the excesses to which unrestrained human activity can go” and “their potential recovery is widely seen as a signal as to whether humans can restrain themselves for the benefit of future generations”<sup>298</sup>, the arguments in favour of abandoning commercial whaling are not centred on whales, but on humans. Can humans send a signal that they can restrain themselves? How can the whale be utilized to produce a satisfactory income? A report by the International Fund For Animal Welfare (IFAW) on whale watching in New Zealand puts it even more bluntly: “Whales are worth more alive than dead”<sup>299</sup>, and New Zealand’s Minister of Conservation is “heartened that communities all around our coastline continue to prosper from the wealth of our marine wildlife”, as whale watching is “now worth close to \$ 120 million to the New Zealand economy”. In addition, “there is potential for more growth in this industry as land based whale watching appears to be in its infancy”<sup>300</sup>. Sadly, not all of nature is as impressive to watch as whales, and if tourists’ interest would cease, the harpoon appears worthy of some reconsideration. If nobody cares to watch, a dead whale is once again worth more than an alive one.

Humans have become self-centred, distanced from everything that is, fundamentally interested in their worlds<sup>301</sup>, thus “individuated individuals”, “promoting their personal economic advantage”, valorizing “competition, self-realization and self-maximization”<sup>302</sup>. Alive whales are more valuable than dead whales, as the first one can be shown numerous times, while the latter one can only be eaten once. Praise “Homo industrialus”<sup>303</sup>.

<sup>297</sup> Department of Conservation: The conservation of whales in the 21th century (Department of Conservation, New Zealand), <http://www.doc.govt.nz/Conservation/001~Plants-and-Animals/003~Marine-Mammals/Whales/100~Conservation-of-whales-in-the-21st-century/020~Summary.asp> (20.09.2005)

<sup>298</sup> The conservation of whales in the 21th century (Department of Conservation, New Zealand)

<sup>299</sup> McIntyre, Michael: Foreword, in: The Growth of the New Zealand Whale Watching Industry (International Fund For Animal Welfare, IFAW, May 2005), [http://www.ifaw.org/ifaw/dimages/custom/2\\_Publications/Whales/NZ\\_Whale\\_Watching\\_2005.pdf](http://www.ifaw.org/ifaw/dimages/custom/2_Publications/Whales/NZ_Whale_Watching_2005.pdf) (20.09.2005), page 3

<sup>300</sup> Carter, Chris: Message from the Minister, in: The Growth of the New Zealand Whale Watching Industry, page 2

<sup>301</sup> McLaughlin, Andrew: Regarding Nature: Industrialism and Deep Ecology, page 4

<sup>302</sup> Pettman, Ralph: World Politics: Rationalism and Beyond (Palgrave, United Kingdom, 2001), page 108-109

<sup>303</sup> Sale, Kirkpatrick: Dwellers in the land: The bioregional vision (University of Georgia Press, Athens, Georgia, United States of America, 2000), page 33

More generally, mankind has transformed from “ecosystem people”, those deriving their livelihood from the ecosystems surrounding them, to “biosphere people”, those deriving their livelihood from ecosystems far removed. Indifference follows the increasing lack of identification<sup>304</sup>. Consequently, feedback loops are enlarged, and society can easily fail to notice ecological mistakes<sup>305</sup>.

Under capitalism, nature can be privately owned. “Most of nonhuman nature is regarded as “stuff” which can be owned and disposed of as a right of the owner”. It is disenchanted of intrinsic value and viewed as “raw materials” and “raw resources”<sup>306</sup> – thus, as Jeffrey Sachs puts it, “natural capital...(ought to provide) the environmental services needed by human society”<sup>307</sup>. Consequently, “nonhuman nature is not seen as what it is but as what it might become”<sup>308</sup>. The whale isn’t primarily a whale, but either a steak or something to showcase to buzzing video-cameras from around the world.

Under capitalism, the future is frequently discounted, and “economic “rationality” requires that the distant future be disregarded”<sup>309</sup>. Scarcities of resources tend to fasten their depletion, unless a business is remodelled, as in the case of whales. Economic “rationality” can only be overcome with sufficient wealth and a desire for a sustainable yield, but “capitalistic economies will not likely be ecologically rational”<sup>310</sup>. The whale might have gotten away, but it is the exception. There are no grounds to assume that socialism, as an alternative to contemporary capitalism, would embrace nature any different, as “there is no compelling reason to believe that a society evolved beyond human relations involving domination would also automatically reject domination over the rest of nature”<sup>311</sup>. “From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs”, Karl Marx once stated, prompting Garrett Hardin to challenge “*And then what?*”<sup>312</sup>

Economic growth is widely regarded as good, but “bodes ill for nature”<sup>313</sup>. Some voices are cautious, claiming that “expanding production will not be endless, because growth cannot continue forever with a finite medium”<sup>314</sup>, but others argue that “with the rise of logic we attain the impossible – infinite energy, perpetual motion, and the triumph of power”. The same authors

<sup>304</sup> Rothenburg, David: Arne Naess: Ecology, community and lifestyle, page 174

<sup>305</sup> McLaughlin, Andrew: Regarding Nature: Industrialism and Deep Ecology, page 21

<sup>306</sup> McLaughlin, Andrew: Regarding Nature: Industrialism and Deep Ecology, page 23

<sup>307</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime, page 244

<sup>308</sup> McLaughlin, Andrew: Regarding Nature: Industrialism and Deep Ecology, page 67

<sup>309</sup> McLaughlin, Andrew: Regarding Nature: Industrialism and Deep Ecology, page 39

<sup>310</sup> McLaughlin, Andrew: Regarding Nature: Industrialism and Deep Ecology, page 40-41

<sup>311</sup> McLaughlin, Andrew: Regarding Nature: Industrialism and Deep Ecology, page 63

<sup>312</sup> Hardin, Garrett: What Marx Missed, in Hardin, Garrett and Baden John: Managing the Commons, page 3-8

<sup>313</sup> McLaughlin, Andrew: Regarding Nature: Industrialism and Deep Ecology, page 41

<sup>314</sup> McLaughlin, Andrew: Regarding Nature: Industrialism and Deep Ecology, page 42

put forward that “some say this is not good for the planet”, but then again “that’s how it works, regardless...what we will forever seek, and forever find, is not energy but the logic of power”<sup>315</sup>.

Kirkpatrick Sale tries to answer when our regard of nature started to shift away from a more inclusive perspective, and pins human’s original desire for exploitation and domination down to the Mycenaean civilization, which flourished on the Aegean islands from approximately 1600 to 1000 BC, as “whatever the reasons, the ways of Gaea (mother earth) were forgotten”<sup>316</sup>. Over the course of human development, nature at first “became a focus for alternation instead of adaptation”, and later “for domination instead of mere alternation”<sup>317</sup>, Andrew McLaughlin observes.

Our modern regard of nature reached an unprecedented scale with the enlightenment project, and the rise of the scientific worldview. Ever since, the world seems to operate according to “certain clear, calculable, and unchanging laws, not by the whims of any living, sentient being”<sup>318</sup>. Jeffrey Sachs feels deeply indebted, as “all of us who work toward a brighter future are intellectually indebted to the awe-inspiring geniuses of the Enlightenment, who first glimpsed the prospect of conscious social actions to improve human well-being on a global scale”<sup>319</sup>. With the rise of the western, modernist project, nature ceased to be “either beautiful or scary”, but “merely there”, ready to be used “by humans, for humans”<sup>320</sup>, Sale argue. It became de-mystified and was interpreted as slave and raw material<sup>321</sup>, Arne Naess adds. For radical environmentalists as them, Sachs’ vision of an “enlightened globalization” – “a globalization of democracies, multilateralism, science and technology, and a global economic system designed to meet human needs”<sup>322</sup> is troublesome. If Sachs’ program of development allows each and everyone of humanity to join in on the rising tide of globalization, non-human life will be drowned out.

When Rene Descartes, often claimed to be the father of modernity, started doubting everything he could manage to doubt, arithmetic and geometry stood out as more certain than sensual perceptions<sup>323</sup>, and the cornerstone for Sachs’ “enlightened globalization” was placed. For Descartes, it become impossible to appraise the world by intuition, and the method of critical

<sup>315</sup> Huber, Peter W. and Mills, Mark P.: The Bottomless Well: The Twilight of Fuel, the Virtue of Waste, and Why We Will Never Run Out of Energy (Basic Books, Perseus Book Group, United States of America, 2005), preface

<sup>316</sup> Sale, Kirkpatrick: Dwellers in the land: The bioregional vision, page 12-13

<sup>317</sup> McLaughlin, Andrew: Regarding Nature: Industrialism and Deep Ecology, page 10-11

<sup>318</sup> Sale, Kirkpatrick: Dwellers in the land: The bioregional vision, page 15

<sup>319</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime, page 347-348

<sup>320</sup> Sale, Kirkpatrick: Dwellers in the land: The bioregional vision, page 17

<sup>321</sup> Rothenburg, David: Arne Naess: Ecology, community and lifestyle page 191

<sup>322</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime, page 358

<sup>323</sup> Russell, Bernard: History of Western Philosophy, page 547

doubt brought to completion the detachment of man from nature, the dualism “of man and the rest of nature that reserved goals and purposes for humans alone”<sup>324</sup>. For Descartes, reasoning and science allowed a reduction of chemistry and biology to mechanics, thus “the process by which a seed develops into an animal or plant is purely mechanical”<sup>325</sup>, therefore “animals are automata”<sup>326</sup>. Nowadays, modern sciences, indebted to the enlightenment project, often portray nature along the lines of “a meaningless and colourless collision of lifeless atoms falling through the void”<sup>327</sup>. By comparison, “only humans have minds and bodies, while animals have only bodies”<sup>328</sup>.

Industrialism and urbanization have transformed experiences of nature, as “the earth itself is sold in plastic bags” and, for many urbanized city-dwellers, contact with unmediated nature is contained in parks, “where ironically the sense of danger resides in encounters with one’s fellow citizens”. The constructed “reality of urban life” is confirmed by contrast with lesser “realities” as Disneyland, but in essence, “the real is no longer real”<sup>329</sup>. Furthermore, the rampant urbanization led to the establishment of national parks, but since parks are limited, they often cannot qualify as areas of what Arne Naess describes as “friluftsliv”<sup>330</sup>, because heavy usage in the era of mass tourism severely restricts what “friluftsliv” is about; one cannot walk off path, camp wild, prepare food except in provided grills and so on<sup>331</sup>. Naess remarks that “instead of entering a realm of freedom, one feels that one is in some kind of museum ruled by angry owners”. Additionally, a highly unnatural “outfitting pressure” exists, and “norms about equipment replacement are impressed upon and accepted by large sections of the population”, therefore “people swallow the equipment hook...lengthen their work day and increase stress in the city to be able to afford the latest”<sup>332</sup>. If this is in accordance with what we, en-masse, regard as nature, the real is once again no longer real.

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<sup>324</sup> McLaughlin, Andrew: Regarding Nature: Industrialism and Deep Ecology, page 148

<sup>325</sup> Russell, Bernard: History of Western Philosophy, page 546

<sup>326</sup> Russell, Bernard: History of Western Philosophy, page 547

<sup>327</sup> McLaughlin, Andrew: Regarding Nature: Industrialism and Deep Ecology, page 104

<sup>328</sup> McLaughlin, Andrew: Regarding Nature: Industrialism and Deep Ecology, page 156

<sup>329</sup> McLaughlin, Andrew: Regarding Nature: Industrialism and Deep Ecology, page 71

<sup>330</sup> Described as „free air life“, indicating a „positive kind of state of mind and body in nature“, or a „partial continuation of an aspect of an earlier form of life“, as humans „until quite recently, have been hunters and gatherers“. Rothenburg, David: Arne Naess: Ecology, community and lifestyle, page 178

<sup>331</sup> Rothenburg, David: Arne Naess: Ecology, community and lifestyle, page 180

<sup>332</sup> Rothenburg, David: Arne Naess: Ecology, community and lifestyle, page 180-181

### 4.3 How to regard nature

If the enlightenment has fastened our detachment from reality, “the actual result of the enlightenment project could, in fact, be used to suggest that the whole project is a mistake”, Andrew McLaughlin argues<sup>333</sup>. But how do we get the “real” back into “reality”. How should we regard nature, if we oppose Jeffrey Sachs’ globalization of the unreal?

Primarily, by intuition, Arne Naess, who coined the phrase “deep ecology” in 1972<sup>334</sup>, believes, referring to personal intuitions developed over a long life spent in nature. For Naess, reflecting on childhood memories of spending endless hours “in shallow water on the coast”, “the tiny beautiful forms which “nobody” cared for, or were even unable to see, were part of a seemingly infinite world, but nevertheless my world”<sup>335</sup>. Modesty, Naess puts forward, is required in man’s relationships “with mountains in particular and the natural world in general”, reflecting back upon solitary trips into the highest mountain regions of Norway at the age of 15<sup>336</sup>.

Led by intuition, we “discover that parts of nature are parts of ourselves”, and “if we progress far enough, the very notion of “environment” becomes unnecessary”<sup>337</sup>. Regarding nature, we have to perceive “wholes...that have an organic identifiable unity in themselves, as a network of relations that can move as one”. Regarding nature as such units, Naess chooses the term “gestalt” for these. “Skiing at night in minus twenty Celsius under crystal clear blue darkness and a wide moon”, Naess remarks that “the extreme cold is so much part of the gestalt that if it were any warmer we would really feel uncomfortable”<sup>338</sup>. Detached from nature, skiers might feel uncomfortable freezing at such temperatures, but once they sense the “gestalt switch”, the perception of the world changes. “At first one sees the world one way” (skiing under the crystal clear sky is beautiful, but extremely cold), “but with an increasing awareness of formerly hidden relations, another understanding suddenly comes to light and we make an instantaneous shift. All of a sudden things become clear – a kind of a-ha! experience, the moment of insight”<sup>339</sup> (skiing under the crystal clear sky is beautiful, and part of this beauty is the coldness, as something would be fundamentally wrong if it weren’t cold). Taking the example of a hydropower power plant in a river valley, even with most of the workings and cables placed underground, “those who

<sup>333</sup> McLaughlin, Andrew: Regarding Nature: Industrialism and Deep Ecology, page 117

<sup>334</sup> Deep Ecology, Wikipedia: The Free Encyclopaedia, Wikimedia Foundation Inc [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Deep\\_ecology](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Deep_ecology) (21.09.2005)

<sup>335</sup> Rothenburg, David: Arne Naess: Ecology, community and lifestyle, page 2

<sup>336</sup> Rothenburg, David: Arne Naess: Ecology, community and lifestyle, page 3

<sup>337</sup> Rothenburg, David: Arne Naess: Ecology, community and lifestyle, page 11

<sup>338</sup> Rothenburg, David: Arne Naess: Ecology, community and lifestyle, page 6

<sup>339</sup> Rothenburg, David: Arne Naess: Ecology, community and lifestyle, page 8

remember the rushing falls of earlier days find their gestalt understanding of the valley is disturbed”<sup>340</sup>.

Self-centred self-realizations, as glorified by modern times, lead towards “complete solitude”, as we “cannot simply split into units, pursuing our own goals”, Naess believes. Based on a more inclusive concept of the self, “the greater Self”, even altruism would become unnecessary, as the “larger world becomes part of our own interests”<sup>341</sup>.

Quoting Immanuel Kant’s maxim “You shall never use another person only as a means”, Naess expands Kant’s maxim to “You shall never use any living being only as means”<sup>342</sup>, as “the right of all the forms to live is universal right which cannot be qualified”. Accordingly, “no single species of living being has more of this particular right to live and unfold than any other species”<sup>343</sup> and “all living creatures are fundamentally one”<sup>344</sup>. Modern concepts such as the monetary valuation of environmental consequences violate the basic rights of living beings. Logically, “cost-benefit analysis break down in the case of rights”<sup>345</sup>, easily to illustrate by the “ideology of the broken arm”, as “nobody is entitled to break the arms of fellow humans, however useful this may appear to be”, consequently “nobody is entitled to destroy any part of a protected river ecosystem”<sup>346</sup>, however useful this may appear to be.

The core problem rests upon identification. If we identify just with our self, then a “lack of identification leads to indifference”<sup>347</sup>, but if we identify with the “greater Self”, we still seek what is best for us, “but through the extension of the self (the “Self”), our “own” best is also that of others”<sup>348</sup>, fellow humans, animals, plants and landscapes included. Therefore, if we identify with all that is, the gestalt-violation of a valley by the construction of a hydropower plant becomes painful, even though it appears highly desirable in what we currently perceive as our “real” world.

In our relationships towards nature, intrinsic value is of central importance, as we have to ascribe value to “animals, plants, landscapes, and wilderness areas independently of their relation to human utility or benefit”. “To relative all value to mankind is a form of anthropocentrism which

<sup>340</sup> Rothenburg, David: Arne Naess: Ecology, community and lifestyle, page 13

<sup>341</sup> Rothenburg, David: Arne Naess: Ecology, community and lifestyle, page 9

<sup>342</sup> Rothenburg, David: Arne Naess: Ecology, community and lifestyle, page 174

<sup>343</sup> Rothenburg, David: Arne Naess: Ecology, community and lifestyle, page 166

<sup>344</sup> Rothenburg, David: Arne Naess: Ecology, community and lifestyle, page 165

<sup>345</sup> Rothenburg, David: Arne Naess: Ecology, community and lifestyle, page 125

<sup>346</sup> Rothenburg, David: Arne Naess: Ecology, community and lifestyle, page 128

<sup>347</sup> Rothenburg, David: Arne Naess: Ecology, community and lifestyle, page 174

<sup>348</sup> Rothenburg, David: Arne Naess: Ecology, community and lifestyle, page 175

is not philosophically tenable”<sup>349</sup>, Naess states, thus the mere idea that “to avoid irrationality, one must stick to homocentric utilitarian positions: one must point to usefulness for humans” is wrong. But persistent, as I have shown in chapter 4.2’s discussion of commercial and scientific whaling.

Naess does not favour complete non-interference with nature, which would be equivalent to humanity’s removal from earth, but demands that “the dimensions of peripheral needs of humans must be compared with vital needs of other species, if there is a conflict”<sup>350</sup>. Western industrial society stresses the alienation caused by a kind of technology that reduces everything to mere objects of manipulation and fosters societies even unable to enjoy “friluftsliv” without experiencing an “outfitting pressure” by cooperation between the “representatives of industry and competitive sports”<sup>351</sup>. Consequently, regarding an all-encompassing alienation from reality, Naess points out, “not only animals are thus treated, (but even) workers tend to be mere factors...what counts is profitable sale”<sup>352</sup>.

Our values have shifted, and “science’s profoundly new way of regarding the natural world – as some lifeless abstract to be controlled and used for human ends” has become our “god”<sup>353</sup>. Humanity exchanged “the organic, the spiritual, the incalculable, the mysterious, the circular, and the holistic” for “the celebration of the mechanical, the tangible, the quantifiable, the utilitarian, the linear and the divisible”<sup>354</sup>. Consequently, it is therefore of little surprise if Jeffrey Sachs argues that “the key to ending extreme poverty is to enable the poorest of the poor to get their foot on the ladder of development...they lack the minimum amount of capital necessary to get a foothold”. What kind of capital does Sachs refer to? A lack of human capital, business capital, infrastructure, natural capital, public institutional capital and knowledge capital<sup>355</sup>. If we take into account our “increasing awareness of the tremendous exciting and awe-inspiring past, reaching back 3500 million years, the conviction strengthens that the role of Homo sapiens cannot possibly be to destroy on the present scale”<sup>356</sup>, Naess insists, and “our concern cannot be only for our children and grandchildren, but must be for remoter generations and for the planet as a whole”. Considering the United Nations’ prediction of human population stabilization at around 11 billion, “for today’s rich country consumption levels to be achieved by a whole world that size

<sup>349</sup> Rothenburg, David: Arne Naess: Ecology, community and lifestyle, page 177

<sup>350</sup> Rothenburg, David: Arne Naess: Ecology, community and lifestyle, page 171

<sup>351</sup> Rothenburg, David: Arne Naess: Ecology, community and lifestyle, page 180

<sup>352</sup> Rothenburg, David: Arne Naess: Ecology, community and lifestyle, page 172

<sup>353</sup> Sale, Kirkpatrick: Dwellers in the land: The bioregional vision, page 20-21

<sup>354</sup> Sale, Kirkpatrick: Dwellers in the land: The bioregional vision, page 19

<sup>355</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime, page 244-245

<sup>356</sup> Rothenburg, David: Arne Naess: Ecology, community and lifestyle, page 126-127

would mean multiplying today’s ecological impact some 20 or 30 times over”<sup>357</sup>. Consequently, the whole development project, despite its impact-softening globalization of the “American Dream myth” concerning equal opportunities to climb the ladder of modern development once a certain threshold has been crossed, is wrong, as, from an ecological perspective, “further industrial growth may be toxic”<sup>358</sup>. Jeffrey Sachs’ notion of “natural capital (as) arable land, healthy soils, biodiversity, and well-functioning ecosystems that provide the environmental services needed by human society”<sup>359</sup> and other insufficient types of capital to turn even more resources into waste is therefore dismissible.

In conclusion, Deep Ecologists, as radical environmentalists more generally, believe that humanity should place itself back within nature – not standing outside it. Even science does so, as the evolution of life on earth clearly locates humanity within nature. A fundamental difference between humans and “much of the rest of nature” is “that we live within a cognitive world and act on the basis of our ideas”<sup>360</sup>. Currently, these ideas include industrial economies requiring perpetual expansion and a problems-posing, but not necessarily, limiting nature. “How to regard nature?” ultimately “asks what cultural forms we should create to map nature and thus our place within it”<sup>361</sup>, and for Deep Ecologists, a new construct of culture is needed, based on the realization of the “Self” (as an interconnected part of all that is), instead of the “self” (as an individuated individual). A possible grounding of such a new culture is the platform of Deep Ecology, formulated by Arne Naess and George Sessions<sup>362</sup>, which I will introduce in detail in chapter 4.5.

## 4.4 The myth of control

The fallacy of human control, as articulated in Jeffrey Sachs’ *End of Poverty*, is one of mankind’s gravest fallacies, Deep Ecologists, and more generally most environmentalists, argue. Whereas Jeffrey Sachs’ urges scientific advances in relation to the poor, who “are at risk of being overwhelmed by climate shocks coming from outside their system”<sup>363</sup>, environmentalists argue that exponential growth is impossible in a finite system, which spells doom to any kind of an advancement of a global ladder of modern, economic development. Science and its reductive

<sup>357</sup> McLaughlin, Andrew: Regarding Nature: Industrialism and Deep Ecology, page 200

<sup>358</sup> McLaughlin, Andrew: Regarding Nature: Industrialism and Deep Ecology, page IX

<sup>359</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime, page 244

<sup>360</sup> McLaughlin, Andrew: Regarding Nature: Industrialism and Deep Ecology, page 5

<sup>361</sup> McLaughlin, Andrew: Regarding Nature: Industrialism and Deep Ecology, page 6

<sup>362</sup> McLaughlin, Andrew: Regarding Nature: Industrialism and Deep Ecology, page 173

<sup>363</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime, page 284

image of nature are constructed in the interests of control, thus modern, economic development, McLaughlin argues, and puts forward that “when science’s image of nature is understood as a construction in the service of the project of domination, it can no longer be taken as legitimating this project”<sup>364</sup>. Increased research and development in the field of “climate forecasting and adjustment” or “sustainable management of ecosystems”, as proposed by Sachs, might be good and fine, but eventually rests on the assumption that adjustments and sustainability are possible without a major cultural change, an image constructed by those indebted to the wisdoms of the enlightenment project.

Arne Naess distinguishes between ecological and technological environmentalism, and places Deep Ecology within the first, as it rejects economic growth and the assumptions underlying western science, namely those of control and human domination of nature, whereas technological environmentalists believe that sustainable (growth) development is possible<sup>365</sup>. Past observations appear to undermine this assumption, as “more efficient engines, motors, lights, and cars lead to more energy consumption, not less”, and “more efficient technology lets more people do more, and do it faster – and more/more/faster invariably swamps all the efficiency gains”<sup>366</sup>. Scientific progress has created the illusion that “man can always find a way out of any difficulties, either political, scientific or technological”<sup>367</sup>, but Andrew McLaughlin compares this to “a sort of tunnel vision”, based on a “separation assumption” and “knowledge assumption”. In reality, the presumed duality between the controller and controlled is not justifiable<sup>368</sup>, and on top of it all “reality is more like a set of interconnected systems”, a system in which “control is diffused throughout the whole system, which means, of course, no control at all”<sup>369</sup>. Analogous to Naess, McLaughlin distinguishes between reactive and ecological environmentalism. He argues that reactive environmentalism perceives humanity’s problems “as mistakes arising from ignorance, foolishness, or venality”, with solutions to be found in “increased governmental regulations and larger doses of expertise in the design and execution of industrial society”<sup>370</sup>. Ecological environmentalism rejects such a society, as “the roots of these problems are understood as extending to more fundamental mistakes in the structure of social decision making in modern society”<sup>371</sup>. The most dramatic position in regard of “control” is held by supporters of the Gaia Hypothesis, who perceive our planet as a single organism for itself, constantly maintaining

<sup>364</sup> McLaughlin, Andrew: Regarding Nature: Industrialism and Deep Ecology, page 116

<sup>365</sup> Rothenburg, David: Arne Naess: Ecology, community and lifestyle page 17

<sup>366</sup> Huber, Peter W. and Mills, Mark P.: The Bottomless Well: The Twilight of Fuel, the Virtue of Waste, and Why We Will Never Run Out of Energy, preface

<sup>367</sup> Rothenburg, David: Arne Naess: Ecology, community and lifestyle page 16

<sup>368</sup> McLaughlin, Andrew: Regarding Nature: Industrialism and Deep Ecology, page 84

<sup>369</sup> McLaughlin, Andrew: Regarding Nature: Industrialism and Deep Ecology, page 87

<sup>370</sup> McLaughlin, Andrew: Regarding Nature: Industrialism and Deep Ecology, page 126

<sup>371</sup> McLaughlin, Andrew: Regarding Nature: Industrialism and Deep Ecology, page 126

conditions necessary for its survival<sup>372</sup>, arguing that “our deepest folly is the notion that we are in charge of the place...it is the other way around. We are not separate beings. We are a living part of the earth’s life, owned and operated by earth, probably specialized for functions on its behalf that we have not yet glimpsed”<sup>373</sup>.

Deep Ecologist McLaughlin argues that “the need for control within industrialism extends in two directions – inwardly into human subjectivity and outwardly into external nature”, with failure in one dimension making success in the other ever more urgent. An example is population growth, as “we simply cannot control our own numbers”, and thus have to “try to increase the human carrying capacity of earth” within “an already stressed ecosystem”. Consequently, this requires “increased efforts at managing nonhuman nature”<sup>374</sup>, which bodes ill if we are “sleepwalking into a technologically restructured world without political discussion about the kind of world we are constructing”<sup>375</sup>.

In order to illustrate humanity’s fallacy of control, McLaughlin invents “some creature existing within a world in which all parts are actually interconnected”. These creatures approach their world in terms of purposive action, “and their basic mode of activity is to seek what they want”. In order to do this, these creatures pull on strings of the web to reach what they desire, and their success confirms the image of their world as a collection of many independent strands. McLaughlin’s creatures are intelligent, and learn to “pull on strands using power mined from the network itself, thus satisfying an increasing range of desires more efficiently”. As the number of creatures increases, more are pulling on an ever increasing number of strands, which is perceived as progress. The perpetual growth of strand-pulling carries negative side effects, and eventually the creatures understand that “they cannot do just one thing and that actions always have multiple consequences”. Consequently, experts are trained to assess likely consequences of strand-pulling, but as these are trained to “examine reality in piecemeal approach”, the illusion of control is held up by a belief in the expert’s detailed studies, which just have not been sufficiently rigorous to maintain full control, predict changes and develop suitable strategies of adaptation. At some point of time, fundamental changes occur, threatening the creature’s way of life. Slowly, it is understood that the creature’s fragmentation of reality needs re-examination, as knowledge needs broadening from that of the pieces to that of the whole system. With the world being “a complex, interconnected, finite, ecological-social-psychological-economic system”, the ongoing

<sup>372</sup> Gaia theory, (Wikipedia: The Free Encyclopaedia, Wikimedia Foundation Inc.)

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gaia\\_theory\\_%28science%29](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gaia_theory_%28science%29) (22.09.2005)

<sup>373</sup> Sale, Kirkpatrick: Dwellers in the land: The bioregional vision, page 191-192

<sup>374</sup> McLaughlin, Andrew: Regarding Nature: Industrialism and Deep Ecology, page 83

<sup>375</sup> McLaughlin, Andrew: Regarding Nature: Industrialism and Deep Ecology, page 84

treatment “as it were not, as if it were divisible, separable, simple, and infinite”, result in “persistent, intractable, global problems”, as we presently have not the “slightest capability” of controlling any such system, “much less one that is becoming global in scope”<sup>376</sup>.

As “nature is capable of immense and unpredictable surprises”, and “a great many signals indicate that events are outpacing our ability to contain them”<sup>377</sup>, the burden of proof that contemporary human actions will not have catastrophic consequences should lie on those who alter the system. Instead, the burden of proof has been shifted towards the critics of industrialism<sup>378</sup>. Interestingly, “the fact that the human population is on catastrophic course does not lead to the conclusion that catastrophe will occur”<sup>379</sup>, resulting in a situation where we might approach “serious, rapid, and unwanted changes”<sup>380</sup>, but as we, “mere drops in the stream of life”<sup>381</sup>, “really do not know”<sup>382</sup>, and constantly “emphasise our lack of knowledge and suggest research programmes which may diminish this lack of knowledge”, the “most natural response for politicians is to propose that matter be put on the table or postponed until more information is available”<sup>383</sup>. Accordingly, “the general attitude among politicians has been that if a major type of interference in the ecosystem cannot be proven to be bad then it is justifiable to continue with business as usual”<sup>384</sup>. On the other hand, “the evidence against the belief that the dynamics of markets are harmonious with the dynamics of ecosystems is substantial and growing”, as “the kinds of action which once had little noticeable effect may, at a later time, have more wide-spread consequences”<sup>385</sup>, which means that a short-term perception of controllability might be illusionary. If “we focus narrowly, then control appears to be possible”, but the illusion of control is “a certain sort of blindness, a lack of peripheral vision”, thus “if one were to leave the tunnel (view) entirely”, “the richness of the present moment would appear as such, in all its detailed particularity. The idea of seeking to discover the causal antecedents of all elements of this moment is patently absurd”<sup>386</sup>.

For Deep Ecologists and other environmentalists alike, humanity stroke a terrible path ever since the enlightenment project has gained in importance, even though it already steered slightly off track millennia before. Inescapably, the path is leading us towards a deadly cliff, but instead of

<sup>376</sup> McLaughlin, Andrew: Regarding Nature: Industrialism and Deep Ecology, page 93-95

<sup>377</sup> Gelbspan, Ross: Boling Point, page 203

<sup>378</sup> McLaughlin, Andrew: Regarding Nature: Industrialism and Deep Ecology, page 131-133

<sup>379</sup> Rothenburg, David: Arne Naess: Ecology, community and lifestyle, page 27

<sup>380</sup> McLaughlin, Andrew: Regarding Nature: Industrialism and Deep Ecology, page ix

<sup>381</sup> Rothenburg, David: Arne Naess: Ecology, community and lifestyle, page 165

<sup>382</sup> Gelbspan, Ross: Boling Point, page 203

<sup>383</sup> Rothenburg, David: Arne Naess: Ecology, community and lifestyle, page 26-27

<sup>384</sup> Rothenburg, David: Arne Naess: Ecology, community and lifestyle, page 211

<sup>385</sup> McLaughlin, Andrew: Regarding Nature: Industrialism and Deep Ecology, page 33

<sup>386</sup> McLaughlin, Andrew: Regarding Nature: Industrialism and Deep Ecology, page 96-97

slowing down, we feel in control, never mind that we are travelling on a narrow one-way street. We perceive our vehicle as more comfortable than before, and if we allow Jeffrey Sachs to steer, even more so. We rejoice in the perpetual, geometrical growth of our velocity and maintain that more evidence is needed that that what lies ahead is indeed a cliff. And even if it is, it is merely a problem, not a limit. Most know that a sign at the turnoff definitely indicated one, but the distance was blank and we are all getting faster, “richer”. There is little hope that nature will stop us, as some passengers proudly claim that “with the rise of logic we attain the impossible – infinite energy, perpetual motion, and the triumph of power”<sup>387</sup>. Needless to say that once the cliff is suddenly in sight, it is too late to develop new brakes and the emergency-mandate to wear seat belts does little good while we plunge into eternal depths. Turning off, in retrospect, then has become a fundamental mistake.

## 4.5 Deep Ecology’s platform

Homo sapiens, Arne Naess states, has used its uniqueness and special capacities “among millions of kinds of other living beings” as a premise for domination and mistreatment, whereas it should have used it as a premise “for a universal care that other species can neither understand nor afford”<sup>388</sup>. Human domination of nature does not lead towards a higher degree of “Self-realisation”, but its neglect, as the true “Self” centres on the human joy of identification with everything that is, as I have shown in chapter 4.3. Humanity ought to limit its own realisation to realise a more inclusive “Self”, as humans are able to perceive the urge of other living beings for their self-realisation, which is why humans must assume a kind of responsibility for their conduct towards others and strive towards a “Self-realisation” of togetherness with the plant and animal world<sup>389</sup>, expressed by Naess in observations as “Gestalts bind the I and the not-I together in a whole. Joy becomes, not my joy, but something joyful in which the I and something else are interdependent, non-isolatable fragments”<sup>390</sup>.

But how can Homo sapiens be redirected towards such attitudes towards nature? For Naess, a common platform for groups supporting ecological environmentalism, thus a break from human domination of nature and industrialism, was a potential stepping stone for more united, social movements. Otherwise, varying deep ecological groupings would run the risk of constantly pointing out their differences, instead of realizing their basic unity. Grounded upon a unifying,

<sup>387</sup> Huber, Peter W. and Mills, Mark P.: The Bottomless Well: The Twilight of Fuel, the Virtue of Waste, and Why We Will Never Run Out of Energy, preface

<sup>388</sup> Rothenburg, David: Arne Naess: Ecology, community and lifestyle, page 171

<sup>389</sup> Rothenburg, David: Arne Naess: Ecology, community and lifestyle, page 170

<sup>390</sup> Rothenburg, David: Arne Naess: Ecology, community and lifestyle, page 60-61

general platform, differences in appliance would be quite natural, as the platform's adaptation "involves elaborating the platform in the direction of greater specificity" in "the context of particular actions at specific time and place"<sup>391</sup>. Thus, by formulating deep ecology's platform in "a literal, somewhat neutral way", Naess hoped to unite similar-minded people with "differing ultimate understandings of themselves, society, and nonhuman nature" around common goals<sup>392</sup>. In the following paragraphs, I will introduce Deep Ecology's platform and provide explanations and additions to illustrate its complexity.

## Deep Ecology: The platform

1. *The well-being and flourishing of human and nonhuman Life on Earth have value in themselves (synonyms: intrinsic value, inherent value). These values are independent of the usefulness of the nonhuman world for human purposes*<sup>393</sup>.

Essentially, "this is a denial of anthropocentrism", McLaughlin elaborates, as it asserts the flourishing of all of life<sup>394</sup>. Concerns for "life" are not to be understood as limited in a biologically narrow sense, as "the term "life" is used here in a comprehensive, non-technical way to refer also to things biologists may classify as non-living: rivers, landscapes, cultures...", Naess interprets and explains the scope of his own platform<sup>395</sup>. It therefore includes his conception of "gestalt", meaning that "no part (of any) experience stands entirely alone", and "the whole is more the sum of its parts", which (the latter one) is a good slogan against mechanical models", as conventional scientific thought "tears gestalts asunder". Gestalt conceptions are incompatible with quantitative natural science, which uses models for individual aspects of reality, and naturally leads to alienation, indifference and meaninglessness, as "gestalts of a very complex character are easily destroyed by attempts to analyse fragments of them consciously"<sup>396</sup>.

<sup>391</sup> McLaughlin, Andrew: Regarding Nature: Industrialism and Deep Ecology, page 174

<sup>392</sup> McLaughlin, Andrew: Regarding Nature: Industrialism and Deep Ecology, page 173

<sup>393</sup> Rothenburg, David: Arne Naess: Ecology, community and lifestyle, page 29

<sup>394</sup> McLaughlin, Andrew: Regarding Nature: Industrialism and Deep Ecology, page 179

<sup>395</sup> Rothenburg, David: Arne Naess: Ecology, community and lifestyle, page 29

<sup>396</sup> Rothenburg, David: Arne Naess: Ecology, community and lifestyle, page 58-61

2. *Richness and diversity of life forms contribute to the realisation of these values and are also values in themselves*<sup>397</sup>.

The second principle of deep ecology's platform is "intended to counter the often held image of evolution as resulting in "higher" forms of life", as instead of understanding evolution as a progress from lower to higher forms, evolution is to be understood "as an expression of multiple and wondrous forms of life". There is no "single standard of excellence", no "chain of being", and only "diversity itself is of the essence of excellence"<sup>398</sup>. Additionally, "the maintenance of richness has to do with the maintenance of habitats and the number of individuals", which indicates that "life on Earth may be excessively interfered with even if complete diversity is upheld"<sup>399</sup>. For humans themselves, maintaining the "richness and diversity" includes controlling Alan Gregg's "cancer", as he interpreted "humanity as a cancer of the earth"<sup>400</sup>. If humanity teams up with industrialism and a globalized economy, not only biological diversity is at risk, as human diversity, expressed in indigenous cultures, is equally threatened<sup>401</sup>. Concerning urbanization, McLaughlin points out that the "convenience of urban life involves a little noticed loss of autonomy", as the individual becomes alienated from what is "real", and correctly identifies itself as "relatively powerless, dependent upon systems over which the individual can exert little control". An example is the use of wood for heating, which Naess perceives as increasing within an ecologically interested minority in many industrial countries, as the self-empowerment creates a joyful experience, "especially if the wood has been collected personally"<sup>402</sup>. Powerlessness is especially evident in the fields of politics, which becomes mass politics. Under such conditions "people are "informed" by experts and become "knowledgeable" through mass media", even though "information becomes reduced to what is purveyed by corporately owned media"<sup>403</sup>, often additionally filtered by what Noam Chomsky refers to as "the advertising license to do business"<sup>404</sup>. From an anthropocentric perspective, the "richness and diversity of life forms", understood as cultures, is threatened, as "many societies are free from the striving for material abundance"<sup>405</sup>, but nevertheless get swamped by Western consumerism, the potential end result of Jeffrey Sachs' "Globalization of the unreal", which is universally

<sup>397</sup> Rothenburg, David: *Arne Naess: Ecology, community and lifestyle*, page 29

<sup>398</sup> McLaughlin, Andrew: *Regarding Nature: Industrialism and Deep Ecology*, page 180-181

<sup>399</sup> Rothenburg, David: *Arne Naess: Ecology, community and lifestyle*, page 30

<sup>400</sup> Hardin, Garrett: *Living within limits: ecology, economics and population taboos* (Oxford University Press, New York, United States of America, 1993), page 174

<sup>401</sup> McLaughlin, Andrew: *Regarding Nature: Industrialism and Deep Ecology*, page 181

<sup>402</sup> Rothenburg, David: *Arne Naess: Ecology, community and lifestyle*, page 93

<sup>403</sup> McLaughlin, Andrew: *Regarding Nature: Industrialism and Deep Ecology*, page 72

<sup>404</sup> Chomsky, Noam and Herman, Edward S.: *Manufacturing Consent: A Propaganda Model*, excerpts from *Manufacturing Consent* (Pantheon Books, RandomHouse Inc., Bertelsmann Media Group, New York, United States of America, 1998), [http://www.thirdworldtraveler.com/Herman%20Manufac Consent Prop Model.html](http://www.thirdworldtraveler.com/Herman%20Manufac%20Consent%20Prop%20Model.html) (25.09.2005)

<sup>405</sup> McLaughlin, Andrew: *Regarding Nature: Industrialism and Deep Ecology*, page 79

understood as “progress”. Western technique, which is not entirely negligible, “cannot be imported in isolation”, as history has shown<sup>406</sup>, and “one shudders to contemplate how little would be left of human cultural diversity if the project of industrializing earth is complete.”<sup>407</sup>

3. *Humans have no right to reduce this richness and diversity except to satisfy vital needs*<sup>408</sup>.

The important distinction regarding the platform’s third principle is that between “vital” and “other” needs. Arne Naess himself comments that “this formulation is perhaps too strong”, as “differences in climate and related factors, together with differences in the structures of society as they now exist, need to be considered”<sup>409</sup>. Additionally, “vital needs” could be interpreted very narrowly as nothing but physiological needs for mere survival, according to the Maslow hierarchy of needs, needs that “can be very strong because deprived over time, the person will die”. Other needs such as “self-realisation needs”, “love/belongings needs” or “safety needs” might equally well impact human surroundings, even after their “correction” advocated by what McLaughlin categorizes as ecological environmentalism, understood as a remodelling of society away from consumerism and industrialism<sup>410</sup>. Deep Ecology’s platform does not deliver any guidelines as to what “vital needs” really are, even though Naess writings’ make it very clear that it is much more than just “vital needs” understood as physiological needs. In addition, what are vital physiological needs in one part of the world are not necessarily such in another, as McLaughlin explains by the example of “an Eskimo wearing the skin of a seal and wearing a fur coat for social status in an affluent society”<sup>411</sup>. As a deep ecological mindset does not grow from a blank, universal human mind, but has to grow from the midst of contemporary society, people from what is perceived as “rich” countries will have different “vital” needs than many of those Jeffrey Sachs considers the “extreme poor”. For them, daily survival is a struggle, thus “vital needs” are very close to physiological needs. Andrew McLaughlin categorizes industrialism’s consumerism as “other” needs, as industrialized humans are often struck in an “endlessly repeating cycle of deprivation and temporary satiation”<sup>412</sup>. As the cycle is driven by the to mass media’s implicit sale of faith that happiness comes from material consumption, “consumers willingly graze the malls and labour for the money to spend on goods that are far beyond the range of human needs”. Demand is

<sup>406</sup> Rothenburg, David: [Arne Naess: Ecology, community and lifestyle](#), page 100

<sup>407</sup> McLaughlin, Andrew: [Regarding Nature: Industrialism and Deep Ecology](#), page 205

<sup>408</sup> Rothenburg, David: [Arne Naess: Ecology, community and lifestyle](#), page 29

<sup>409</sup> Rothenburg, David: [Arne Naess: Ecology, community and lifestyle](#), page 30

<sup>410</sup> [Maslow Hierarchy of Needs](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maslow_hierarchy_of_needs) (Wikipedia: The Free Encyclopaedia, Wikimedia Foundation Inc.), [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maslow\\_hierarchy\\_of\\_needs](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maslow_hierarchy_of_needs) (25.09.2005)

<sup>411</sup> McLaughlin, Andrew: [Regarding Nature: Industrialism and Deep Ecology](#), page 182

<sup>412</sup> McLaughlin, Andrew: [Regarding Nature: Industrialism and Deep Ecology](#), page 182

managed by its unnatural stimulation<sup>413</sup>. Arne Naess further tries to clarify that deep ecology's guidelines ought not to be misunderstood as equalling that "human needs should never have priority over non-human needs". Human existence necessarily involves "killing or injuring non-humans"<sup>414</sup>. The "equal right to unfold potentials as a principle is not a practical norm about equal conduct toward all life forms", Naess explains, but merely "a guideline limiting killing, and more generally limiting obstruction of the unfolding of potentials in others". What needs avoidance is killing justified by "relative intrinsic value", meaning that beings perceived to have an eternal soul, capable of reasoning, conscious of themselves or perceived as "higher" in an evolutionary sense can justify their acts of killing based on a higher degree of intrinsic value. For Naess, "it is against my intuition to say "I can kill you because I am more valuable", but not against the intuition to say "I will kill you because I am hungry"<sup>415</sup>.

4. *Present human interference with the non-human world is excessive, and the situation is rapidly worsening*<sup>416</sup>.

"Humans have modified the Earth and will continue to do so", Naess remarks, but adds that "less interference does not imply that humans should not modify some ecosystems", as other species do the same. Instead, "at issue is the nature and extent of such interference", especially in regard of wilderness, as the continued evolutionary speciation of animals and plants is hindered by human activity – and might already have come to a hopefully temporary end for large birds and mammals<sup>417</sup>. For McLaughlin, the "guiding principle should probably be the continuation of biological history". Additionally, technological "advances" disrupt natural cycles, as "agricultural practices involving large scale monocropping create expanding needs for fertilizer and pesticides as crops diminish fertility and "pests" develop immunity to previously used pesticides"<sup>418</sup>. If the situation is already rapidly worsening, as Naess perceives it, the successful implementation of Jeffrey Sachs' *End of poverty* could indeed be interpreted as the impoverishment of all, non-human nature included. Alongside massive development aid, the globalization of a culture that identifies nature primarily as "natural capital", "one of the six identified types of capital...needed for an effective, well-functioning economy" would do little to reduce human interference with non-human nature from current levels, as, in the words of Sachs, the "conservation of ecosystem

<sup>413</sup> McLaughlin, Andrew: Regarding Nature: Industrialism and Deep Ecology, page 75

<sup>414</sup> Rothenburg, David: Arne Naess: Ecology, community and lifestyle, page 170

<sup>415</sup> Rothenburg, David: Arne Naess: Ecology, community and lifestyle, page 167-168

<sup>416</sup> Rothenburg, David: Arne Naess: Ecology, community and lifestyle, page 29

<sup>417</sup> Rothenburg, David: Arne Naess: Ecology, community and lifestyle, page 30

<sup>418</sup> McLaughlin, Andrew: Regarding Nature: Industrialism and Deep Ecology, page 183

services” is necessary to support “crop productivity”<sup>419</sup>. “The Green Revolution”, Sachs points out, “is one of the most important triumphs of targeted science in the past century”, as high-yield varieties of staple crops have helped increasing the earth’s carrying capacity<sup>420</sup>. Nevertheless, in regard of the extreme poor, scientific advances in tropical agriculture are needed, thus nothing but more disruptions of natural cycles: “new seed varieties, water management techniques, and soil management techniques”<sup>421</sup>.

5. *The flourishing of human life and cultures is compatible with a substantial decrease of the human population. The flourishing of non-human life requires such a decrease*<sup>422</sup>.

“Once recognition is given to other forms of life, then it is clear that we humans are too many already”, McLaughlin elaborates, and touches one of the most controversial issues surrounding Deep Ecology, namely the quest for human population control. “The continuing increase in human numbers also condemns many humans to a life of suffering”, he remarks. “The poorest of the poor countries...are stuck with fertility rates of five or more”, Jeffrey Sachs illustrates in regard of the demographic trap, which he perceives as avoidable by development, as “high population growth leads to deeper poverty, and deeper poverty contributes to high fertility rates”<sup>423</sup>. Among other reasons, risk averse families are part of the population dilemma, as “when children die in large numbers”, poor families “overcompensate in a statistical sense”<sup>424</sup>. To a certain degree, Jeffrey Sachs and Deep Ecologists go hand in hand in recognition of the world’s population problem, even though Deep Ecologists would restrain from calling for a new green revolution in the chronically malnourished tropical world, as Sachs does<sup>425</sup>. For them, “the expanding human population, especially when coupled with environmentally destructive forms of production, appears as a vast aggression against the rest of nature”<sup>426</sup>. Most Deep Ecologists fail to address the fifth principle of Deep Ecology’s platform in a convincing manner. Arne Naess himself states that “the stabilisation and reduction of human population will take time”, and later adds that a “population reduction towards decent levels might incidentally require a thousand years”<sup>427</sup>. Naess also states that “if the present billions of humans (would) deeply change their behaviour in the direction of ecological responsibility, non-human life could flourish”, but current economics and technology are not capable of a fundamental change. This line of thought

<sup>419</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime, page 255-256

<sup>420</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime, page 259

<sup>421</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime, page 283

<sup>422</sup> Rothenburg, David: Arne Naess: Ecology, community and lifestyle, page 29

<sup>423</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime, page 66

<sup>424</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime, page 324

<sup>425</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime, page 283

<sup>426</sup> McLaughlin, Andrew: Regarding Nature: Industrialism and Deep Ecology, page 153

<sup>427</sup> Rothenburg, David: Arne Naess: Ecology, community and lifestyle, page 127

refutes Jeffrey Sachs' strategy of lifting the poor on the universal ladder of modern, economic growth and thus Sachs' solution of the demographic trap, or at least its intention. For Sachs, the demographic trap traps humanity and creates human poverty, for Deep Ecologists, "all that is" is trapped, and "most of what is" does not get released by Jeffrey Sachs' strategies to spread wealth among mankind. In regard of contemporary world affairs, Naess highlights the "present complacency", thus "substantial decreases in richness and diversity are liable to occur", and "the rate of extinction of species will be greater than in any other period of Earth history"<sup>428</sup>. If we assume that the world's human population will level out at 11 billion in 2050<sup>429</sup>, it needs asking how much damage will be done if, as Naess states, a sensible reduction of human population requires as much as a millennium. McLaughlin distances Deep Ecology from "misanthropy or cruelty toward presently existing humans"<sup>430</sup>.

Garrett Hardin, who never opposed capitalism or affiliated himself with Deep Ecology, proposed just this as viable solutions for the "tragedy of the commons", namely the world's problem of too many people overusing the world's commons, and being assisted in doing so by humanitarian, ill-advised compassion. Even though he is solely concerned with humanity's survival, his position is of potential interest for Deep Ecology's platform, as similar lines of thought might develop within social movements grounding themselves in Deep Ecology, but dissatisfied with the somewhat vague hope that development reduces fertility and yet-to-come cultural changes will reduce human numbers down towards a sensible level over the course of multiple centuries, or even a millennium. Hardin proposes a more natural "dog eat dog" world, as "parents who breed too exuberantly would leave fewer descendants, not more, because they would be unable to care adequately for their children"<sup>431</sup>, because if "overbreeding brought its own "punishment" to the germ line – then there would be no public interest in controlling the breeding of families". Bluntly speaking, if overpopulation would cause a famine in parts of the world, nature would solve the problem and adjust human population to the actual carrying size of the area. If instead aid would arrive, "population size escalates, as does the absolute magnitude of "accidents" and "emergencies"<sup>432</sup>. The underlying problem is our welfare state, or along the same lines of thought, international aid and universal human rights, as "to couple the concept of freedom to breed with the belief that everyone born has an equal right to the commons is to lock the world into a tragic course of action", and, "if we love the truth we must openly deny the validity of the

<sup>428</sup> Rothenburg, David: Arne Naess: Ecology, community and lifestyle page 30-31

<sup>429</sup> McLaughlin, Andrew: Regarding Nature: Industrialism and Deep Ecology, page 200

<sup>430</sup> McLaughlin, Andrew: Regarding Nature: Industrialism and Deep Ecology, page 182

<sup>431</sup> Hardin, Garrett: The Tragedy of the Commons (1968) in Hardin, Garrett and Baden John: Managing the Commons (W.H. Freeman and Company, San Francisco, California, 1977), page 23

<sup>432</sup> Hardin, Garrett: Living within limits: ecology, economics and population taboos (Oxford University Press, New York, United States of America, 1993), page 267-70

Universal Declaration of Human Rights”<sup>433</sup>. In another work, Hardin openly writes about “The Peril of Universal Human Rights”, as he questions whether we must “tolerate unlimited tolerance”<sup>434</sup>. The “most important aspect of necessity that we must recognize is the necessity of abandoning the commons in breeding”, Hardin puts forward, as “no technological solution can rescue us from the misery of overpopulation”<sup>435</sup>. Instead, technological solutions, such as the Green Revolution, are labelled as “eco-destruction”, as an attempt to increase food production and thus the earth’s carrying capacity just spreads the human “cancer” further. To make his point, Hardin quotes Alan Gregg, who stated that “cancerous growths demand food; but, so far as I know, they have never been cured by getting it...the analogies can be found in our plundered planet”<sup>436</sup>. Hardin is equally opposed to immigration. In his words, “to be generous with one’s own possessions is one thing; to be generous with posterity’s is quite another”, even though he recognizes the problem of regress, as his country, the United States, is made up out of immigrants. “We are all the descendants of thieves”, he acknowledges, “and the world’s resources are inequitably distributed, but we must begin the journey to tomorrow from the point where we are today”, as “we cannot safely divide the wealth equitably among all present peoples, so long as people reproduce at different rates, because to do so would guarantee that our grandchildren would have only a ruined world to inhabit”<sup>437</sup>. Theoretically, it is easy to see how more determined Deep Ecological movements could adapt Hardin’s ideology, even though some perceive it as “barbaric”<sup>438</sup>, but not in the name of humanity’s survival, as he does, but the survival of “all that is”.

6. *Significant change of life conditions for the better requires change in policies. These affect basic economic, technological, and ideological structures*<sup>439</sup>.

Principle 1 to 5 are incompatible to “economic growth as conceived and implemented today by the industrial states”, Naess argues. Similarly, Jeffrey Sachs’ appeal to anti-globalization movements to cease focusing on blocking trade and investment, and instead insisting “that the World Trade Organization follow through on the political commitments made at Doha and elsewhere to ensure that the poorest countries have access to the markets of the richest”, is equally incompatible to Deep Ecology’s platform. Industrialism leads to prestige in vast consumption and waste. For Naess, the main problem of contemporary growth-ideologies is that

<sup>433</sup> Hardin, Garrett: The Tragedy of the Commons, page 24

<sup>434</sup> Hardin, Garrett: Living within limits: ecology, economics and population taboos, page 295

<sup>435</sup> Hardin, Garrett: The Tragedy of the Commons, page 28

<sup>436</sup> Hardin, Garrett: Living within limits: ecology, economics and population taboos, page 174

<sup>437</sup> Hardin, Garrett: Living on a Lifeboat, page 272-275

<sup>438</sup> McLaughlin, Andrew: Regarding Nature: Industrialism and Deep Ecology, page 136

<sup>439</sup> Rothenburg, David: Arne Naess: Ecology, community and lifestyle, page 29

growth is measured solely in marketable values, but not in values that are more general. “Sustainability is completely ignored”, and the concentration on growth-indicators as GDP “favours still more development of the already strongly industrialised and centralised areas”<sup>440</sup>. In regard of political changes needed, key slogans as “self-determination” and “local community” additionally require more political interconnection on a global level, “perhaps contrary to the short-range interests of local communities”<sup>441</sup>, as some issues cannot be dealt with locally, even though the concept of increased local autonomy and the need for regulation and coordination between increasingly autonomous localities poses challenges.

Technology-wise, “the technology of mass production is in itself violent, ecologically harmful, ultimately self-destructive in its consumption of non-renewable resources and stupefying for the human person”, Arne Naess quotes Ernst Friedrich Schumacher’s work *Small is beautiful*. Schumacher also stated that “the most striking thing about modern industry is that it requires so much and accomplishes so little”, as “modern industry seems to be inefficient to a degree that surpasses one’s ordinary powers of imagination. Its inefficiency therefore remains unnoticed”<sup>442</sup>. A focus on GDP growth as a measure of development and advancement “favours hard and distant technologies”, Naess claims, as the economy operates along the lines of “if something can be done in a complicated way and thereby generate more profit, why do it simple?”<sup>443</sup> It is therefore a justifiable means to illustrate Schumacher’s perceived unimaginable inefficiency. Modern economic thought, Naess argues, often focuses on rationality and rational choice, but does so in a very selective manner, which promotes irrationality. He illustrates this by stating that “when it is said that it is economically more rational to transport heavy goods from A to B by means of trucks than by means of horses, it does not exclude the possibility that it is unwise to transport any heavy goods from A to B”, therefore the “elimination of normativity in economics turned a great deal of attention in the name of “progress” towards irrationality”, then perceived as rational choices available due to the means constructed by hard technologies<sup>444</sup>. Since the ecologically harmful transportation of goods needed to satisfy often constructed, artificial needs is even itself interpreted as progress, the globalization of markets appears desirable and increases the involved countries’ national incomes. GDP’s absurdity concerning welfare and “progress” calculations are perfectly summarized by Harry Livesey, who states that “there are many examples of miscalculated GDP. The costs of increased crime and crime protection, the clean-up

<sup>440</sup> Rothenburg, David: *Arne Naess: Ecology, community and lifestyle*, page 113

<sup>441</sup> Rothenburg, David: *Arne Naess: Ecology, community and lifestyle*, page 31

<sup>442</sup> Piasecki, Bruce: *E.F. Schumacher: A retrospect and reflection after September 11, 2001* (Loka Institute, Pennsylvania, United States of America, 01.11.2001), [http://www.loka.org/alerts/loka\\_alert\\_8.6.htm](http://www.loka.org/alerts/loka_alert_8.6.htm) (26.09.2005)

<sup>443</sup> Rothenburg, David: *Arne Naess: Ecology, community and lifestyle*, page 113

<sup>444</sup> Rothenburg, David: *Arne Naess: Ecology, community and lifestyle*, page 107

bills from floods, car crashes and oil-spills all add to GDP. GDP does not count benefits we currently get for free. If a town draws its water from a clean flowing stream, GDP sees nothing. If the stream becomes polluted and ratepayers must now pay for a treatment plant and have higher rates, GDP records a gain in welfare even though we're now paying for a service we used to have for free". Moreover, in regard of New Zealand's GDP, Livesey rightfully states that "if we logged the West Coast completely bare our GDP would skyrocket"<sup>445</sup>, which illustrates the completely missing component of sustainability within a simple-minded focus on GDP. Additionally, GDP calculations fail to account for work such as "unpaid work in the home", and thus reflect a very selective approach towards the question what kind of work really "counts". Changes are therefore needed in regard of technologies, with an increased emphasis on what Naess describes as "soft technologies", therefore "ecologically satisfactory techniques", more aligned with the mantra "small is beautiful" and regional empowerment than the "big, centralised, hierarchical" structures contemporary economic globalization seems to favour<sup>446</sup>.

Ideologically-wise, the average lifestyle of the global elites, as "we can learn about under the heading "Living" in Time magazine, might more appropriately have the heading "Dying"", Naess bitterly remarks, as "the universalisation and implementation of the norms imply a catastrophic decrease in living conditions of most kinds of living beings"<sup>447</sup>. Similarly, for McLaughlin, sustainability is of central importance in regard of the sixth principle, as "taking sustainability as the criterion by which economies should be appraised is a fundamental shift away from the mindless quest for growth", and might help humanity to understand that a decrease in population is necessary<sup>448</sup>.

7. *The ideological change is mainly that of appreciating life quality (dwelling in situations of intrinsic value) rather than adhering to a high standard of living. There will be a profound awareness of the difference between big and great<sup>449</sup>.*

"Some economists", Arne Naess states, "criticise the term "quality of life" because it is supposed to be too vague", but for Naess this vagueness "is actually the non-quantifiable nature of the term"<sup>450</sup>. A high standard of living, as experienced in most first world countries, apparently does

<sup>445</sup> Livesey, Harry: The Unhappy Australian Paradox: are we „lagging“ behind? (Salient, Victoria University Wellington, New Zealand, Issue 23/05), page 26

<sup>446</sup> Rothenburg, David: Arne Naess: Ecology, community and lifestyle, page 97-100

<sup>447</sup> Rothenburg, David: Arne Naess: Ecology, community and lifestyle, page 93

<sup>448</sup> McLaughlin, Andrew: Regarding Nature: Industrialism and Deep Ecology, page 183-184

<sup>449</sup> Rothenburg, David: Arne Naess: Ecology, community and lifestyle, page 29

<sup>450</sup> Rothenburg, David: Arne Naess: Ecology, community and lifestyle, page 31

not lead to satisfaction, but “rather an unending quest for more”, McLaughlin observes<sup>451</sup>. If the self realises itself not with “all that it possesses”, but “with all that is”, as Deep Ecologists prefer, the requirements of economic growth for its own sake can be avoided. For Deep Ecologists, Jeffrey Sachs’ perception of the wondrous rise of Chinese affluence has little in common with an increased appreciation of life quality, but nevertheless illustrates many of the “wrongs” associated with the “right” of economic progress. Sachs illustrates his amazement in regard of China’s newfound affluence by a short tale about a night out, where he enjoyed a “Mao-era revolutionary opera in a room filled with very well-dressed young business executives”. “Every table had at least one, and usually half a dozen, cell phones lying on it in case any of the hotshot young businessmen and –women received calls from clients or the office”, Sachs tells his readers, and rejoices at the distractions of increasing affluence. “As I peered at the opera out of a corner of my eye, my hosts showed me the new cell phones they had just purchased that were also digital cameras...this was a gadget that I had not yet seen back home”. While Sachs was distracted from appreciating the opera’s “intrinsic quality”, he mused that “these young Chinese men and women have the chance to attain tremendous affluence, to travel the world, and to enjoy the other benefits of the high living standards available to them because of the powers of globalization”<sup>452</sup>. One could equally well muse, which Sachs apparently did not, over the question whether dozens of ringing after-hours cell-phones are really capable of increasing the long-term quality of life of those interrupted during the opera by the jingle of their newest gadget. Equally, one could question whether Beijing, Sachs’ “booming city of eleven million” and “one of the world’s economic capitals”, “where economic growth is speeding ahead of full throttle”<sup>453</sup>, is developing as positive as he makes it appear. Joe Lavin, a Boston Herald columnist, tells his readers about a city that “makes the Los Angeles smog seem like fresh air” and “painted the grass green in some spots just to impress the visitors” prior to the IOC’s decision in regard of the 2008 Olympics<sup>454</sup>. Readers of the Guardian Unlimited, meanwhile, can read about a city that advised its residents not to go outside and ordered the partial closure of some highways in the fall of 2004. After several windless days, “the pollution reduced visibility in central areas to a few hundred meters, blurring the edges of buildings and turning distant skyscrapers into giant ghosts.”<sup>455</sup> Of course, it has to be kept in focus that Sachs is primarily concerned about ending extreme poverty, not delivering gadgets for everyone. Nevertheless, the myth Sachs is trying to globalize by putting everyone on the ladder of economic development is that everybody could have a chance to

<sup>451</sup> McLaughlin, Andrew: Regarding Nature: Industrialism and Deep Ecology, page 42

<sup>452</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime, page 17

<sup>453</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime, page 17

<sup>454</sup> Lavin, Joe: The Smog Olympics: Beijing 2008 (Boston Herald, Massachusetts, United States of America, 21.07.2001), [http://joelavin.com/herald\\_olympics.html](http://joelavin.com/herald_olympics.html) (26.09.2005)

<sup>455</sup> Watts, Jonathan: Toxic smog shrouds Beijing (Guardian Unlimited, London, United Kingdom, 11.10.2004), <http://www.guardian.co.uk/waste/story/0,12188,1324326,00.html> (26.09.2005)

obtain gadgets as his Chinese hosts, or make it to the rungs of the middle-income world, which allows for the purchase of a scooter “and someday even an automobile”<sup>456</sup>. For Deep Ecologists, this is the globalization of the unreal. Industrialism does not create the conditions for real human well-being<sup>457</sup>, which is “Self-realisation”, Arne Naess’ “top norm and key term for an ultimate goal”, including personal and community self-realisation and the “unfolding of reality as a totality”, instead of “ego-realizations”, as favoured by prevailing individualistic and utilitarian political thinking in Western industrial states. Western ideologies treat self-cultivation as egoistic acts, developed through traits conducive to winning, but for Naess, human’s personalities are not as narrow as such images of self-cultivation reflect, as “the sources of joy go deeper and farther”<sup>458</sup>. In regard of principle #7’s “profound awareness of the difference between big and great”, the aforementioned (principle #6) focus on E.F. Schumacher’s *Small is beautiful* and regional empowerment is once more taken up. Key concepts regarding what Naess perceives as “soft technologies” are attempts to “restore the old system that food is grown within the horizon”, “restore pattern of local handicraft”, “restore local building pattern with local materials”, “restore patterns of walking, talking, bicycling, more car-free areas” and so forth<sup>459</sup>. As I perceive industrialism’s alleged inability to increase not only living standards but the quality of life as the central question in regard of alternative ideologies’ chances to effect deep cultural change, I will try to introduce the correlation between economic performance and human happiness in a chapter 4.6.

8. *Those who subscribe to the foregoing points have an obligation directly or indirectly to participate in the attempt to implement the necessary changes*<sup>460</sup>.

As “diversity” is a high norm for Arne Naess, he allows for “ample room for different opinions about priorities” and thus actions and ideologies based upon Deep Ecology’s platform<sup>461</sup>, but nevertheless urges those in general agreement of the platform to implement changes into their lives, as backers of the platform have to realise “that change must begin at once”<sup>462</sup>. Naess’ platform itself just expresses general and basic views to be shared by anyone claiming to be a Deep Ecologist. Equally, it is the result of Arne Naess’s “Ecosophy T”<sup>463</sup>, his personal reasoning

<sup>456</sup> Sachs, Jeffrey D.: *The End of Poverty: How We Can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime*, page 19

<sup>457</sup> McLaughlin, Andrew: *Regarding Nature: Industrialism and Deep Ecology*, page 185

<sup>458</sup> Rothenburg, David: *Arne Naess: Ecology, community and lifestyle*, page 84-86

<sup>459</sup> Rothenburg, David: *Arne Naess: Ecology, community and lifestyle*, page 99

<sup>460</sup> Rothenburg, David: *Arne Naess: Ecology, community and lifestyle*, page 29

<sup>461</sup> Rothenburg, David: *Arne Naess: Ecology, community and lifestyle*, page 31-32

<sup>462</sup> Rothenburg, David: *Arne Naess: Ecology, community and lifestyle*, page 5

<sup>463</sup> *Ecosophy*: utilisation of basic concepts from the science of ecology, such as complexity, diversity, and symbiosis, to clarify the place of our species within nature through the process of working out a total view, Rothenburg, David: *Arne Naess: Ecology, community and lifestyle*, page 3

“why this is so”, in regard to his intuitive perception of a personal connectedness to “all that is”<sup>464</sup>. His ecosophy’s name, “Ecosophy T”, ought to imply that there might be many other ecosophies, which every follower of Deep Ecology has to develop for him- or herself. For Naess, it is not important that followers buy into every detail of “Ecosophy T’s” reasoning, but that “we are able to reach the system’s conclusions (the platform) using ways of feeling and reason familiar to us”, even if those differ from “Ecosophy T”. Thus, if an individual’s world view aligns with Deep Ecology’s platform, the 8<sup>th</sup> principle urges this individual to act within its capabilities.

Andrew McLaughlin throws up the important question of “agency”, as “the urgent question now is, who will dare to make radical ecocentric change?” Not surprisingly, his conclusions appear sobering at first sight, as “perhaps there is no effective social agency for the needed transformation”, because “industrial society cannot be effectively reformed”<sup>465</sup>. Considering the absence of any apparent top-down willingness for profound change, Deep Ecologists should focus on the grass-root level. Additionally, “if there is no effective human agency, then the agent of change is the rest of nature”, as “the situation has to get worse before it gets better”. Nature itself has to convince a critical mass of people that something is wrong with an economic theory that denies the possibility of an economy exceeding its optimal scale, and grass-root Deep Ecologists’ task is to have an alternative vision ready to present once the public becomes receptive. Without such alternative visions at hand, it is doubtful whether broad masses will take purposive action, even in the face of rapid ecological deterioration<sup>466</sup>.

Radical ecocentrism, as it is required, has to cooperate with other social movements for which principle #6 is of vital importance, whether it are those at the periphery of industrialism or feminists, even though feminism, or other marginalised positions in the field of international relations, does not in itself lead towards ecological feminism<sup>467</sup>. Oppression is not limited to industrialism’s “determinative role in the rape of the Earth”, therefore the “poor” and “oppressed” have to coordinate their social movements in order to make their claims heard. Unfortunately, for McLaughlin, “it is hard to know whether such movements can gain sufficient strength in number to force a reversal of the structure of industrialism”, but for contemporary movements, “the point is the action, not its fruit”, as “the struggle will extend beyond any of our lifetimes”. Nevertheless, for those supporting Deep Ecology’s platform, “it is important to live now in a way that enables one’s spirit to flourish”<sup>468</sup>.

<sup>464</sup> Rothenburg, David: Arne Naess: Ecology, community and lifestyle, page 2-3

<sup>465</sup> McLaughlin, Andrew: Regarding Nature: Industrialism and Deep Ecology, page 215

<sup>466</sup> McLaughlin, Andrew: Regarding Nature: Industrialism and Deep Ecology, page 216

<sup>467</sup> McLaughlin, Andrew: Regarding Nature: Industrialism and Deep Ecology, page 220

<sup>468</sup> McLaughlin, Andrew: Regarding Nature: Industrialism and Deep Ecology, page 222-223

An example for an individual fulfilling his obligation is Dough Tompkins, founder of “The North Face Company” and “Esprit”, who “came from a world of materialism...of promoting useless products”, before selling his stakes in Esprit and founding the Foundation for Deep Ecology in the early 1990s<sup>469</sup>. By slowly obtaining more and more of Chile’s countryside, he amassed an area close to 800,000 adjacent acres and became the country’s largest private landowner. His intentions? Handing the land back to nature, restoring it as an architect would restore ancient buildings so that untrammelled evolution can continue once again. Interestingly, nationalists strongly opposed Tompkins’ intentions, which factually cut the narrow country in half, with Senator Antonio Horvath scenting an international, green conspiracy to halt Chile’s development<sup>470</sup>.

## 4.6 Are we getting happier?

Does Deep Ecology convince? Does economic development, perpetual growth, produce perpetual happiness? Are we getting happier? Can we globalize happiness with Jeffrey Sachs’ enlightened globalization? Both Naess’ and McLaughlin’s works are interwoven with vague statements that we cannot, as development based upon a global ladder of modern, economic growth automatically includes a drive for overdevelopment. Only once does McLaughlin refer to some kind of statistic, when he states that Americans consistently report lower happiness than in 1957, despite rapidly increasing material possessions<sup>471</sup>. Other than that, McLaughlin mostly refers to metaphors as the “treadmill of material consumption”<sup>472</sup> or describes industrial life as “swings through moods of excitement, boredom, anger, and fear”, thus “not a recipe for human joy or excellence”, as “people aimlessly graze malls armed with credit cards, seeking *something*, though they know not what”. Life is “supersaturated with latent discontent”, but “a trance has been induced by mass media”. Mass media with a global influence, as he, writing in 1993, rightfully predicted that the dissolving Soviet Union would attempt to live the globalized “dream of shopping malls with parking lots big enough for all to come”<sup>473</sup>. In the words of Arne Naess, the key word “economic growth...has negative influence on contemporary quality of life in the rich industrial nations”<sup>474</sup>, and principle #7 of Deep Ecology’s platform refers to a needed

<sup>469</sup> Tompkins, Doug: Looking Forward & Backward, (Foundation for Deep Ecology, San Francisco, United States of America), <http://www.deepecology.org/lookingback.html> (27.09.2005)

<sup>470</sup> Glüsing, Jens: Der König von Patagonien (Der Spiegel, Hamburg, Germany), <http://www.spiegel.de/spiegel/0,1518,376439,00.html> (27.09.2005)

<sup>471</sup> McLaughlin, Andrew: Regarding Nature: Industrialism and Deep Ecology, page 42

<sup>472</sup> McLaughlin, Andrew: Regarding Nature: Industrialism and Deep Ecology, page 42

<sup>473</sup> McLaughlin, Andrew: Regarding Nature: Industrialism and Deep Ecology, page 200-201

<sup>474</sup> Rothenburg, David: Arne Naess: Ecology, community and lifestyle, page 111

increase in appreciation of life quality, not material standard of living<sup>475</sup>. We ought to want less (materially) in order to have more (joy). David Rothenberg observes that “we feel our world in crisis...(and) walk around and sense an emptiness in our way of living and the course which we follow”<sup>476</sup>.

The author’s bold rhetoric is strong, but the question is whether the extensive use of metaphors and images does not disguise an otherwise unsustainable argument, or is grounded in perceptions of Self-realisation and joyfulness difficult to universalize, especially as “progress” and “happiness” are massively constructed quite contrarily by the globalized mass media.

Nevertheless, the authors try to connect with their readers, draw up common images and hope that readers perceive the same widespread emptiness and latent dissatisfaction as they do. Were Naess, McLaughlin, Sachs and NY times columnist Thomas Friedman to visit China together, or even to attend a Mao-era revolutionary opera as Sachs did, their perceptions of busy hotshot businessmen and –women frantically doing business on their mobile gadgets, would reflect dramatically different world views. Disregarding environmental issues, for the one side the galloping individualisation of a formerly hierarchical, community-based, sociocentric Confucian society<sup>477</sup> would spell doom for humanity’s cultural diversity and richness, whereas Sachs would enthusiastically observe that the rising tide of globalization is lifting ever more, just as NY Times columnist Thomas Friedman would detect the “wealth of yet more nations” in a “flattening world”<sup>478</sup>.

In the absence of environmental Armageddon, Deep Ecology’s chances of transforming society rest upon its apparently eye-opening rhetoric, even though radical propositions often fall on deaf ears, as Noam Chomsky explained by stating that “either you repeat the same conventional doctrines everybody is saying, or else you say something true, and it will sound like it's from Neptune.”<sup>479</sup> Reactive environmentalism will occur automatically; even though some state leaders or lobby groups are more prone to act in such manners than others. For Deep Ecologist, those half-hearted attempts to achieve sustainable growth are far off mark, as they are essentially anthropocentric and insufficient as long as the inherent growth-oriented tendencies of industrialised societies are not abandoned. Deep Ecologist’s rhetoric differs and asks for an abandonment of the whole project of modern, economic growth, grounded in the enlightened

<sup>475</sup> Rothenburg, David: Arne Naess: Ecology, community and lifestyle, page 29

<sup>476</sup> Rothenburg, David: Arne Naess: Ecology, community and lifestyle, page 1

<sup>477</sup> Morris, Brian: Anthropology of the Self: The Individual in Cultural Perspective, page 112-117

<sup>478</sup> Zakaria, Fareed: The World is Flat: The Wealth of Yet More Nations

<sup>479</sup> Noam Chomsky Quotes, (Brainy Quote, Brainy Media, 2005), <http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/quotes/n/noamchomsk136283.html> (27.09.2005)

project. Thus, do we nod in agreement when reading Friedman and Sachs or Naess and McLaughlin? True, the question is not entirely fair, as the latter two, just as other Deep Ecologists, are highly marginalized, whereas neo-liberalism and a quest for perpetual growth are widely perceived as positive goals resulting in higher living standards, which most people treat interchangeable with quality of life. Despite the fact that Arne Naess believes in the non-quantifiable nature of the term “quality of life”<sup>480</sup>, some economists do. They might help to answer whether Deep Ecology’s rhetoric stands a chance before our finite source of resources communicates its discomfort with mankind’s increased obsession for what Ralph Nader described as a world restructuring itself in the name of “trade über alles”<sup>481</sup>. So, does overdevelopment, thus extensive consumerism, buy happiness? Do Naess’ and McLaughlin’s conclusions regarding the rich’s increasing dissatisfaction sound as if they are from Neptune, or can they open our eyes and propel us towards a change for the better of all that is?

## So are we getting happier?

Andrew Oswald, an Economist at the University of Warwick, dismisses orthodox methods to measure a society’s wellbeing. A focus on a country’s GDP provides excellent news for First World countries, but only if one is “a born bean counter”, and whereas “hot showers have created unambiguous gain in human wellbeing”, “hot cars and hot pants” probably have not. Mental health surveys provide not so great news, but are not all-conclusive, he states, whereas the United Nations Development Index comes up with an encouraging prognosis for our well-being, but nevertheless is a little-saying composite of longevity, years of average education and a country’s GDP, thus “not at all persuasive”. A much better answer, therefore, rests in happiness surveys, which have been conducted more or less globally in a reliable and consistent way since the 1970<sup>482</sup>. A definition of happiness in this regard is “feeling good, enjoying life, and feeling it is wonderful”, whereas unhappiness equals “feeling bad and wishing things were different”, with “happiness being like noise”, thus having many qualities<sup>483</sup>, an observation which probably prompted Arne Naess to point towards the aforementioned non-quantifiable nature of the term “life quality”.

<sup>480</sup> Rothenburg, David: Arne Naess: Ecology, community and lifestyle page 31

<sup>481</sup> Nader, Ralph: Seattle and the WTO (The Nader Page, 07.12.1999), <http://www.nader.org/interest/12799.html> (27.09.2005)

<sup>482</sup> Oswald, Andrew: So are we getting happier? (The Times, London, United Kingdom, August 2002), [www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/economics/staff/faculty/oswald/timeshappinessholidaysaugust2002.pfd](http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/economics/staff/faculty/oswald/timeshappinessholidaysaugust2002.pfd) (29.09.2005)

<sup>483</sup> Layard, Richard. Happiness: Has Social Science a Clue? Lecture 1: What is happiness? Are we getting happier? (Lionel Robbins Memorial Lectures 2002/2003, London School of Economics, United Kingdom, March 2003), page 4 <http://cep.lse.ac.uk/events/lectures/layard/RL030303.pdf>

The results of Oswald's studies deal a blow to the myth that a nation's improved economic performance buys its citizens a great deal more happiness. "Economic performance", Oswald states, "is not intrinsically interesting", and such indicators matter "only in so far as they make people happier", which we commonly assume they do. Rightfully so? For Oswald, many of economic's assumptions ignore key questions. He lists inflation as an example, and puts forward that "if one wished to know whether inflation is bad, one might ask whether, in inflationary periods, people en masse unknowingly tick lower down their happiness score sheets". If they do not, it might be time to rethink inflation. As we blindly assume inflation to be bad and economic growth to be good, such questions are rarely asked<sup>484</sup>. It is difficult to imagine a state-leader proposing that everybody should become happier over the course of the next legislative period, as such vague propositions appear to come from Neptun. In his essay "Happiness and Economic Performance", Oswald summarizes seven major findings of recent happiness studies.

First of all, in regard to the United States from the 70s onward, happiness with life appears to be increasing, even though the rise is so small that it can be concluded that extra income is not dramatically contributing to the quality of people's lives. Secondly, similar information exists for European countries, where "reported levels of satisfaction with life...have on average risen very slightly". Thirdly, studies in Great Britain revealed that the correlation between income and happiness is negligible, whereas joblessness poses a major threat for happiness, as mental distress increases dramatically for those feeling unneeded, with the non-pecuniary distress far outweighing the loss of income<sup>485</sup>. Interestingly, studies comparing events such as marriage, divorce and, among others, unemployment in regard of life satisfaction movement compared to previous baseline-levels reveal significant lag and lead effects. In regard of unemployment, satisfaction movements among men are dramatic, whereas women are able to recover their life satisfaction relatively swiftly after unemployment<sup>486</sup>. While this may be attributed to socially constructed role models, it nevertheless indicates that a society's ability to provide a stable employment environment is of vital importance for its en-masse happiness.

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<sup>484</sup> Oswald, Andrew: Happiness and Economic Performance (Department of Economics, University of Warwick, England, April 1997), page 1, [www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/economics/staff/faculty/oswald/happecperf.pdf](http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/economics/staff/faculty/oswald/happecperf.pdf) (28.09.2005)

<sup>485</sup> Mental distress, on a scale between 0 and 12, measured an average of 2.98 for those unemployed, 1.45 for those employed and 1.54 for those self-employed. In general, distress increased with the level of education, as working, highly educated individuals reported a mental distress of 1.48 vs. 1.43 for those lowly educated, and 3.44 vs. 2.70 for those out of work, Oswald, Andrew: Happiness and Economic Performance, page 26

<sup>486</sup> Excellent graphs illustrating such satisfaction movements in: Clark, Andrew E. & et al.: Lags and Leads in Life Satisfaction: A Test of the Baseline Hypothesis (August 2003, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massasuchets, United States of America), page 20, [http://www.wcfia.harvard.edu/conferences/socialcapital/Happiness%20Readings/Clark\\_Diener\\_Georgellis\\_Lucas\\_2003.pdf](http://www.wcfia.harvard.edu/conferences/socialcapital/Happiness%20Readings/Clark_Diener_Georgellis_Lucas_2003.pdf) (28.09.2005)

Returning to Oswald's studies, he fourthly observed that happiness is high among "those who are married, on high income, women, whites, the well-educated, the self-employed, the retired, and those looking after the home", with happiness being "U-shaped in age, minimizing around the 30s". Fifthly, suicide-rates are consistent with rates in happiness, with those out of work or divorced at a much higher risk of suicide. Analysis of unemployed Edinburgh males suggested that "among unemployed men in the lowest social class one in twenty try to kill themselves in a given year". At least for Great Britain, suicide-rates have been steadily dropping, hinting at the conclusion that increasing wealth might decrease extreme unhappiness. Sixthly, therefore, increasing unemployment may swell the number of people taking their own lives. Seventhly, studies in Great Britain and United States revealed no rising level of job satisfaction over time, and "there is thus if anything some sign of a slight fall in the level of job satisfaction in Britain"<sup>487</sup>. In conclusion, economic growth is not worthless, "but only just". How come then, that if money buys little well being, most individuals are constantly striving to earn more? For Oswald, a possible explanation is that "what matters to someone who lives in a rich country is his or her relative income", as "a spectator who leaps up at a football match gets at first a much better view of the game, but by the time his neighbours are up is no better than before". As "unemployment appears to be the primary economic source of unhappiness...economic growth should not be a government's primary concern."<sup>488</sup>

Richard Layard, of the London School of Economics and Political Sciences, comes to similar conclusions. In regard of the United States, the following graph staggeringly indicates a missing correlation between an increase in GDP per capita and an overall increase of those feeling "very happy".

Layard observes a similar phenomenon in Japan, where, since 1950, a 6-fold increase in income per head has not correlated with any significant change in happiness. As Oswald indicated by the metaphor of the uprising football fan, Layard acknowledges that "at any time within any community there is a clear relation between happiness and income"<sup>489</sup>, but happiness is relative, as people, and societies as a whole, do not grow happier as they grow richer<sup>490</sup>. In the words of

<sup>487</sup> US Job Satisfaction: "very & moderately satisfied" %: 1972: 84.2, 1980: 82.1, 1990: 86.1 vs. "very & little dissatisfied" 15.8 / 18 / 13.9. UK Job Satisfaction: "very & fairly satisfied" %: 1973: 85.5, 1978: 83.9, 1983: 82.2 vs. "very & little dissatisfied" 6.8 / 11.4 / 12.3; Oswald, Andrew: Happiness and Economic Performance, page 28

<sup>488</sup> Oswald, Andrew: Happiness and Economic Performance, page 3-17

<sup>489</sup> Layard, Richard. Happiness: Has Social Science a Clue? Lecture 1: What is happiness? Are we getting happier?, page 15

<sup>490</sup> Layard, Richard. Happiness: Has Social Science a Clue? Lecture 2: Income and happiness: rethinking economic policy (Lionel Robbins Memorial Lectures 2002/2003, London School of Economics, March 2003), page 3, <http://cep.lse.ac.uk/events/lectures/layard/RL040303.pdf>

Oswald, “happiness and self-esteem depend on rank and relative income. There is only so much rank to go around. Still.”<sup>491</sup> A good example is happiness in the United States, as shown in the following table:

	Top quarter of income		Bottom quarter of income	
	1975	1998	1975	1998
Very happy	39	37	19	16
Pretty happy	53	57	51	53
Not too happy	8	6	30	31

Even though both groups have clearly become “richer” between 1975 and 1998, no happiness-movement has occurred, which is “an absolutely standard pattern in all countries”, as “when the whole society becomes richer, nobody seems to be any happier”, and “since 1972 Americans have been asked whether they are satisfied with their financial position. Although real income per head has risen by 50%, the proportion of people who say they are pretty well satisfied with their financial situation has actually fallen”. Layard attributes the “moving up of the norm” to habituation and rivalry. Habituation makes “it difficult to lift us onto a permanently higher plane of experience”, and people “measure their situation largely by reference to where they have recently got to”. This puts them onto the “hedonic treadmill – they try to rise up a rung but in the next period that rung is once again at the bottom, from which they again try to rise”<sup>493</sup>. Layard’s observation sounds familiar to Deep Ecologist Andrew McLaughlin’s remark that people are stuck on the “treadmill of material consumption”<sup>494</sup> and live lives swinging “through moods of excitement, boredom, anger, and fear”<sup>495</sup>. Rivalry, on the other hand, explains why in the case of East Germany, levels of happiness have plummeted since Germany’s reunification, even though material living standards have soared, as “people care only about their relative income and not at all about their income as such”<sup>496</sup>.

Concerning development, Layard’s most telling observation is that once a country has passed a certain threshold of GDP per capita, thus material wealth, “its level of happiness appears to be independent of its income per head”. Layard draws the line at an GDP per capita of

<sup>491</sup> Oswald, Andrew: [So are we getting happier?](#)

<sup>492</sup> Layard, Richard. [Lecture 2: Income and happiness: rethinking economic policy](#), page 3

<sup>493</sup> Layard, Richard. [Lecture 2: Income and happiness: rethinking economic policy](#), page 2-7

<sup>494</sup> McLaughlin, Andrew: [Regarding Nature: Industrialism and Deep Ecology](#), page 42

<sup>495</sup> McLaughlin, Andrew: [Regarding Nature: Industrialism and Deep Ecology](#), page 200-201

<sup>496</sup> Layard, Richard. [Lecture 2: Income and happiness: rethinking economic policy](#), page 7-9

approximately 15,000 \$ and concludes that “above \$ 15,000 per head, higher average income is no guarantee of greater happiness”<sup>497</sup>, an observation the New York Times summarized with the telling statement that “some countries were happier than they should be” if economic growth were responsible for happiness<sup>498</sup>. “Happiness depends on a lot more than your purchasing power”, Layard observes and points out nine main factors influencing an individuals’ fluctuation of perceived happiness<sup>499</sup>, namely “income”, “work”, “family”, “health”, “religion”, “trust”, “morality” and “freedom”. Interestingly, most factors correlate more strongly with perceived happiness than income alone, with “freedom” rating about two and a half times as important and even religion rating twice as strong.

The message is relatively clear. Once society has reached a level where no extra income and increased material standard, as shown previously, does buy any significant increase in en-masse happiness, policies should be aimed at minimizing negative effects on happiness. A politician should be allowed to formulate the vague proposition of increasing happiness without sounding from Neptun. A policy recommendation maximising happiness will conclude this chapter. Current trends mean that these findings “are pretty devastating in their policy implications”<sup>500</sup>, as contemporary, increasingly neo-liberal, rich societies see the gap between society’s rich and poor widening, flexibility in the job market increasing and families becoming more and more unstable. Therefore, Layard provokingly asks “how can we not afford security now that we are richer, when we could afford it when we were poorer?”, and challenges that “as we become richer, it must be mad if, at the same time, we become less secure and more stressed”<sup>501</sup>. Neo-liberal practices, shifting more and more responsibilities towards the individual, whether in regard of tertiary tuition fees or private retirement arrangements are clearly at odds with most people’s desires. In Layard’s words, civil servants in neo-liberal countries “gaily reorganise every public service, oblivious of how each reorganisation destroys a major channel of personal security and trust”<sup>502</sup>, which is at odds with our real “selves”, as a “desire for security is a central part of their nature”<sup>503</sup>.

<sup>497</sup> Layard, Richard. Lecture 1: What is happiness? Are we getting happier?, page 17-19

<sup>498</sup> Revkin, Andrew C.: A New Measure of Well-Being From A Happy Little-Kingdom (New York Times, New York, United States of America, 04.10.2005), <http://www.nytimes.com/2005/10/04/science/04happ.html?pagewanted=1&th&emc=th> (05.10.2005)

<sup>499</sup> Layard, Richard. Happiness: Has Social Science a Clue? Lecture 3: How can we make a happier society? (Lionel Robbins Memorial Lectures 2002/2003, London School of Economics, March 2003), page 3, <http://cep.lse.ac.uk/events/lectures/layard/RL050303.pdf> (28.09.2005)

<sup>500</sup> Layard, Richard. Lecture 3: How can we make a happier society?, page 4

<sup>501</sup> Layard, Richard. Lecture 3: How can we make a happier society?, page 5-7

<sup>502</sup> Layard, Richard. Lecture 3: How can we make a happier society?, page 7

<sup>503</sup> Layard, Richard. Lecture 3: How can we make a happier society?, page 6

For Layard, the object of public policy should be “to maximise the sum of happiness in society”<sup>504</sup>, and society, made up out of people naturally seeking “the good of more than themselves”<sup>505</sup> should be led by the “principle of greatest happiness”<sup>506</sup>. For Layard, the “self” neo-liberal practices are constructing, the individuated individual observed in his or her own, narrow world is at odds with evolution, as present humans naturally are the offspring of a cooperative species, not of a selfish one, which would be punished by natural selection. For Layard, “we tip taxi-drivers, vote in elections and even dive after drowning people that we do not know”, as we have deep social feelings that can lead us “to sacrifice our lives”. We have “inherited instincts of fairness”, and the “best state for society is where people are happiest”. Such a way of living is possible threatened and “polluted” by the “Me-First” attitude contemporary, western self-making promotes and globalizes<sup>507</sup>, as dominating economic theory “assumes that people are normally selfish”<sup>508</sup>. Tellingly, contemporary economic teaching is problematic. If people are taught to be selfish, they become so. As individualism has become the dominating ideology in Western culture, the pursuit of self-interest has not lead to the social optimum. In addition, “the pursuit of individual self-interest is not a good formula for personal happiness”<sup>509</sup>. In an experiment, students were asked whether they would report if they had been undercharged for a purchase, or whether they would return a lost addressed envelope containing \$ 100. “Students who took introductory economics became less honest, while astronomy students become more honest, and the difference was significant”<sup>510</sup>.

## Policies for Happiness

Layard tries to draw up general guidelines for good policies in countries where the threshold of maximised happiness by means of material accumulation has been reached. His eight propositions are at odds with political reality, but if one detaches oneself from this all-encompassing “reality”, they appear far more “rational” than what “rationality” currently dictates governments to do. Policy recommendations regarding the conversation of the environment are missing, but quoting Jigmi Y. Thinley, Minister of Home and Cultural Affairs of Bhutan, “it would seem from happiness researches that environment and biodiversity are not strong correlates of happiness. This is partly because apparently, no one has attempted to seriously

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<sup>504</sup> Layard, Richard. [Lecture 1: What is happiness? Are we getting happier?](#), page 2

<sup>505</sup> Layard, Richard. [Lecture 3: How can we make a happier society?](#), page 18

<sup>506</sup> Layard, Richard. [Lecture 3: How can we make a happier society?](#), page 16

<sup>507</sup> Layard, Richard. [Lecture 3: How can we make a happier society?](#), page 18-20

<sup>508</sup> Layard, Richard. [Lecture 3: How can we make a happier society?](#), page 11

<sup>509</sup> Layard, Richard. [Lecture 3: How can we make a happier society?](#), page 15

<sup>510</sup> Layard, Richard. [Lecture 3: How can we make a happier society?](#), page 15

measured happiness against environmental variables. Nevertheless, it is difficult to argue against the value of environment in everyday life and hence our happiness, given that our health and aesthetic experiences depend on the quality of the physical environment around us.”<sup>511</sup> Therefore, despite the fact that environmental sustainability receives no explicit attention in works of happiness researchers, common sense tells us that it is not a variable to be discarded, but a variable overlooked.

1. *Self-defeating work should be discouraged by suitable taxation*<sup>512</sup>.

For Layard, “a new approach to the work-life balance” is necessary, hence cultural priorities need changing. As people care more about their relative income than their income as such, the normal opinion, “that taxation distorts the choice between leisure and income – making people work too little”, needs rethinking. Of course, discouraging increased work-loads by increasing taxation would almost certainly reduce our GDP, but as GDP “is a faulty measure of well-being”, this does not necessarily matter<sup>513</sup>. A study among Texas women revealed that among 19 typical, daily activities, commuting to work, work and commuting back home ranked last. In regard of happiness recorded while spending time with different people, the boss, oneself, clients and co-workers ranked behind one’s children, the spouse, parents and friends<sup>514</sup>. These results are not entirely surprising, but should guide a society’s priorities.

2. *Producers matter as much as consumers. They should be incentivated more by professional norms and not by ever more financial incentives*<sup>515</sup>.

People should enjoy their contribution to the social product, “a notion unknown to standard economics but experienced by each of us”. Motivation to work should not be externally, thus performance-related, but work should be intrinsically motivating. We should not just enjoy consumption, but try to make production as enjoyable as possible<sup>516</sup>.

3. *We should not promote the search for status, and we should limit dysfunctional advertising*<sup>517</sup>.

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<sup>511</sup> Thinley, Jigmi Y: What Does gross National Happiness (GNH) Mean? (Keynote Speech, 2<sup>nd</sup> International Conference on GNH, Halifax, Canada, 21.06.2005), <http://www.undp.org.bt/Governance/GNH/thinley.pdf> (05.10.2005)

<sup>512</sup> Layard, Richard. Lecture 3: How can we make a happier society?, page 10

<sup>513</sup> Layard, Richard. Lecture 2: Income and happiness: rethinking economic policy, page 10-11

<sup>514</sup> Layard, Richard. Lecture 1: What is happiness? Are we getting happier?, page p6

<sup>515</sup> Layard, Richard. Lecture 3: How can we make a happier society?, page 10

<sup>516</sup> Layard, Richard. Lecture 2: Income and happiness: rethinking economic policy page 13-14

<sup>517</sup> Layard, Richard. Lecture 3: How can we make a happier society?, page 10

The introduction of television, according to Layard, has broadened our ability to relate our incomes to those of others. Generally, the effects have been disastrous, and it comes as no surprise that in the UK, crime, depressions and alcoholism have risen in the golden period of economic growth (1950-1973). Television and advertising influence our well-being, and it should not surprise that a typical woman's mood drops when seeing the daily parade of beautiful, unrepresentative women on TV while men often feel worse about their wives while consuming such images<sup>518</sup>.

4. *Income should be redistributed towards where it makes most difference*<sup>519</sup>.

As the utility of increased incomes shrinks the higher the income is, the proposed taxation discouraging self-defeating, usually well-paying work could be used to lessen the financial burden of those earning little. The point is not to make all incomes equal, but to make society fairer by distributing incomes to where they make a difference, and discouraging those in well-paying jobs to take advantage of this and pursue unreal and essentially unsatisfactory "needs". The same holds truth in the international context, as it makes little sense for a country to grow beyond a certain threshold, while it makes much sense for poorer countries below this threshold to do so<sup>520</sup>.

5. *Secure work should be promoted by welfare-to-work and reasonable employment protection. Secure pensions may require a state earnings-related scheme*<sup>521</sup>.

As unemployment is one of the major disasters affecting happiness, and generally, any kind of work is better than no kind of work, especially for males as they are currently socially constructed, the working environment ought to become more secure, totally opposed to contemporary trends requiring increased job- and geographical mobility.

6. *Security at home and in the community will be reduced if there is too much geographical mobility*<sup>522</sup>.

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<sup>518</sup> Layard, Richard. Lecture 2: Income and happiness: rethinking economic policy, page 15-17

<sup>519</sup> Layard, Richard. Lecture 3: How can we make a happier society?, page 10

<sup>520</sup> Layard, Richard. Lecture 2: Income and happiness: rethinking economic policy, page 17

<sup>521</sup> Layard, Richard. Lecture 3: How can we make a happier society?, page 10

<sup>522</sup> Layard, Richard. Lecture 3: How can we make a happier society?, page 11

As happiness depends, in part, on one's interaction with others, those who trust people tend to be happier<sup>523</sup>. Increased mobility, often required by the economy in the name of job market flexibility, alienates one from his or her community, and needs discouragement.

7. *Mental health should receive much higher priority*<sup>524</sup>.

Roughly 14% of the US population aged 35 have experienced a depression, and about 2% of the population are constantly suffering. Depressions are increasing; in the 1950s, only 2% of those aged 35 had experienced depressions<sup>525</sup>. Few patients receive treatment, and "it is a complete scandal that we spend so little on mental health", as "most of the worst unhappiness is caused by mental disorders"<sup>526</sup>.

8. *We should actively promote participatory democracy*<sup>527</sup>.

The lowest happiness worldwide persisted among those living under communism<sup>528</sup>, and a study in Switzerland revealed that Swiss cantons with the most frequent referenda report an increased happiness equal to a doubling of income by comparison to cantons with the least frequent referenda<sup>529</sup>. People want to feel empowered in their daily lives.

## **Can unhappiness jumpstart a deep, ecological revolution?**

Is the Deep Ecologists' strong rhetoric in regard of an increasing emptiness in the Western way of life right? Will society itself come to the conclusion that latent unhappiness needs a remaking of society, less based on the myth of desirable economic growth and more on happiness, joy and Self-realisation? Will people be able to connect the dots? Do they see their world in crisis and the system of industrialism as the core problem?

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<sup>523</sup> Layard, Richard. Lecture 3: How can we make a happier society?, page 13

<sup>524</sup> Layard, Richard. Lecture 3: How can we make a happier society?, page 11

<sup>525</sup> Layard, Richard. Lecture 1: What is happiness? Are we getting happier? page 20

<sup>526</sup> Layard, Richard. Lecture 3: How can we make a happier society?, page 8

<sup>527</sup> Layard, Richard. Lecture 3: How can we make a happier society?, page 11

<sup>528</sup> Layard, Richard. Lecture 1: What is happiness? Are we getting happier?, page 17

<sup>529</sup> Layard, Richard. Lecture 3: How can we make a happier society?, page 9

Not necessarily, as happiness studies illustrate. Once a certain threshold of wealth is reached, happiness cannot be bought, which also means that economic development, in general, is a good path to pursue for those underneath the threshold. This does not automatically mean that happiness recedes after the threshold has been crossed, therefore it might still need environmental Armageddon to direct society's attention towards more sustainable alternatives. Economic prosperity is just one factor among many influencing an individual's happiness, and contemporary neo-liberal practices are counterproductive towards increased happiness. Nevertheless, humans are habitual animals, and will presumably accept increasingly neo-liberal policies if these changes occur slowly, or are perceived as "necessary" in developing nations. From a happiness perspective, these changes are poisonous, but it is unlikely that political parties can formulate policies based on the maximisation of happiness without appearing from Neptun. Much of human's happiness does not depend on whether industrialism exists or not. Other factors appear far more important, namely employment in general, religious beliefs and private lives. Happiness studies are not a conclusive indicator that people in themselves will find Deep Ecology immensely alluring without a major threat for most components of their happiness, which is unlikely until nature itself does not grasp agency and propel a change for more sustainable world affairs.

An interesting, subsequent question ought to be: *And now what?*

V

And now

what?

*"It may well be that the impossible at a given moment can become possible only by being stated at a time when it is impossible."<sup>530</sup>*

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<sup>530</sup> Kirkpatrick, Sale: Human scale (Coward, McCann & Geoghegan, New York, United States of America, 1980), page 519

## 5 And now what?

At the beginning of this thesis, I aimed at showing that a successful implementation of Jeffrey Sachs' *The End of Poverty* would globalize the unreal and impoverish us all. I explained Sachs' strategies and ambitions and showed why Sachs perceives them as feasible. In short, past aid was never sufficient to make any real, lasting difference, poor countries need empowerment in regard of their poverty reduction strategies, neo-liberalistic reforms can only do so much and should not be exaggerated and financial aid ought to provide budgetary relief, not project-based or policy-related assistance. The objective is not a world of more material and financial equality, which may or may not evolve, but of more equal opportunities, as the extreme poor, roughly a sixth of humanity and an affront in regard of widespread affluence, are hopelessly stuck out of reach of the ladder of modern, economic growth. I then went on to explain what happens if we take the strategy's feasibility for granted, work towards its realisation and ask: *And then what?*

“Complete justice, complete catastrophe” appears to be a suitable answer, if humanity, mere drops in the stream of life, is handed the collective opportunity to climb the ladder of modern, economic growth. If development is predominately understood as economic development, humanity might propel its voyage towards the environmental trap and non-human nature is ever more victimised in the name of the questionable pursuit of ever more. For Deep Ecologist's, humanity is already wrecking havoc with its true “Self”, as the enlightened project allowed for the “self's” detachment from the “Self”. Modern science perfected the study of fragmented parts of reality, but completely ignored that the whole is more than the sum of its parts. For Sachs, economic growth is the indirect result of development aid, as aid has to furnish the equipment needed to participate in the global quest for more of increasingly less, even though Sachs fails to admit such limits to growth and views nature as a sort of capital needed for human prosperity. Nevertheless, the infinite consumption of finite goods might pose a problem, whether in the appearance of resource scarcities or rapidly deteriorating living conditions for ever more species, once tolerance-thresholds of earth are crossed. Undeniably, at some stage, humanity will become one of these species. Of course, nobody knows at what levels of interference disaster strikes, but the prevalent fallacy of control is appalling.

In which regards is *The End of Poverty* globalizing the unreal? Apparently, *The End of Poverty* creates unreal “selfs”, promotes unreal “well-being”, an unreal “rationality” and an unreal “world”.

Quite logically, evolution promoted not only the fittest Homo sapiens, but also those capable of cooperation. The biggest ego and a mighty club are of little advantage if one's path crosses with a small number of smaller egos with smaller clubs but a pretty good idea how to beat simultaneously. Just as for nature, a society is more than the sum of its parts, and an exaggerated cultivation of maximised parts is the wrong path to maximise the total outcome. People do not desire to live in a highly competitive world, but nevertheless neo-liberal practices foster just that, and habituation fosters unreal "selves". Nowadays, everybody is directed to nurture his ego and get him- or herself the biggest club around. Some argue that this maximises everybody's well-being by the invisible force of the club, while others rightfully characterise modern, western society as "Ellenbogengesellschaften" – societies made up out of individuals pursuing their own paths using whatever methods available, elbows included, to succeed. Western ideologies treat self-cultivation as egoistic acts. Societies are created where for everyone that "has made it" several others have not. It is problematic if we globalize the myth of economic development as a game everyone can win, as Sachs does, which overvalues the individuated individual's self-realization, self-maximisation and ascribed competitive nature. Maybe not everyone wants to play and just wants to live.

If we globalize the myth of the ladder of modern, economic development, a ladder each and everyone can climb, we therefore globalize an unreal perception of "well-being". True, for the poorest of the poor, the fact that material wealth does not promote happiness above a far-away threshold is initially of little importance, but if we assume that Sachs is serious about giving everyone a chance to become "rich" on his or her own, a strategy only makes sense if the endpoint makes sense. Development is good and fine, but the ladder does not protect against the risks of overdevelopment. Furthermore, the *End of Poverty* only makes sense if we, in the rich countries of the world, perceive the top of the ladder as highly desirable. For most of the globe, we live in utopia, but the time has come when we should seriously reconsider whether the whole ladder was a good idea in the first place, as we apparently cannot afford the security we could when we were poorer, even though that we, en-masse, have become dramatically richer. How come that the richest of the rich have to demolish the superior welfare state in order to secure its competitiveness in what has been described as a global race to the bottom? How come that most First World countries have recently become dramatically richer but not necessarily happier?

How come that we promote a kind of "living" that equals "dying" for much of the rest of nature and possibly even for us? If everybody were to live as the world's richest sixth currently does, complete justice would equal complete catastrophe. If, turned into the lifestyle of all, the lifestyle of some is unbearable, what justifies it? Here, an unreal rationality sets in, as societies driven by a

want to ascent the ladder of modern, economic growth tend to replace rationality with economic rationality, which appears to be quite irrational. Deep Ecology offers a far superior rationality. Nowadays, individuals happily pursue activities they would otherwise avoid, as artificially created needs need satisfaction by the monetary incentives of often stupefying work. In this regard, socialistic economies rate no better than capitalistic ones. As economic growth, no matter how much growth has already occurred, is perceived as “good” and highly desirable, decisions and policies are predominately influenced by the perceived need for ever more growth, no matter growth’s real sustainability. As I explained in the Deep Ecologist’s critique of industrialism, the general assumptions our growth-oriented society rests upon are faulty. Hard technologies foster a country’s GDP, which is an insufficient indicator to measure anything but the quantity of marketable goods, which would only be of interest if human population on earth would be so scarce that sustainability proves entirely unproblematic. With more than six billion humans inhabiting our planet and another four or five being added until total population is projected to peak, we need to be smarter than that. The constant focus on short term performances measured from within prevailing rationality cloaks its irrationality. Stock-markets measure a company’s successes by quarterly reports, politicians are constantly scrutinized by polls and the continuous pressure to appease demands of rationality as we know it hinders any real questioning of underlying assumptions. Environmentally harmful complexity for the satisfaction of unreal needs equals progress, therefore the satisfaction of an unreal well-being goes hand in hand with an unreal economic rationality and creates an unreal world, as humans perceive everything that is as real and measure it against lesser realities as “Disneyland”.

What is needed is a new global culture: a real culture. We need new concepts of self-making, a real focus on well-being, a rationality deservingly labelled rational, thus something along the lines of ecological rationalism, an economy aimed at the satisfaction of real needs and thus, in conclusion, a real and essentially lasting world. Without such a new culture, Nietzsche’s clever animal that invented knowledge and had to die will become reality, as *The End of Poverty* impoverishes us all. For Deep Ecologists, who promote equal rights for all that is, the process of impoverishment is well under way. For more anthropocentric thinkers, intuition might lead towards the conclusion that contemporary developments are not exclusively favourable, as *Homo industrialus* is altering and essentially destroying its livelihood at an unprecedented rate. Such conclusions are not compulsory, but the burden of proof wrongfully rests upon those raising their voices in alarm, and even if their voices are heard, the then-perceived fact that the human population is on catastrophic course does not lead to the conclusion that catastrophe will occur, while simultaneously rationality is praised. The justification for the continued neglect is obviously the tremendous scope of changes needed, and if a problem becomes too big to handle within the

predominating culture of rationality, the reaction of choice appears to be an acknowledgement of its unfortunate existence, an evasive reference to a lack of ever more evidence and a shoulder shrug. *What can one do?*

A lot, I would argue, and surprisingly one of the world's nations, the kingdom of Bhutan, is already heavily engaged in a focus on sustainability and happiness. True, the increasingly globalized individuated individual within a fragmented society appears relatively powerless, and it would require social movements of an unprecedented scale to convince a critical mass of fellow humans to discard the ladder of modern, economic growth. An unlikely scenario, I concede. Agency could come from the people, ought to come from elected leaders and will probably come from nature. Elected leaders cannot not know that the potential of unsustainability in contemporary world affairs exists. This is even more so if the challenges of *The End of Poverty* and the Millennium Development Goals, aimed at enabling the entire world to prosper economically, were taken seriously, which they currently are only on a rhetorical level. No nation on its own could change its growth culture, once it has been successfully institutionalized by "development", but regional change appears possible. It is highly utopian to imagine any significant region retiring from economic globalization and recreating itself driven by ecological rationalism, but nevertheless it is not as impossible as for a single, isolated nation above the lowest rung of economic development to successfully do so. For perceived "poor" countries without developed comparative advantages, it might be possible to remain underneath the radar of international recognition and to do "as one pleases", as the case of the "happy little kingdom" of Bhutan illustrates, a country not driven by the quest for an ever-increasing GDP, but for a maximised GNH – gross national happiness<sup>531</sup>. However, I remain sceptical in humanity's en-masse ability to handle problems classifiable as unsolvable within prevailing rationality, especially as the development process is driven by Western ideals, not Bhutanese ones. The phenomenon of "peak oil" appears to be an exquisite example of pathological denial and complacency. Even though it is generally accepted knowledge that "peak oil" will occur, past predictions have proven wrong, as we have ridden through close to a dozen scientific predictions without "peak oil" occurring<sup>532</sup>. Not entirely surprisingly, the year 2004 saw global demand growing faster than in any of the past 24 years<sup>533</sup>. The ability to reason should enable humanity to perceive that current trends in oil consumption and a prominent absence of alternative technologies in many spheres vital to what is widely perceived as a good (unreal) lifestyle justifies concerns, especially

<sup>531</sup> Revkin, Andrew C.: *A New Measure of Well-Being From A Happy Little-Kingdom*

<sup>532</sup> Bentley, Roger: *Past Oil Forecasts*, (University of Reading, United Kingdom, 23.04.2002) [http://www.oildepletion.org/roger/Key\\_topics/Past\\_forecasts/Past\\_forecasts.htm#top](http://www.oildepletion.org/roger/Key_topics/Past_forecasts/Past_forecasts.htm#top) (01.10.2005)

<sup>533</sup> BBS News, *World oil demand estimate raised*, (BBC News UK Edition, Business section, United Kingdom, 11.08.2004), <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/business/3554462.stm> (01.10.2005)

considering that in all likelihood increased demand is set to collide with rapidly falling production, but no serious rethinking takes place. I see no reason to assume that rapid climate change, until thresholds of human interference with the planet are crossed, is treated any different. Within our cultures focused on the cultivation of the individual “self” and the willingness to measure successes in ever-shortening time spans, the potential for a radical rethinking of culture and humanity within nature is increasingly impossible.

It is heartening to acknowledge that exceptions to the global encroachment of neo-liberal practices and policies exist, as the briefly aforementioned example of Bhutan illustrates. Dishearteningly, nobody appears to pay much attention to the little kingdom’s “balanced and holistic approach to development”, based “on the conviction that man is bound by nature to search for happiness, and that it is the single most desire of every citizen”, as Jigmi Y. Thinley, Bhutan’s Minister of Home and Cultural Affairs explains. In addition, he states that “evidently, there is growing interest in how to be happy as opposed to how to make money”, and that Bhutan “had the pleasure of welcoming many research scholars and prominent journalists”, but it appears unlikely that any visitor was as influential as Jeffrey Sachs. Nevertheless, even Bhutan is not without fault. Despite its praiseworthy pillars of national development, namely (1) sustainable and equitable socio-economic development, (2) the conservation of environment, (3) the preservation and promotion of culture and (4) the promotion of good governance, the kingdom failed to live up to its maxims, especially in regard of good governance. Since prioritizing gross national happiness in 1972, Bhutan has never been truly democratic. Instead, the government of His Majesty King Jigme Singye Wangchuck ruled unchecked, but defended its “good governance” by alleging that working towards “the ultimate democratic desire or opinion of the people, which is happiness”, ought to suffice<sup>534</sup>, even though power structures under which a single entity defines “happiness” appear questionable. However, democratic processes are currently underway, and the National Assembly was granted the authority to remove the monarch with a two-thirds vote in 1998<sup>535</sup>. In addition, “His Majesty the King, the fountainhead of all positive changes, has recently circulated the Draft Constitution of the Kingdom of Bhutan that opts for liberal democratic institutions”. What needs acknowledgement is the Bhutanese understanding that democracies alone are not sufficient, as “what seems to demand attention even among democratic states is the question about motivational values that drive the institutions holding power...we need to ask whether values and intentions that guide them ...are aligned with search for happiness”<sup>536</sup>. Obviously, Western democracies are set to fail if gauged by such

<sup>534</sup> Thinley, Jigmi Y: What Does gross National Happiness (GNH) Mean?

<sup>535</sup> Central Intelligence Agency: World Factbook. Bhutan (Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), Washington, United States of America, 20.09.2005), <http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/bt.html> (05.10.2005)

<sup>536</sup> Thinley, Jigmi Y: What Does gross National Happiness (GNH) Mean?

measures. Without a doubt, these Bhutanese words are words of wisdom in a world of persistent irrationality, but simultaneously the kingdom of happiness has a questionable record of accomplishment in regard of its dealings with a Nepali-speaking minority, driven out of the country by the tens of thousands in recent decades<sup>537</sup>. Nevertheless, Bhutan's "achievements are remarkable" and the country's commitment to GNH "has meant that moral and ethical values are placed at the core of its economic strategies for ensuring better food, housing and health for a population of just over 710,000<sup>538</sup> people"<sup>539</sup>. Quite interestingly, the CIA's "World Factbook" uses 1903 words to describe Bhutan, fails to mention the word "happiness", describes the industrial sector as technologically "backward" and concludes that "detailed controls and uncertain policies in areas like industrial licensing, trade, labour, and finance continue to hamper foreign investment" in an economy that is "one of the world's smallest and least developed"<sup>540</sup>.

Returning to Jeffrey Sachs, there is a lot to take from *The End of Poverty*. Current world affairs with those in the ranks of the "rich" numbering close to those too poor to live are indeed an affront to humanity. Massive aid is needed, immediately, as every human is created equal and often suffers from extreme poverty or abundant affluence by chance. Sachs clearly shows that the end of extreme poverty is more a question of will than of ability. It is safe to state that nobody chose to be born within the First or Third world, and it is a shame that humanity's responsibility for other humans is blurred by historically quite arbitrary nation-states. This does not mean that the world was any better before the institution of the nation state, but merely that humanity in general has reached a necessary level of affluence, or as U2's Bono easily comprehensible formulated when stating that "we have the cash, we have the drugs, we have the science"<sup>541</sup>, to end stupid extreme poverty.

Aid, massive, unprecedented quantities of aid, should not be used to globalize a ladder of modern, economic development, but instead those institutions holding power in contemporary world affairs should align their motivational values with those Bhutan officially promotes: sustainable happiness. Up to a certain rung of the ladder, development and material wealth buys happiness, as studies have shown, but there is absolutely no reason whatsoever to institutionalize economic growth as desirable, as long as the growth-culture has no inherent security mechanisms to avoid

<sup>537</sup> Revkin, Andrew C.: [A New Measure of Well-Being From A Happy Little-Kingdom](#)

<sup>538</sup> Population numbers vary between 710,000 as in AlterNet's article or either 810,000 or 2,232,291 (CIA World Factbook), so apparently nobody really knows, as the country has not conducted a census since 1969. Central Intelligence Agency: [World Factbook. Bhutan](#)

<sup>539</sup> Bakshi, Rajni: [Gross National Happiness](#) (Resurgence Magazine, Bideford, Devon, United Kingdom, 25.01.2005), <http://www.alternet.org/envirohealth/21083/> (05.10.2005)

<sup>540</sup> Central Intelligence Agency: [World Factbook. Bhutan](#)

<sup>541</sup> Oxfam: [Paying the price: Why rich countries must invest now in a war on poverty](#), (Oxfam International, Oxford, United Kingdom, 2005), page 5

overdevelopment. Instead, the maximisation of the sum of happiness ought to be inserted, as I cannot imagine a single objection, besides sustainability, to organize a society around the principle of greatest happiness, which undoubtedly has to equal the ultimate democratic desire of the people. Unless we believe in reincarnation, everybody has just one life, and an exaggerated focus on material living standards stands at odds with a real quality of life. Contemporary nurturing practices rejoice in blurring this contradiction. Instead, the maxim of “greatest happiness” needs to be interwoven with the platform of Deep Ecology.

My proposal is heavily loaded with problems. To a certain degree, I propose cultural imperialism on everyone, which is opposed to humanity’s cultural richness and diversity, as I wish to promote equal rights for everyone to realize him- or herself in a “real”, sustainable manner. No culture I know of lives entirely up to this maxim, and many, often in regard of rights of women, fail dramatically. If diversity diminishes potentials for individual happiness or sustainability, its abolishment might prove beneficial. Of course, every pursuit for individual happiness has to abide to the principle of the Pareto-optimum, thus the stage of advancement at which no individual can be made better off without another being off worse<sup>542</sup>. It is often frowned upon to use qualifying terms in regard of cultures, but I am deeply convinced that some cultures are better than others, while none is perfect. Somewhat egalitarian, western cultures are best at promoting what I described as an unreal world, often fail to recognize dangers to the community’s sustainability and have the appearance of bogus democracies, which is often still better than no democracy at all. In the extreme, there is a contradiction between personal empowerment and the upholding of nation-states or any kind of superstructures, as all forms of representative decision-making equal a loss of autonomy, but I am confident that more satisfying middle-grounds of increased individual empowerment and representative decision making can be found. At this stage, I do not want to discard the nation-state entirely, but I think that especially in regard of municipal, political discourses increased empowerment is entirely possible without immediately restructuring the whole world. In regard of a theoretical disintegration of nation-states, smaller units would be more appropriate than larger units, quite contrary to contemporary world affairs. A federation of appropriate, partially self-sufficient regions might be a theoretical model.

Happiness studies help us to identify which factors increase the unquantifiable nature of the quality of life. En masse, people rejoice in security, employment and a feeling of empowerment, and it is clear that western, neo-liberal countries often fail to deliver all three and apparently worsen despite increased “wealth”. In a way, the rich become poor. In regard of a country’s

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<sup>542</sup> Pareto efficiency. Wikipedia: The Free Encyclopaedia, Wikimedia Foundation Inc, [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pareto\\_optimum](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pareto_optimum) (05.10.2005)

development, the quest for growth ought to be suspended once extra growth does not equal extra en-masse happiness, as the real justification for increased material well-being is gone. Maybe growth itself should be measured more broadly in terms aligned with happiness and not in contemporary constructs as GDP, which totally ignore any kind of sustainability. There is no reason to initiate the hedonic treadmill of consumerism, and if the total amount of available work would become insufficient to make everyone feel needed, a real objective of economic development were reached and everybody would just work less. Additionally, the then-rational rollback of economic globalization would revitalize regional structures and promote inefficiency, as measured by today's standards.

Internationally, economic development needs encouragement up to such levels where no extra happiness is easily bought, but policies have to reflect that economic prosperity is just one of many factors influencing the average happiness of citizens. Bluntly speaking, as Europeans, Japanese and U.S. Americans have not become significantly happier over the course of the past three decades, most innovations appear, in retrospect, quite unnecessary. Of course, future innovations ought not to be prohibited, and even economic growth is possible, but it should not be the main objective of governance and from a certain stage of material prosperity onwards, no objective at all.

Jeffrey Sachs' proposals in regard of "clinical economics" and a nation's empowerment in developing suitable development strategies deserve praise, and I think that it is entirely possible to transform the concept in regard of happiness and sustainability. Many of the MDG actually increase happiness, but the aim of aid should not be to hand a country an opportunity to participate in the global quest for economic prosperity, which may result in total catastrophe, but for en-masse happiness. Of course, for many of the world's extreme poor, increased economic prosperity is of vital importance, but economic growth needs understanding as a means, not as an end in itself. In this regard, all nations become developing nations, as those frequently considered "developed" would need to discard their growth addiction and develop methods of restructuring society in a sustainable, satisfying manner. Values rational in a sustainable manner are easily found within Deep Ecology's platform and offer themselves for inclusion in the nurturing process of the human consciousness. This might have the aftertaste of brainwashing, but the same is done nowadays in regard of contemporary, economic rationality.

Quite logically, soft technologies, as proposed by Arne Naess, would be of vital importance to roll back the global division of labour and empower regions or communities. The production of goods for needs, predominately vital needs, would become less efficient, but there is little

correlation between economic efficiency and satisfaction at work. As far as I know, nobody ever paid too much attention to whether Adam Smith's individual pin-maker rejoiced more in his work than those employed in the pin manufactory. The apparent loss of living standards would be set off by an increase in an intrinsic quality of life. Many products would still be produced for global markets, but the globalization of the unnecessary needs reversal. Such developments only appear economically irrational within contemporary economic rationality, which is irrational in itself. Total human population remains an obstacle for the continuation of non-human evolution and self-realisation, but as I believe that universal, human rights are one of the cornerstones of happiness, I would align myself with Arne Naess or Andrew McLaughlin in their hope that development and empowerment reduce fertility rates to more sustainable and eventually declining levels.

In conclusion, I am not excessively optimistic that humanity, or regions to begin with, will show any significant willingness to toss Deep Ecology's platform and Richard Layard's recommendations for policies towards maximised happiness together and give the outcome a try. Instead, it appears likely that the ladder of modern, economic development will become more crowded. Sachs' *End of Poverty* appears to make perfect sense and reverses some of the wrongs of exaggerated neo-liberalism, but might lead humanity towards complete justice and complete catastrophe, thus the impoverishment of all. Even without a successful implementation of Sachs' strategies catastrophe is looming in the absence of major cultural changes, but globalized abilities to reason economically appear to speed the process up. Contemporarily less-developed regions will be even less inclined towards sustainability if the myth of the American dream is further spread via the metaphor of Jeffrey Sachs' ladder or the rising tide of globalization, institutionalised in owned, but partially externally dictated, national poverty reduction strategies. I am not even convinced that a potential outcome for an alternative development of all nations as briefly outlined would prove workable, but it might be a stepping stone for further debate. However, I think that Deep Ecology is clearly useful to lead us towards the roots of an impending catastrophe. Without a major break from prevailing, unreal cultures, this catastrophe might be inevitable, especially as we appear on track to globalize the root problem and its inherent ideology in the name of economic development.

Clever animals, we are.

# VI

# Biblio- graphy

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