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THE NEW WORLD CITIZENS

Sustain means to hold up, to support to bear. Sustainability means that something is capable of carrying or maintaining itself or something else. This is more or less what philosopher Peter Kemp wrote in a chapter of the book *Verdensborgeren om Bæredygtighedens begreb* (The World Citizen - on the Sustainability concept). He adds that we, with the word sustainability, are facing a new concept which presupposes the modern development of science and technology which reaches radically into the physical and biological basic conditions of life; and, I add, that it is both about material and biological as well as existential basic conditions.

Sustainability is, at the one extreme, about maintaining the planet. Sustainability, at the other extreme, is about whether I can keep and maintain myself. Sustainability is about the planet and about individuals on the planet; the globe as a huge physical and biological system, and the individual as a unique and divine being who has been given a capacity, a spirit, a consciousness which enables mankind to think of and have visions and plans for the future.

Mankind can make decisions that reach far beyond its own immediate needs. Yes, mankind can destroy the planet. It is, therefore, not only interesting but necessary to link the concepts of sustainability and citizen of the world together. World citizen is the individual who helps to maintain the planet or in Peter Kemp's definition: "The world citizen of our era is the person who addresses the current big, burning global issues of concern in order to contribute to solutions that can be of benefit to all mankind".

The concept of sustainability is in its infancy and must, within the next few years, develop and be put into practice as a kind of bio- or life science, a science about the planet, about life on the planet and the sustainable development of life. Herein lies an invitation to, and a requirement for professionalism and interdisciplinary cooperation. Some of

the disciplines (sciences) that we know today, must be assumed to be introductions and experiments which, in the future, will be integrated and develop into new sciences which, in this way, will have to accommodate ever larger unifications and explanation structures.

It is the world citizens who will contribute to an ever more sustainable development on the planet. The challenge is to create social trust at the global level, if mankind is to develop in an ever more sustainable direction, or what Jeremy Rifkin calls a "seamless, integrated, socially just and sustainable planetary economy." Very big words, but perhaps not so big if we imagine them taking shape in classrooms filled with inquisitive children who are not hampered by the mistrust and thought patterns of the past, but who find themselves in what might be called the blogosphere's social networks. They are globally orientated in their consciousness and communication.

Classrooms are laboratories for the preparation of biospherical and existential awareness of the rising generations. Children are trained in the knowledge that everything they do, their whole way of life has an ecological footprint which affects the lives of all fellow creatures and for the biosphere in which we live together. Children understand that we are as closely connected to each other in the ecosystems of the biosphere as we are on the social network of the blogosphere.

They transfer their empathic feelings to the biosphere and create social trust globally. They contribute towards the preservation and development of the power of cohesion in the large as well as the small. They might talk about the many dimensions of sustainability; sustainability as an ethical concept, an existential neuro-scientific concept, a social concept, a natural philosophical concept, a biological concept, an economic concept as well as a legal concept.

We are the new world citizens.