

PREFACE

|| Susanne Luther

Dear readers,

“We are unanimously convinced that rapid, radical redressment of the present unbalanced and dangerously deteriorating world situation is the primary task facing humanity. (...) This supreme effort is a challenge for our generation. It cannot be passed on to the next. The effort must be resolutely undertaken without delay, and significant redirection must be achieved during this decade.”¹ This statement comes from the seminal work “The Limits to Growth”, published by the Club of Rome in 1972.

Half a century later, following the discussions on the outcome of the 26th Conference of the Parties in Glasgow past November, the paragraph above seems vaguely familiar, as one of the main statements of the final document “stresses the urgency of enhancing ambition and action in relation to mitigation, adaptation and finance in this critical decade to address the gaps in the implementation of the goals of the Paris Agreement”.

Another noteworthy message from the “Limits to Growth” states: “if the global society waits until those constraints are unmistakably apparent, it will have waited too long.” And indeed, in recent years, climate change has developed from being a vague future scenario with no immediate effects, to a visible catastrophe that can be directly experienced, even in the northern hemisphere. In recent years, no one could escape the images of extreme and unprecedented weather events like floods, storms, severe heatwaves and droughts, the burning Amazon forest and wild fires in the US, Australia and Southern

Europe; not to speak of the fact that we find ourselves amidst a mass extinction of species which is linked to the changes in climate and environmental degradation.

Have we waited too long? Although there has been much movement in climate politics in the past few decades, some scientists believe that some self-reinforcing tipping points in the Earth system will be reached sooner than expected, thus making climate change irreversible and ever increasing in speed. What we will face, when the targets of the Paris Agreement will not be met – a recent study projects an average rise in temperature between 2,2° and 2,9°^{2,3} – is hard to imagine. But some of the expected impacts will become reality within our, or our children’s, lifetime. Within this setting, developing countries – which contribute and have contributed least to climate change – are among the ones that already feel the worst effects. For these reasons, the focus of climate science in all relevant areas of life and increasingly also in politics, lies not only on preventing or slowing down climate change, but also on concrete measures to mitigate the already noticeable effects of climate change and to strengthen societies’ resilience.

Many developing countries are only at the beginning of full industrialisation. Since development in its traditional form is often still interpreted as economic growth via industrialisation and thus is following the traditional Western paradigm of modernisation, this will further accelerate global warming and environmental degradation. It is a task for all na-

tions and for all actors in the field of development to think ahead and leave beaten paths. It is also a task to think boldly about new – or old – proposals for economic models that do not focus only on economic growth as a desirable outcome and indicator for development. Against this background, it should be emphasised that among the main drivers of climate change are industrial production, energy and heating, agriculture and forestry, and global and individual transport. This means that for a sustainable future, virtually all areas of human life will be under scrutiny and, in the best case scenario, will have to be rethought.

But although the likely consequences of global warming and rampant environmental degradation have been known for many decades, it seems to be part of human nature to easily brush aside even the logically and scientifically obvious when the consequences are unclear and the required actions inconvenient, and on first sight mean giving up some comfort and consumption on the individual level. Moreover, across the political spectrum, short-term issues that require immediate political attention – such as tackling the COVID-19 pandemic, economic emergencies or geostrategic challenges – seem to distract from humanity's most pressing problem. Not to mention that any structural change, even if it leads to the frequently invoked win-win scenario, means hard work first and foremost.

This issue of “Argumente und Materialien der Entwicklungszusammenarbeit” (Arguments and Materials for Development Cooperation) deals with questions such as how the consequences of climate change are affecting people and societies in our partner countries, which adaptation strategies are needed and which political, social and economic instruments are being used to achieve the climate- and sustainable development goals.

Adi Wolfson, Ofira Ayalon, and Yoni Sappir contribute an article focusing on the ramifications in the State of Israel. Their paper describes actions needed to fulfil Israel's greenhouse gases reduction goals for the

benefits of the people of Israel, the world and future generations – yet, so far, the authors consider Israel's goals and performances as very limited.

The article “The EU as a global leader on climate action between ambition and reality” examines the ambitious EU policy initiative unveiled by the Commission in 2019, which has the potential to drive global climate action efforts and give the EU a real leadership role on the world stage, but also the limits of the European Union's room for manoeuvre.

Christoph Rapp from the Technical University of Munich (TUM) and Christian Springer from the University of Applied Sciences (UAS) Erfurt present an example of an experimental knowledge exchange project in hydraulics, “Lab-in-a-Bag”, on which partners from Tanzania and Germany have been working since April 2021. The project is easily replicable, and set within the framework of an experience-based teaching concept, focusing on the central role water plays in global warming processes.

Magnus Bengtsson, Patrick Schröder & Michael Siegner present the concept of circular economy in the article “Building back better through circular economy – opportunities for ASEAN countries”, especially its relevance for low and middle income countries. It shows why circular economy practices should be part of the ASEAN region's recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic to help build economies that are both more inclusive and resilient.

Shi Gendong, the executive director of the UNESCO Chinese National Working Committee on Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) describes the achievements made in ESD in China. As theoretical research and innovatory practice go deeper, he envisages ESD to become a distinctive mainstream strand in the overall onward advance of the modernisation of education nationwide and serve as important arenas for innovation.

Hyun-Ah Choi and Bernhard Seliger discuss South Korea's ambitious Green New Deal,

which won worldwide acclaim, even when details of it were still unknown. When the COVID-19 pandemic hit the world, South Korea was one of the first countries answering with a large-scale deficit-spending programme at the same time purporting to tackle the issue of growth and green transformation.

In his article "Climate Action and the Indian Imperative", Sandeep Kumar Dubey focuses on climate finance and water governance. He argues that climate finance and technology transfer from developed to developing countries are not enough to bridge the capability gap as the focus is one-sided on climate change mitigation actions. He tries to explain why it is important for India to raise its ambition on climate change by improving climate finance mobilisation, developing adaptation technologies and strengthening its climate policy.

With a focus on Africa, Daniel Seiberling gives a brief introduction of the Hanns Seidel Foundation's Regional Sustainability Network (RSN), followed by an extensive review on "the Role of Civil Society Organizations and Networks in Advancing and Achieving the Paris Agreement and Sustainable Development Goals".

In this article, Sixbert Mwanga provides an overview of the role played by CSOs in Tanzania to advance and achieve the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC-Paris Agreement) and SDGs targets.

This edition concludes with an interview conducted by Barbara Kahatjipara – "Ahead of the COP26: Namibia's fight for climate change mitigation and adaptation". Bernadette Shalumbu-Shivute, Jonathan Kamwi, and Clemens von Doderer discuss the prospects for Namibia, which is severely affected by climate change. Since the country has huge potential for renewable energies such as solar energy, there are opportunities for a sustainable, "green" growth, also in the context of post-COVID recovery.

Dear readers, the way ahead will not be easy. But despite the undeniable challenges, international cooperation on climate and environmental issues have, and hopefully will pave the way for more understanding between cultures in our common concern for our people and the planet. The Hanns Seidel Foundation is strongly committed to issues of environmental sustainability, both in Germany and in our project offices in 74 countries around the world. In cooperation with and as a mediator between civil society and politics, we will play our part and do our best to advance the agenda for a sustainable future.

I wish you an interesting read.



|| Dr. Susanne Luther

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NOTES

- 1 Meadows, d. et al. (1972) *The Limits to Growth*. A report for the Club of Rome's project on the predictament of mankind. Universe Books, New York
- 2 Sognaes, I., Gambhir, A., van de Ven, DJ. et al. A multi-model analysis of long-term emissions and warming implications of current mitigation efforts. *Nat. Clim. Chang.* 11, 1055–1062 (2021). URL <https://www.nature.com/articles/s41558-021-01206-3>
- 3 The Monitoring Report 2019 on the German Strategy for Adaptation to Climate Change confirms that average rise in temperature has already reached 1,5°C. See Monitoringbericht 2019 zur Deutschen Anpassungsstrategie an den Klimawandel Bericht der Interministeriellen Arbeitsgruppe Anpassungsstrategie der Bundesregierung URL https://www.bmu.de/fileadmin/Daten_BMU/Download_PDF/Klimaschutz/monitoringbericht_2019_bf.pdf