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**Betriebswirtschaftliche Schriftenreihe Rechte der Natur / Biokratie in der
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Eberhard Seidel: Biokratie und Brundtland-Triade. Die Rechte der Natur in Ökonomie und Organisation (Biocracy and the Brundtland triad. The rights of nature in the context of economics and organization), ISBN 978-3-7316-1116-5

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**Series Rights of Nature / Biocracy, publisher Metropolis-Verlag, Marburg,
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Abstract Volume 1, ISBN 978-3-7316-1116-5 (2015)



Eberhard Seidel: Biocracy and the Brundtland triad. The rights of nature in the context of economics and organization

Abstract

This volume describes the fundamental relation between the two complexes “rights of nature / biocracy” on the one hand and „economics and organization“ on the other hand, in two ways:

- First of all, there are logical-analytical relations as to the conceptual differentiation between the two complexes: Rights of nature are organizational norms in the field of organization and economic restrictions (constraints) in the field of economics.
- Secondly, there are empirical-synthetic relations as to the factual connection between the two complexes:

The factual connection is chiefly a goal-means connection. It is about the realization of biocracy and the rights of nature (*goal*) in the field of economics through organizational *means* (methods and instruments).

The main subject of the book, presented in section III “Biocracy and the Brundtland triad”, is a discussion of the biocracy concept vis-à-vis the prevailing doctrine and opinion in the area of environmental or sustainability management in both the public and private sector. The Brundtland triad, the highly attractive consensus model in politics and science as well as economic doctrine and practice, is the essence of mainstream thinking. Biocracy, on the other hand, is still a very marginal concept and is looked upon with considerable skepticism. This suggests that the Brundtland triad might be taken as a source of hope for solutions and support for biocracy.

This hope is in vain. The Brundtland triad

- does not undertake any serious attempt at achieving operationalization,
- is, with its core feature of equal rank, not really operationalizable,
- would, if operationalized, be unsuitable because equal rank, in its nominal definition, is clearly not sufficient to even approach sustainability.

The Brundtland triad is an illusionary fabrication with serious negative consequences. Actual realization of biocracy and sustainability requires a reversal of the proto-operational rank weighting in the current hierarchy triad of labor, capital and environment. Implementing this reversal would also mean the cancellation of a serious „*systemic reversal*”, including a serious *violation of holistic existence (rationality break)*, in the system of human economics.

Nevertheless, Brundtland triad and biocracy dual remain ambivalently interconnected. The modified Brundtland triad, for example, can be seen as a prerequisite for the success of assumed biocratic voting rights. Biocracy is a – fruitful and useful – pragmatic fiction in the sense of the philosophy of ‘As if’ according to Hans Vaihinger.

In their economic activities, humans have made the greatest error they could make in their calculations: *to tally the bill without the host*. Only nature actually „produces” anything, therefore nature is the only real and true “host”. Humans, on the other hand, are consumers and, as such, are even parasites. Biocracy can and should help to tally the bill not without, but more and more with the host in future. Only biocracy will provide a way to come close to *sustainability* and *viability of human economic activity*.

**Series Rights of Nature / Biocracy, publisher Metropolis-Verlag, Marburg,
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Abstract Volume 2, ISBN 978-3-7316-1117-2 (2015)



Thomas Göllinger, Biocracy – The Evolutionary-Economic Foundations

Abstract

From a systemic-evolutionary perspective, the ecological question arises from inter-systemic competition between the biosphere and the anthroposphere; as the depth of penetration into the biosphere increases, there is a danger of disturbed coevolution.

Against this background, it is fitting to consider the interactions between these systems in terms of evolutionary economics. How is ecologically adapted business management possible in the context of the evolving biosphere and anthroposphere?

Anthropogenic economy is subject to both entropic and self-organizing processes. Hence, this tug-of-war needs to be illuminated more precisely. In addition to a discussion of advanced thermodynamic concepts, the focus is on their connection with the concepts of evolution.

Knowledge about the functional principles of the biosphere is not only necessary to limit the intensity of intervention, but can also provide valuable information for the design of anthropogenic metabolic and value-added systems according to natural models. For example, for the anthropogenic use of energy, it is possible to derive the match criteria from the organizational properties of the natural energy flux.

An adequate economic interpretation of the sustainability issue can be achieved through differentiated consideration of the concept of natural capital. Economics and biosphere can be interpreted as specific categories of living systems. This brings up certain conditions for sustainable interaction between biosphere and anthroposphere. Of central importance is the evolutionary view of natural added value, which regards production as a cyclic process.

The evolutionary economic view of the connection between economic activities and strains on nature is not limited to the problem of exhaustion of natural resources, but explicitly addresses the problem of the increasing depth of intervention arising from anthropogenic activities. This ranges from consideration of changes in resource stocks and material flows, through changes in material cycles and the disturbance of control

circuits, to the influence of natural self-organization and change of evolutionary direction.

The socio-economic auto-organizational process of order evolution is still largely organized at a low level of complexity and is characterized by relatively inefficient technologies, an ecologically inconsistent metabolism and a low level of information networking. The material-energetic (metabolic) incompatibility is a result of the asynchronous evolution of biosphere and anthroposphere.

The fundamental extension of the conventional environmental-economic point of view to include evolutionary economics is significant for the analysis of systemic ecological-economic interconnections for several reasons:

1. This approach allows the economy to connect with modern and advanced theories (in the natural and social sciences) pertaining to self-organization, evolution and systematics.
 2. These concepts enable a better understanding of the developmental conditions and functions of ecological systems.
 3. Thus the anthropogenic production system can be analyzed with regard to its non-compatibility with the biosphere; only then can the (deeper) causes of the ecological problem complex be understood.
 4. Based on this broader understanding of systemic ecological-economic interconnections, adequate solutions can be developed that transcend simplistic concepts.
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**Series Rights of Nature / Biocracy, publisher Metropolis-Verlag, Marburg,
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Abstract Volume 3, ISBN 978-3-7316-1183-7 (2016)



Eberhard K. Seifert, Nature - Thought - Creation

Abstract

Volume 3 of the series contains an „excursus” with afterthoughts on each of the subjects nature, thought and creation:

1. Goethe’s essay Nature: Aphorisms (1783/1828) – since its publication a reference work in controversies regarding anti-mechanical views of nature.
2. A publication on “biocracy” by Alfred Köster (1963), the first in the German-speaking world discovered in the course of research to date, which makes reference to philosophical thought (‘theorem of sufficient reason’), as well as scientific thought (physics/Einstein).
3. The current encyclical ‘Laudato Si’ by Pope Francis ‘on caring for the common house’ (2015), the first historical ‘eco’ proclamation of the Apostolic See to all people, not only Christians.

The respective ‘after-thoughts’ on and brief reviews of these three documents address guiding (especially philosophical) questions, which are dealt with in more detail in the volume: „Biocracy – Criticism of Forgetting Nature” on the topic of nature and its history, in particular with a view to possible connection points for biocratic perspectives and a corresponding bio-economics, as well as to the whole project of conceptual development of biocracy in interdisciplinary (eg temporarily institutionalized) research and communication contexts.

**Series Rights of Nature / Biocracy, publisher Metropolis-Verlag, Marburg,
Volume 1-20,**

Abstract Volume 4, ISBN 978-3-7316-1132-5 (2015)



Volker Stahlmann: Intrinsic rights of nature - for whose benefit?

Abstract

It is a truism that nature does not need to have rights granted to it by humans. It has its own rights and its own value, without our having to rack our brains over it. If we do grant nature intrinsic rights, then we do this in the vested interest of humans themselves, because the rights of nature are of fundamental importance for human life and are the basis for any kind of economic added value. The Federal Republic of German should therefore follow the lead of Ecuador and add the intrinsic rights of nature to their constitution, inserting the following text in Article 1 (1a) of their Constitutional Law: “The natural basis of existence is under special protection by the State. Actions taken by the State shall respect the natural environment and protect its intrinsic value cross-generationally as the basis for dignified human livelihood.”

This would be a logical further development of our positive legal order, correcting its highly anthropocentric orientation at the very outset. But it would also be a kind of “final rescue attempt” to constrain our apparent freedom of unlimited consumption and to place quality of life and just distribution ahead of growth.

The emphasis on nature as the primary basis of value-creation would make the Brundtland triad appear in a different, solely future-oriented target weighting:

Firstly: The respect, conservation and revitalization of nature.

Secondly: The development of a society that promotes prosperity, cultural diversity (not only from a material, consumerist perspective).

Thirdly: The organization of the economy as part of society, divided complementarily as a domestic economy with its own work and a commercial and social economy.

The necessary change in base values throughout the population and among decision-makers in politics, business and society still seems far removed for the project of humanistic biocracy. Nonetheless, lateral movements towards a more natural, sustainable development are unmistakable. These include renewable energies, organic agriculture, community-oriented and money-free self-sustaining economic structures, as

well as tendencies towards decentralization and regional economic cycles. Numerous small to medium-sized enterprises are pursuing strategies to ensure that their business processes are environmentally and socially responsible, independent of growth, and consumers are becoming increasingly committed to ecologically and socially fair products.

So that the intrinsic rights of nature are more than just a good idea on paper, cultural, decentralized counter-flows of post-growth society have to be encouraged and supported. The development of an eco-centered, cultivated and humanitarian social order could then be a model that benefits all of humankind.

**Series Rights of Nature / Biocracy, publisher Metropolis-Verlag, Marburg,
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Abstract Volume 5, ISBN 978-3-7316-1141-7 (2015)



Hans-Ulrich Zabel: Biocracy approach - habitat design and behavioral perspectives

Abstract

To counteract the destruction of the natural basis of life, sustainable development is needed. The biocratic approach provides a path to operationalizing such a development that gives priority to ecology within the triad of economy, social issues and ecology and, by doing so, brings survivability into focus.

Georg Winter as the creator of the modern biocracy approach (particularly in combination with the concept-related works of Eberhard Seidel) develops the central demand of survivability out of the analytic diagnosis of civilization's "life-threatening" alienation from the requirements of the inclusion of nature, namely that the "reunion between technological civilization and nature", in addition to human rights, also requires the development, discussion, and establishment of "rights of nature".

In this part of Volume 5, the following fields of study are dealt with:

1. Biocratic approach and sustainable development (Ch. 2): The Biocratic approach is characterized as impulse generator and operationalization aid for sustainable development, whereby connections to effectivity and efficiency of the economy are also drawn (keyword e.g. nature protection as an economic requirement).
2. Rights of Nature: Requirements and limits (Ch. 3): Starting from the outlines of the rights of living organisms/animals (referring to interests, goals, standards, objects of protection, institutional insurance) problems and limitations are demonstrated (system, capacity, recognition and modelling limits as well as behavioral barriers). The conclusion drawn is that the protection of individual animals and species encounters difficult obstacles (nature itself is a dynamic system of development and decay, of eating and being eaten; certain existing animals and species, such as raccoons, should not be protected but combated for the sake of species diversity). From this it is derived that it is not the protection of individuals and species that should be at the foreground, but rather the protection of habitats. The focus should be on the principles of natural cycles (provision through disposal, unity of growth and

limitations of growth, diversity, foresight and, of course, programmed behavior activation). These ecological cycle principles, in turn, are translated into techno-economic system elements.

3. Behavioral aspects (Ch. 4): A behavioral model is presented which in addition to cultural conditioning and situational influences contains genetic conditioning as a central behavioral determinant. Genetic conditioning (for the most part still stemming from hunter-gatherer times) influence behavior within natural environments and social structures toward serving life (which directly entails serving the species and the group). They thus provide the behavioral background of the biocratic approach.
4. Synthesis: Habitat protection/cycle orientation and behavior activation (Ch. 5): Based on the correspondences between the behavioral model and the biocracy approach, elements of decision basis and organizational implementation (the “-cracy” component in biocracy in the sense of democratic organization and implementation) are developed. The following components are dealt with individually with reference to requirements and possibilities of a design compatible with bureaucracy: Growth limitation, diversity, ethics, protection of nature, labor, science and technology, and extension of monetary regulations.

The selected components illustrate that the biocracy approach permeates economic and societal life in its entirety and that this permeation requires further exciting research.

**Series Rights of Nature / Biocracy, publisher Metropolis-Verlag, Marburg,
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Abstract Volume 6, ISBN 978-3-7316-1167-7 (2015)

Georg Müller-Christ, Biocracy or Oikoscraçy: The triad of economy, society and nature in a different setup

Abstract

The discourse on biocracy can be taken as an impulse to think about nature's place in the positioning game of business and society.

Such a positioning game actually takes place, it is often discussed in science and politics, whether in texts or speeches, and ultimately it comes down to who is going to set the rules for this game. In the first part of these reflections, we look at the game of economics, ecology and society (or nature, business and society) as has been observable so far in discussions on sustainability. These reflections lead us to the question whether we could be facing a confusion of purpose and means, in which the means (humans and nature) are revalued economically until they become purposes themselves again. The presumed reason why this is so is: The positioning of the triad is not absolute, but depends on the level of consciousness of the actors who set the rules for the game (spiral dynamics).

Is there a way to express the interplay of the triad other than through discursive processes and normative positing? In the second part of this paper, an approach based on Systemic Constellation is used to express the interplay of nature, the economy and society in a completely different way. System Constellation is an unknown method for many but, when experienced, it is almost always accepted. Spiral Dynamics is also a concept that is not yet known to many but is almost always found convincing when presented. The paper comes to the following conclusion:

The interplay between business, society and nature is not an absolute given. It depends on which people look at the spheres with which structures of consciousness. Providing the one speechless sphere of the three with a language and a voice and creating a biocracy is only one of the conceivable solutions. Another possibility is to turn the relatively simple sphere of the economy as a purpose-means optimizer into a connecting and mediating link between the restrictions of nature and the infinite needs of society. The rights of nature are not assured by power and domination, but by cooperation

between the spheres in a kind of household community (Oikoscracy). Such an Oikoscracy is proposed here as a solution.

and:



Rüdiger H. Jung: Strengthening of orientation towards meaning in leadership action through biocracy-sensitive personnel management

Abstract

At first glance, linking the biocratic ideal with entrepreneurial leadership seems far-fetched. On closer inspection, however, it becomes evident that the integration of a new appreciative relation to nature into employer-employee collaboration can present a strong counterbalance to the loss of meaning in the workplace. These considerations are based on the basic principle of philosophical anthropology, that humans are beings whose existence include value relatedness and the search for meaning. We link this conception of humans with a consideration regarding the special meaning potential of nature-related, biocracy-sensitive responsibility.

Whereas body and psyche distinguish humans only slightly from other living things, they are, in their spiritual dimension, as spiritual person, free and “elevated above the dichotomy of organism and environment” (Max Scheler). A core feature of the spiritual person is the pursuit of virtue, which also explains the ability of humans to confront the reality they find themselves in and “hurl a forceful ‘No’ at it” (Max Scheler). (This anthropological understanding also explains the role change of industry representatives which Müller-Christ observes in his experiment regarding the interaction of nature, economy and society; see the contribution of Müller-Christ on “Biocracy or Oikoscracy”.)

Only in accordance with spiritual personality do humans pose the question of the meaning of their own existence; and in value-related behavior they find answers to the question of meaning, and the “will to meaning” (Viktor Frankl) receives a chance for deep fulfilment as a motivational factor sui generis through a sense of value and purpose.

Turning to nature and the resulting experience of values holds a special potential for a feeling of meaning (Konrad Lorenz). Even if possible social superstructures and subsequently constructed existential and consume-related necessities distract us from this natural experience of meaning, the potentiality remains. The biocracy approach can

greatly expand the observational and interactive space for value relations and meaning orientation; it creates contact points for value realization and sense of meaning.

When employees and management in different fields and levels of hierarchy report deficits in meaning (for which there is empirical evidence), it seems sensible to consider the integration of an appreciative relation to nature into the employer-employee collaboration. Creative approaches to biocracy-sensitive entrepreneurial action can present a strong counterbalance to loss of meaning in the workplace. In addition to the theoretical derivation, a scenario is presented to describe the character of the executive Leo Arduc, a department chief who conquers the hearts of her co-workers with a biocracy-sensitive management style by re-introducing them to the possibilities of value experience and sense of meaning in the workplace.

The scenario serves as an example for a grass-roots approach on the micro-scale of a single company, which can have an effect beyond individual efforts and eventually play the ball to decision makers on the macro-scale via mechanisms of self-organization. However it is an approach that first demands emotional resources of managers and their direct employees on the micro-scale, meaning that it offers the opportunity to experience oneself in the realization of values through nature-related commitment and thus find answers to the question of meaning, which is also ever present in professional life. Just such a grass-roots approach may be a promising way to create enthusiasm for “an intermediary third category ‘garden’” (Eberhard Seidel) between the extremes of sheer wilderness and anthropogenic-parasitic civilization.

**Series Rights of Nature / Biocracy, publisher Metropolis-Verlag, Marburg,
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Abstract Volume 7, ISBN 978-3-7316-1171-4 (2015)



Ralf Isenmann: Biophilic economy - from nature as a bag of resources to nature as a model

Abstract

The essay in volume 7: “Biophilic economy – from nature as a bag of resources to nature as a model” marks a step on the way to biocracy in order to help assure the rights of nature in the context of the economy and its exploitation of nature’s resources and functions. This step focuses on basic assumptions in the economy, below the discussion of “the right instruments of environmental politics”. It is concerned with theory formation and development in economics, more precisely in business economics; it is interwoven with the history of dogma; and it references, in a methodically and conceptually supported way, the theory and ethics of science, in particular natural philosophy.

Such an endeavor should not be approached in a “slam dunk” way or as an “in medias res” process, but rather integrated into the business-ethical context of balancing economics and ecology, as this symbolizes a structural change towards a biophilic economy. The extension of our understanding of nature, from a “bag of resources” (Hampicke 1977, 622) towards a partial model, is embedded in the guiding concepts and principles of a viable and sustainable economy: This means that the economy has to be conceived and designed to be biophilic, that is life-sustaining, life-increasing and life-enhancing, combining conservative and progressive aspects.

By integrating nature and its ecological resources into the economic value creation and environmental impact scheme, the economy, at the level of its basic assumptions, will see itself more and more in a fair exchange with nature as a part of the encompassing ecosystem.

Minimum substantial maintenance of nature and its ecological resources would appear to consist of applying them in the sphere of economics, following the triad: value, value appreciation, value creation. Thus nature would be recognized as a necessary, even if not sufficient, basis for economics and business. This extension and supplementation of the understanding of and relationship to nature opens up the opportunity to extend the traditional, narrow analytical and object-oriented view of nature as a „sack of resources“

beyond the „management rules of sustainable economics“ and to learn from nature as an exemplary source of innovation: from its smart phenomena, its evolutionary strategies in dealing with matter, energy, information, space and time, as well as its basic functional principles.

The essay in Volume 7 is intended to illustrate the idea of considering nature as a model of economic activity and to show that this point of view seems to be possible, comprehensible and helpful, even if it may contradict traditional thinking patterns in economics.

**Series Rights of Nature / Biocracy, publisher Metropolis-Verlag, Marburg,
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Abstract Volume 8, ISBN 978-3-7316-1160-8 (2015)



**Eberhard Seidel: Environmental cost accounting as a component of biocratic
controlling Rights of Nature / Biocracy**

Abstract

The subject of this volume is operational environmental cost accounting as a component of biocratic controlling, something that can only be hoped for in the distant future. After a brief sketch of the controlling concept in accounting (I.), environmental cost accounting is presented as a socio-economic component of biocratic controlling (II.). A short sidelight falls finally on environmental monitoring as the bio-ecological component of biocratic controlling (III.).

Due to the still elementary development level of the topic, following an outline and overview (II.1) and an introductory consideration of environmental protection and cost accounting (II.2), the main focus is placed on the conceptual clarification of “environmental costs” (II.3). In addition to a sidelight on the course of development of concept formation (II.3.1), an attempt is made to systematize and summarize the level of concept development achieved so far (II.3.2). Are environmental costs (a) all of the allocated or calculated operational costs of a company, or (b) parts thereof, or are environmental costs (c) outside the scope of operational costs allocated or calculated to date? Each of the three questions can be affirmed in certain respects and, in addition, allow different logical combinations:

- Environmental costs are all operationally allocated and calculated costs and additional costs.
- Environmental costs are part of the allocated and calculated costs and additional costs.

With regard to environmental cost accounting in the narrower sense, the procedure is twofold: Firstly, environmental cost accounting is placed within the scope of the conventional actual full cost accounting. The areas involved (II.4) are environmentally relevant cost type accounting, environmentally relevant cost center accounting and environmentally relevant cost unit accounting. An overview is then given of the existing approaches to environmental cost accounting. Ecology-oriented accounting approaches

in the area of external costs (II.5.2), conventional business accounting approaches (II.5.3) and modern process-oriented accounting approaches (II.5.4) are differentiated. Approaches with flow-cost or process-cost orientation are currently the most promising approaches to environmental cost accounting, theoretically and practically.

Operational implementations of such accounting approaches are best understood as “projects” and addressed with the usual tools of project work. Section II.6 sheds some light on current practical project work and points out procedural and organizational aspects in the development of an environmental process cost calculation. “Environmental performance” is a facet of environmental costs, but remains an individual, albeit indispensable, target category. In an excursus, the general win-win maxim with regard to environmental cost accounting is criticized (II.7). Relationships between economic (internalized) and environmental (externalized) environmental costs under twelve movements (strategies) are discussed.

A brief summary and outlook follow in II.8. Development requirements for environmental cost accounting with regard to closing the gap, at some point in the future, between environmental cost accounting and environmental monitoring are discussed in section III.

**Series Rights of Nature / Biocracy, publisher Metropolis-Verlag, Marburg,
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Abstract Volume 9, ISBN 978-3-7316-1178-3 (2015)



Jürgen Freimann, Nature as a Stakeholder

Abstract

The biocracy approach aims to change the political-legal framework to make companies take responsibility in their business activities for respecting the independent rights of nature. This volume poses the question whether this can be achieved.

It begins by examining the company image that underlies the biocracy approach. The author comes to the conclusion that the approach is based on the conventional shareholder company image. Unlike the competing stakeholder company image, the conventional image does not include an independent company ethic. It regards economic ethics as purely institutional ethics, leaving business actions, which are aimed solely at financial profit, unaffected in principle.

In this respect, the biocracy approach is short-sighted. There is abundant evidence showing that the postulates of institutional ethics have little effect, even if they are expressly anchored in the constitution, as is the case with the postulate of socially binding property ownership or the equality of men and women. What is needed is a fundamental cultural change in society and in companies that leads business participants to reflect on the ethics of their own business actions.

However, such a cultural change conflicts with the long-term trends in global cultural development, such as the fetishization of economic growth, the elimination of moral boundaries in money-oriented economic patterns of action, the growing nature of modern societies and their role model function for large parts of the rest of the world. These trends are responsible for the fact that most people pay so little attention to the conservation of nature, despite existing knowledge.

The author raises the question of whether and how it might be possible, nevertheless, to initiate such a fundamental cultural change and what contribution might be made by integrating the independent rights of nature into the legal system. He discusses possible drivers of such a change, as well as potential obstacles. In closing, he submits three proposals for the extension of company organization that could help make independent constitutional rights of nature effective at company level: Mandatory standardized

sustainability reporting, regular stakeholder dialogs with “attorneys of nature”, and establishment of a Sustainability Board in all larger companies.

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Andreas Troge: Biocracy: Positioning the Magnet Correctly

Abstract

The vision biocracy, that is, the idea of bringing the “domination of life” as a state of higher order into human societies, fits both our experiences and the foreseeable challenges of protecting our natural resources: Experience teaches us that, despite some success, we are too slow; the challenge is that the erosion of our natural resources is likely to continue or even accelerate.

What are the necessary prerequisites for the vision of biocracy not to become an illusion?

1. Widespread consciousness in the population, that we have reached nature’s limits and are headed toward its lasting destruction, so that we can no longer turn to the exploitation of new resources like a wandering bandit, but rather have to treat the natural basis of our lives with care;
2. The insight that the laws of evolution and the “meta-state Nature” do not relieve us as human beings of our responsibility to make long-term, at least not predictably wrong decisions for the preservation of the natural basis of life, instead of allowing natural evolution to prevail without any criticism (even against humans). Which natural resources should be protected with higher or lower priority, for how long, and for what reason?
3. In order to make responsible decisions for ourselves and the rest of the nature, we have to learn not to implement corrections of various mistakes here and there, mostly in retrospect. Instead of trying to redirect our numerous individual cases of misconduct towards nature with a great deal of force, like turning iron filings against the force of incorrectly positioned magnets, i.e. our overriding behavioral incentives, it is a matter of making fundamental improvements in favor of nature. Correctly placed magnets are the necessary prerequisite for the iron filings to orient themselves in the right basic direction, without requiring intervention per individual case: To this end, institutional reforms are needed that fundamentally counteract the myopia of

decisions in state and society, because the human time scale is inadequate for the protection of nature.

4. In the public sector, the Federal President could act as sustainability advocate against the notorious myopia of parliaments and governments, provided he or she is granted the right to veto parliamentary and governmental resolutions if these decisions could be expected to obstruct intergenerational prosperity, including the natural basis of life. This would require a special legitimation of the Federal President, for example, by being elected by a federal assembly that in turn is elected directly by the people. It would be helpful to have a Sustainability Council assigned to the Federal President to provide consultation with regard to sustainability issues; the members of the Sustainability Council would have to be completely independent of any party or special economic interests.
5. In the social sphere, our ownership structure is „system-relevant“ for nature, to quote a term from the bank rescue scheme in the context of the global financial crisis (starting in 2008) and the euro crisis. Obviously, limited liability companies (in Germany, corporations and Ltd) can take more risks - even to the detriment of nature - than entrepreneurs who bear full responsibility for their companies' liabilities. The former favors short-term behavior, the latter transgenerational. Since it is unlikely that full liability of entrepreneurs with their private assets could be introduced any time soon, particularly in the international context, the following measures could lead in the right direction, i.e. to a new positioning of the magnet: increased equity ratios in the balance total, requirement of additional capital contributions by the capital owners, delayed payment of premiums and delayed recognition of retirement pensions for managers, both of which only in cases where the company is still faring well after several years.
6. Looking ahead, the question arises as to how private and public ownership of productive assets can be delineated so that it helps to preserve the natural basis of life as far as possible: The question is: What do we want to regard as our natural basis of life in the long term, and why? A social discourse may help here, but can provide neither truths, nor behavioral certainties. Nevertheless: It could help to achieve more directional certainty in the distinction between decisions and behavior that are in favor of and those that are at the expense of the natural basis of life – as can currently be observed with regard to the final disposal of highly radioactive waste in Germany.

Conclusion: The first central steps towards biocracy already show a high „air resistance coefficient“. But perhaps this will increase the perception of this important idea.

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Thomas Göllinger, Frank Weber, Unternehmen und ökologische Herausforderung

Abstract is coming soon

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Abstract Volume 12, ISBN 978-3-7316-1182-0 (2015)



Thomas Göllinger: Biocracy - Integrative Sustainability Strategies

Abstract

In order to secure ecological sustainability, the use of all three strategy options is essential: efficiency, consistency and sufficiency. This is supported particularly by the fact that the social players, of their own accord, bring out inventions and innovations from the entire range of options that are waiting for their chance to be implemented. Moreover, the three strategic options each have specific restrictions, which argues against a one-sided preference for any particular strategic option.

Efficiency innovations, for example, allow a direct decoupling of economic output and resource consumption on the one hand. On the other hand, this not only leads to saving of resources, but often to a more cost-effective supply of goods and thus to an increase in demand (economic and psychological rebound effects) and, indirectly, to an increased consumption of resources, effective stress relief for nature and the environment can, at least in principle, be achieved by means of consistency innovations, which make material flows, with regard to their ecological quality, compatible with the fitness criteria of natural material cycles. However, this also triggers psychological rebound effects, as the ecological relief leads to reduced problem awareness among consumers and therefore increased consumption desires can be expected.

Due to the systemic limitations of efficiency and consistency strategies, the sufficiency strategy is also an important component of an integrative sustainability strategy. The sufficiency strategy is important both in its manifestation as quantitative sufficiency with regard to size, and as qualitative sufficiency with regard to the specific composition of the consumed shopping basket. The mutual interdependencies between these options are manifold and complex; possible influences range from inhibition of the other two options due to forced realization of a certain type of strategy, to mutual promotion through self-reinforcing effects. Hence, a concerted innovation cascade, including organizational and institutional innovations, is called for.

The particular challenge for an integrative sustainability strategy results from the complex intertwining of strategic approaches, with a multitude of mutually inhibiting

and complementary factors. Neither „carry on”, nor the demand for a radical change of direction are realistic perspectives. In keeping with the systemic realization that the solutions of today are going to become the problems of tomorrow, today's problems are in turn the results of yesterday's solutions. Overcoming them will still require technological, organizational and institutional innovations; but also the clear awareness that these innovations will be neither sufficient nor free of further problems.

and



Thomas Göllinger/ Gabriele Harrer, Biocybernetics and sustainability - dialog on the “basic principles of biocynenetics” and their significance for environmental sustainability and the “rights of nature”. Acknowledgment on the occasion of the 90th birthday of Frederic Vester

Abstract

Regarding concepts that support the strengthening of natural rights, biologically and ecologically inspired approaches are of particular importance for obvious reasons. Biocybernetics, as developed and propagated by the German systemic scientist Frederic Vester (1925-2003) since the 1970s, is one such nature-inspired concept. The “Eight Basic Principles of Biocybernetics”, in particular, provide a set of instruments for understanding and adequately dealing with complex systems, focusing on preserving and strengthening nature, while at the same time enabling the transfer of acquired insights to other problems.

This dialog with Gabriele Harrer, who worked closely with Frederic Vester for over eighteen years, provides a deeper understanding of the background and development of the eight biocybernetic principles as well as an overview of the different applications of this approach.

In all his works, Vester regarded the eight biocybernetic rules as the basic principle of viability, and especially the “viability and sustainability” of systems. They serve as guardrails for orientation in the design of viable and sustainable systems. This can be illustrated based on examples from nature, but also from business and society.

The first rule, for example, states that negative feedback in a system or subsystem has to take precedence over positive feedback with regard to correlations; or the second basic rule that the system function has to be independent of growth. The other rules cover further basic principles that also play an important role in the field of green economy. A very important point here is the importance of biocybernetic principles for the strategic

dimension of the sustainability discussion; this is evidenced by the typical strategic approaches of efficiency, consistency and sufficiency, all of which are systemic components of the eight principles. For Vester, it was clear that a solution to our civilizational problems cannot emanate from a single approach, but only from a skillful, systemically based nexus of different approaches.

From the implementation of these rules in the areas of planning and management, these steps were then implemented methodically and practically and developed over the years, leading e.g. to the development of the computer-aided biocybernetic planning and management tool “Sensitivity Model Prof. Vester®”. This enabled the basic rules to be used e.g. in the development of a forward-looking strategy for the automotive industry or in the design of organic farming facilities.

In general, there is a major problem that needs to be taken into account both in systemic considerations and in the application of the basic rules of biocybernetics: As a result of our conventional training, we are accustomed to what is known as linear thinking; we believe that we can control the development of systems and obtain absolute security from them. The principle of biocybernetics, not only to see ourselves as cybernetes or gubernators, but as a part of the system and not just outsiders standing at the helm, would lead to a different interaction with nature as well as with man-made systems.

Series Vol. 13, 14, 15, 16, 17 Abstract coming soon

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Volume 13, ISBN 978-3-7316-1184-4 ***Abstract coming soon***

**Series Rights of Nature / Biocracy, publisher Metropolis-Verlag, Marburg,
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Abstract Volume 18, ISBN 978-3-7316-1189-9 (2015)



Markus Will, Jana Brauweiler: What does Biocracy mean for Business?

Abstract

Biocracy calls for greater consideration of ecological aspects, ahead of business and social aspects (Doughnut model: $E > B + S$). With the pillar models (“Mickey Mouse” model: $B > E + S$) and the consensus-oriented model (“win-win-win”: $B = E = S$), companies remain un-sustainable, because the essential characteristics of the un-sustainable company remain in place, although minor improvements can be achieved when the business case is dominant (“low hanging fruits”).

The essay presents the three sustainability models and their decision processes, exemplified by a hypothetical hazardous substance substitution test for (A) polycarbonate and its available technical alternatives (B) polyethylene, (C) polyethylene terephthalate (PET), and (D) polypropylene (PP), based on the criteria of health, environment, technical aspects, material costs, investment in facilities and customer acceptance. Only when the conditions of the biocracy approach are taken into account does the decision fall in favor of alternative (D) polypropylene, which is characterized by the lowest environmental and health effects, but is also associated with high procurement costs and major investment requirements in the technical infrastructure. Under the prevailing social conditions and decision-making rationalities, and in the absence of mandatory legal requirements, this variant seems unlikely, unless the company has consciously chosen to undergo the improvement process from a non-sustainable to a sustainable business model. This requires more radical innovations, not only at the process level, but also at the level of the product and the product system, and including cultural changes (consumption patterns, etc.).

Even if the biocracy approach can be acknowledged as a further contribution of a great utopian vision, its connection facilities need to be further developed to enable a practical implementation.

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Gerd Winter, Ecological Proportionality, The principle of ecological proportionality

Abstract

Mankind's impact on natural resources and natural cycles has become a dominant phenomenon of the state of the earth. Some see a new age emerging: that of the anthropocene. The impact is however not accompanied by sufficient capacity of human governance that can ensure a state of nature fit for the survival of humanity. For some time, human governance has tried to find and guard the thresholds of exploitation tolerated by nature. Overall, these times of „environmental protection law” have applied a trial and error approach, even where the precautionary principle was propagated. Humans have waited until nature – often irreversibly – proved that thresholds were overstepped. The preoccupation on nature's responses have blinded human eyes for the fact that not nature but humanity is the problem. Not nature's needs ought to be put into question, but rather human aspirations and the socio-economic structures fostering them. They are the driving factor of the uncontrolled anthropocene. They must be (self)regulated. Eco-proportionality is a tool to that effect. Asking for giving reasons for human objectives and their means, both as a social and a gradually emerging legal norm, it contributes to a new paradigm of rules governing human-nature interaction. Eco-proportionality is an analogy to the well-established principle of proportionality that was developed to check governmental powers in the state-citizen relationships. Eco-proportionality is designed to check society's powers in relation to nature. Like in the traditional principle, eco-proportionality requires four tests, namely a justifiable objective of action and the effectiveness, necessity and weighing of means. The principle is already present both as a social and legal norm. There is reason to suggest that it should enter into more spheres of societal practice and legal order, at the same time taking a more differentiated and ambitious shape.

and:



Gerd Winter, A Fundament and Two Pillars: The Concept of Sustainable Development

Abstract

The World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED), also known as the “Brundtland Commission” after the name of its chair, presented its report on “Our Common Future” in 1987. The work of the Commission was intense and controversial, yet the final text was adopted unanimously. Its central message was encapsulated in the term “sustainable development,” understood as the use of natural resources in a manner “that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generation to meet their own needs”. The Report ends with a dramatic appeal for urgency: “We are unanimous in our conviction that the security, well-being, and very survival of the planet depend on such changes, now”. Almost 30 years have since passed. The article asks which meaning sustainability has taken over the years. The thesis is that the principle of sustainability has been padded out, drained of sense and, hence, disarmed. A renewed reading of the WCED Report suggests that the scope of the principle has to be defined more narrowly. Only if it can bite would it make sense to establish it as a principle or even rule of law. In its catch all shape it will rather be misused for greenwashing unsustainable practices. The proposed concept is one of stark sustainability, as visualized by nature as fundament and society and economy as columns, the whole carrying the roof – the future generations.

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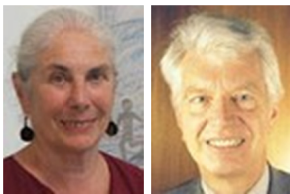
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Hans Immler: Biokratie – Bietet sie einen Weg zur Lösung?

Abstracts coming soon

and:



Renate Kirchhof-Stahlmann, Volker Stahlmann, Biocracy from a female point of view – the appreciation of life

Abstract

We are proud of our society of knowledge, but we are ignoring the obvious limits of growth, even though for over 40 years people have been pointing out that the Western growth model presents a threat to human existence. With the countless reasons and priorities that evidence this, there must be something more deep-rooted that makes us persist in the mechanics of old habits.

Our thesis is that, as a result of the male view of the world, humans generally overestimate their own capabilities, which has increasingly removed them from nature and from themselves. This hubris has been promoted by monotheistic patriarchal religions (Judaism, Christianity, Islam) for centuries. A large part of the male population of the world still regard nature – and with it women – as objects that need to be controlled. A man's relationship to his own body and to life in general is not as strong as a woman's. The love of technology, the abstraction and artificialization of the world (the "homo oeconomicus", sprawling financial illusions, digitalization and virtualization of the world, the "strive to be victorious and stay ahead"), competition, as well as crime and wars are all essentially male properties, so that respect for "natural nature" (G. Altner) and the anchoring of nature's inherent rights in the constitution must be connected primarily with a change in male behavior. As Margarete Mitscherlich put it 25 years ago: "The future is feminine, or it does not exist!" But the emancipation of men is still in its infancy.

A balance between male and female characteristics is therefore necessary to get back in tune with nature and with oneself. “Female” is only partly bound to biological gender, but predominantly a role assignment from the respective sociocultural environment. If the inherent rights of nature are to be ready for decision and action, then our feeling and precautionary principle must recognize and respect the subject qualities of nature. Intellect and intuition have to interact.

Several developments do give us hope: Partner relationships are changing, working hours are becoming more flexible with work-life balance strategies (e.g. “seesaws” in family environments), part-time work and parental leave for men is growing slightly, quality of life is increasingly discussed in economics and in social practice. Co-operative, social forms of business outside of strict competitive logic and a money-free economy of trading and sharing are emerging. In all-day schools, boys are also taught household economics, there are critically reflective conventions on peaceful and health-conscious living for men, and an unstoppable advance of weak / gentle (“solar instead of atomic”) and bionic recirculating technologies.

These are all developments that can contribute, together with an interdenominational world ethos, to an increased respect for nature and its value for life.

and:



Richard Kiridus-Göller, Thoughts on the ethos of biocracy: the nomos of economics and the logos of life

Abstract

In order to justify a ruling principle, in the interest of survival, relevant knowledge on the mesh of relevant conditions has to be presented first. Biocracy appears to be systematically legitimized inasmuch as the economy’s sustainability normatively presumes its viability.

Creating and safeguarding the means of viability are the genuine cultural function and biological purpose of the economy. Humans have to do business in order to live; acting in one’s own interest, understood through true insight, is the controlling physiocratic principle. The ethos of biocracy includes derivations of the nomos of economics from the logos of the living being.

Based on bioscientific insights, biocracy is a reintroduction of deductive derivations as before with physiocracy, but now on a systemic theoretical basis. It is a matter of overcoming evolutionary economic immaturity.

The transformation of prevailing economic ideologies in the interest of socio-economic recovery cannot succeed without orientation to the logic of living and inclusion of non-human “nature” in economic rationality. This may be self-evident in the field of medicine, but it is becoming more and more urgent in socio-economics.

Since economics does not begin with money and markets, but in life, social and economic sciences would have to „transcend biologically” from their theoretical foundations to the global systemic policy. This is particularly the case, because the basic biological structure of social consciousness is programmed for survival, but not adapted to the complexity of our industrial civilization.

In this respect, biology has a special educational value compared to the general educational value of the natural sciences.

The economy is not a living being, but life is an economic being. Anything that is contrary to life’s conditions of existence falls under the verdict of natural selection. What is incompatible with the laws of the biosphere destroys itself.

With the globalization of the economy, the pressure is growing to follow the rules in place in the biosphere. Setting up corporate constraints that are consistent with the “constraints” of the biosphere is, in principle, not impossible, but it will require political backing. The adaptation of our social legal system to its bio-ecological physical foundation is essential.

The WHO’s concept of health includes personal and social well-being, but not ecological health. This has to be expected as the ethical norm of a global economy, however.

In the relationship of the parts to the whole, biocratic ethics guides “fitness management” along the path from the resources to the benefits of sustainable economics. The basic life-sustaining meaning of “goods” is hardly present in the Anglo-American, but converges in their physical view with “bio-economics”.