

Living in Balance – New Ways of Cohabitation with Nature

Ille C. Gebeshuber¹ and Mark O. Macqueen²

¹ Institute of Applied Physics, Vienna University of Technology, Wiedner Hauptstrasse 8-10/134, 1040 Wien, Austria, Europe. Contact: gebeshuber@iap.tuwien.ac.at

² AN-COR-TEK C.E. GmbH, Office Park 1, Top B/2, 6th floor, 1300 Vienna Airport, Austria, Europe. Contact: mark.macqueen@an-cor-tek.com

Our modern society is developing fast. Within a few millennia people evolved from a life within nature toward a life in an isolated, technology-based society. The rewards of innovation resulted in a reduced infant mortality and a higher life expectancy. The resulting population growth, in combination with an increase of individual resources consumption, caused an exponential burden on our world's ecosphere. Nature is taking an irreversible damage and – even worse – the increased metacentric distance between our society and nature, made most people insensitive towards the ongoing disaster. Systems theory shows that any system will grow until all resources available are used up. In the case of mankind not a limit in food or living space is reached, but the limit of the global environment to support our whole system. The results of this failure could be grave.

The Living in Balance approach aims to counter this lack of awareness and to change the perception of nature in our society. A starting point here will be new ways of learning from nature and initiatives to bridge the gap between our urban structures and nature. The goal must be not to exclude nature from our society but to live with it and appreciate it – a Cohabitation with Nature. The presentation will show how the ongoing alienation between man and nature developed and how countermeasures to preserve ecosystems and biodiversity could look like.