

"From Power and Greed to Compassion and the Common Good !"

Seminars with the Chilean economist **Manfred Max-Neef**
on the theme of "**Sustainable Economy**"

Borgholm (Öland)
September 5th, 2012

Övertorneå (Norrbotten)
September 14th, 2012

ORGANIZERS:

Swedish Association of Eco-Municipalities



SVERIGES EKOKOMMUNER

Municipality of Borgholm



Sustainable Sweden Association



Municipality of Övertorneå



Welcome to 2 exciting seminars in Borgholm and Övertorneå !

At the time when global finance economy is breaking apart, when the threats of the environmental problems and of the resources shortage are bigger than ever, the economic paradigm that is ruling the world has started to be more and more questioned.

Indeed the most extreme followers of the neoclassic theories, such as Milton Friedman and his disciples, have been allowed to dominate the economic politics for a long time. Meaning that reductions of the public sector, increased privatization and deregulated market economy were not-challenged necessities for responsible economies. The sacred growth, as expressed by the GDP, has been seen as the the most important goal of the society without which the economy would collapse.

How many times haven't we heard that we need to consume more in order to jump start the economy? As if we needed to consume more to show solidarity with society!

But, should we think, terrible thought, what if it is exactly this behaviour and our focus on GDP growth that is the main cause for the threats we are facing? What if there is a connection between our growth-driven financial system and the increasing destruction of natural resources?

For the last hundred years, the economic growth has been built on cheap oil. What will happen now, when we already partly passed the oil peak and since we got aware of the considerable consequences of the economic system, that is to say a growing green house effect and a climate going out of control?

More and more people around the world realize that we need to rethink the system before it's too late. We must quit our old way of thinking economy. "Sustainable Growth" is a term that has been used a lot along the last years. But what does it mean? What is it that is going to grow? Is it possible for something to grow forever? Is it really growth that is the most important? Why? If not growth, what should we focus on instead?

Since the 1980s already the kingdom of Bhutan abolished the GDP as the most important economic measurement, and established a measure called "Gross National Happiness" (GNH). Today, the measure is an index of 72 indicators that are meant to evaluate the wellbeing of the country and its citizens.

In 2011, on the initiative of Bhutan, the United Nations engaged themselves in a resolution for the development of a New Sustainable Economic Paradigm for the world. 68 countries, including Sweden, signed this resolution. The 2nd of April 2012, 800 delegates from all parts of the world gathered in the United Nations head quarters in New York to discuss the content of the new economic paradigm and how the process for its creation shall continue. It is expected that the United Nations will undertake a broad global process, targeting the year 2014 for the establishment of the new economic paradigm.

Among the main principles of this new paradigm is the idea that "Growth is not the same thing as development, and development doesn't necessarily require growth!" This statement is one of the many on which Manfred Max-Neef, Chilean alternative economist and winner of the *Right Livelihood* award, relies on in his theories.

In one of his most famous book, *Human Scale Development* (1991), he defines what he calls the "human fundamental needs", as a basis to define "wealth". These fundamental needs (there are 9 of them) are the same regardless of time and space. It is the tools to achieve them - what he calls "the satisfiers" - that are changing. If we want to become rich we need to find the right tools to satisfy our needs.

In his latest book *Economics Unmasked – From power and greed to compassion and the common good* (2011), co-written with the physicist Philip B. Smith, they analyse

the wanderings of the old economic paradigm at the same time that they are showing the way towards a new sustainable economy. They also present ongoing positive examples where their theories are being applied, including the growing Eco-Municipality movement!

We have the honor to have Manfred Max Neef as the keynote speaker on our seminars. The seminars will also host the participation of other interesting lecturers that will cover the topics of both threats and possibilities for the future, not the least for business and companies.

The seminars are done in cooperation with Sustainable Sweden Association, The Swedish Association for Eco-Municipalities and the Municipalities of Borgholm and Övertorneå. These are both Eco-Municipalities, and are taking part in an exciting cooperative project involving Eco-Municipalities in Chile, Argentina, Colombia and Sweden.

Most welcome in the seminars!



Torbjörn Lahti
Sustainable Sweden Association

SEMINAR PROGRAM:

Both seminars are integrated with a **Sustainable Sweden Tour** with participants from all over the world. During the two-week tour the participants will visit many exciting examples of concrete actions on sustainable development, both in the hosting Eco-Municipalities and in other municipalities in different parts of Sweden.

For the participants of the seminars there is the opportunity to take part to the study visits taking place the day before the seminar.

Seminar languages : English and Swedish.

BORGHOLM:

Tuesday 4th, September 2012

Study visit in the windpower plant and meeting with green entrepreneurs.
Presentation of the climate and energy plan of the Eco-Municipality of Borgholm.

Wednesday 5th, September 2012 - SEMINAR

Place: Strand Hotel, Borgholm

Program:

9.00 Welcome, Chairman of the Executive Board of Borgholm Municipality

9.15 Introduction and background, Torbjörn Lahti

Eco-Municipalities and need for a new economic paradigm. Report from the UN conference on "Wellbeing and Happiness"

10.00 Conditions for a "Sustainable Economy", Manfred Max-Neef

12.00 Lunch

14.00 Lecture on "green business"

14.45 Lecture on "eco-turism"

15.30 "Fika" - Coffee break

15.45 Sustainable Sweden South East – capacity center for "Sustainable entrepreneurship"

16.15 Collective discussion

17.00 End of the seminar

ÖVERTORNEÅ:

Thursday 13th, September 2012

Study visit in Övertorneå :

- Local private-funded district heating plant (wood-chips burning) in the village of Hedenäset. Collective work from the villagers. Own forest etc.

- Private school, Hedenäset. Pedagogical work on "sustainability at the center", initiative from the villagers

- Farm in Juoksengi joining force with the villagers. Private organization with the village as a partner. New modern facility. Planning for a biogas plant.

- Windpower plant

Friday 14th, September 2012 - SEMINAR

Place : "Folkets Hus"

Program

9.00 Welcome, Chariman of the Executive Borad of Övertorneå Municipality

9.15 Introduction and background, Torbjörn Lahti

Eco-Municipalities and need for a new economic paradigm. Report from the UN conference on "Wellbeing and Happiness"

10.00 Conditions for a "Sustainable Economy", Manfred Max-Neef

12.00 Lunch

13.00 Time of adjustment, Björn Forsberg, political scientist

13.40 New thinking for a new business : high time to change economists' language
Karl Bonnedal. School of Business and Economics of the University of Umeå

14.30 "Fika" - Coffee break

14.50 Examples from entrepreneurs

15.20 Common discussion

16.00 End of the seminar

Seminar fee : 1500 SEK (Swedish Crown), excluding VAT (5/9 and 14/9)

Study visits fee : 750 SEK excluding VAT (4/9 and 13/9)

20% discount for SEKOM member municipalities

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REGISTRATION FORM

See attached document