

TOPIC 2014: BE THE CHANGE WE WANT TO SEE IN THE WORLD

*Drive less, insulate your houses,
as a consequence climate change will
not be so bad – this is what we have believed.
Yet, our planet will nevertheless get hot,
dry and hostile to life. Even if we choose
to radically change the route.*

Die Zeit, 41, 4 October 2012

On the occasion of the 20th Anniversary of the Swiss Biennial on Science, Technics + Aesthetics decision makers, experts and stakeholders from enterprises, politics, science, non-profit organizations and other institutions are invited to Lucerne. Mahatma Ghandi's famous sentence *You must be the change you wish to see in the world* provides the starting point for the Biennial in order to think about collective, individual and creative possibilities for action and ways of coming to grips with the pressing and most difficult problem of climate change, with the dramatic aggravation of global warming lying ahead.

The focus of the Biennial is on the political, economic and ethical challenges affecting society as a whole as well as every single human being. Two themes are at the core of this meeting. On the one hand, it is about the collective and individual task to protect the air, the common property constituting both the foundations of our descendants' lives and the future of life on Earth. On the other hand, it is about the enormous challenge that we are facing today to globally protect the common property of the oceans.

Yet, how can we think together climate protection, oceans, planetary resources and, on top of that, the problems of hunger, poverty and inequality which are inseparably connected with one another? How can we get a grip on the abstract future risks of a disturbed climatic environment and the ever more rapidly progressing eradication of the global marine ecosystems? Is the Two-Degrees-Goal an Eurocentric crackpot idea? What is the role of science and technology in coping with climate change that will probably kill millions of humans? What options exist and what are the measures needed to realise *The Great Transition*? What risks will the global society take? How can single countries and large global enterprises contribute to managing the world of our common wealth? Should the global negotiation process be given up despite its slowness and insufficient outcomes? Do we need a different economic order than today's capitalism?

I am indebted to Markus Allemann, Marcel Brenninkmeijer, Verena Mühlberger, Kaspar Schuler and many others for numerous enriching discussions about sustainability, ecology and green politics. When we envisage options for action for the human community and the individual life style which will be discussed in Lucerne, this is ultimately a matter of values. In 2014, on the occasion of its 20th Anniversary, the 10th Swiss Biennial on Science, Technics + Aesthetics will create a platform for a broad public audience in order to raise the urgent question of responsibility. From their varying perspectives of engagement, the speakers will debate the socio-ecological reconstruction of society, and our common ecological-cosmopolitical, economic and ethical lives in a global community.

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