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With a focus on Ethical and Sustainable Business

From the Editor - **Armageddon**

Our focus at the MEJB is on Ethical and Sustainable business .

Some articles relate solely to academic business issues but in these troubled times of wars, cruel dictatorships and ecological disaster the precarious global situation affects all aspects of life, of which business is a part. Indeed the current ecological probklems on earth are a by-prouct of corrupt and shoddy business. It is within the intelligence and espertise of humans to do all things ethically and sustaianably and this journal encourages our readers to be a beacon against the darkness of ignorance that too often surrounds us all. The Publisher initiated this journal with the longterm sustainability of life on earth in mind. The reader may not agree with some of the opinions in this journal but they are presented in order to generate greatly needed discussion on these issues instead of the mad stampede toward oblivion that is currently taking place.

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Project Road to Success and Failure

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Abstract

This paper provides two case studies of Project Management and their effect on project outcomes. It includes the Sydney Opera House which survived aspects of poor Project management to become a successful project outcome and the Failure of the Energy Sector Project in Lebanon.

Key words: project management

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Introduction

One of the vaguest concepts of project management is project success. Project management has traditionally looked at managing the project implementation process. This view of project management specifically views the project as a task or process that needs to be completed following the specifications, budget and time given. This approach has provided metrics that are universally accepted such as cost, schedule and performance (Pinto & Levin, 1998, Meredith & Mantel, 2003) to evaluate the performance of the project. However, these metrics do not provide the necessary view to the success of the project to the organization/stakeholders.

Since each individual or group of people who are involved in a project have different needs and expectations, it is very unsurprising that they interpret project success according to their own understanding (Cleland &Ireland 2004). "For those involved with a project , project success is normally thought of as the achievement of some predetermined project goals "(Lim & Mohamed ,1999) while the general public has different views, commonly based on user satisfaction.

A classic example of different perspective of a successful project is the Sydney Opera House project (Thomsett, 2002) which went 16 times over budget and took 4 times more to finish than originally planned .But the final impact that the Opera House created was so big that no one remembers the original missed goals. The project was a big success for the people and at the same a big failure from the project management perspective.

Project Success - a different view

When referring to 'project management success and 'product success. "No system of project metrics is complete without both sets of measures (performance and success)…" (Cooke-Davies, 2002, 2004). This also leaves out one important fact; that the original specifications may not have been correct, the budget allocated to the project may have been inaccurate, and the time estimate may have been flawed. This is often perpetuated by a manager and/or stakeholder, in his/her zeal to get a project started, who will try to make the ROI (Return on Investment) look the absolute best. One of the easiest ways to increase ROI is to have the implementation costs as low as possible. This sometimes is done with best case scenarios or wild guesses on the time and cost of the project. Also the ramifications and true requirements may not be fully understood and may cause significant cost and time over-runs.

In addition many project managers do not do a post implementation audit, when this is essential to reviewing the success, failures, challenges and lessons learned. For those who do them, it is usually within a month or two of completion of the project and usually focuses on the traditional metrics, success/failures and how the project team did in implementing the project.

One of the main factors for failure is bad decisions made by the project manager and/or project team. The ability to make good decisions is absolutely critical to any and all project outcomes, including the ability to meet success criterion. This ability is influenced by several factors, including:

The education/capability of the project team

Some level of luck, certainly, but mostly:

The availability of adequate project cost and schedule performance information, which almost always clarifies the best project decisions.

Criteria for project success

Kerzner (2001) suggests three criteria from the organization perspective in order for a project to be successful. The first is that it must be completed "with minimum or mutually agreed upon scope changes", even though stakeholders constantly have different views about project results (Maylor,2005); secondly, "without disturbing the main work flow of the organization " because a project has to assist an organization's everyday operation and try to make it more efficient and effective. Finally, it should be completed "without changing the corporate culture " even though projects are " almost exclusively concerned with change—with knocking down the old and building up the new"(Bguley,1995). A project manager's main responsibility is to make sure that the delivers change only where it is necessary, otherwise he is doomed to find strong resistance from almost all organizational departments (Kerzner,2001) which ultimately could lead to project failure.

Numerous studies have shown that the core skills for any successful project manager are the ability to develop a successful 'high performing' team, and communicate effectively to influence key stakeholders. These are soft skills and very hard to achieve competence in. This reframing is important because well over 90% of project failures can be directly attributed to people issues, including headline disasters such as the original Hubble Space Telescope launch and Challenger (Maylor, 2005).

1. Sydney Opera House Case Study

Background

The Sydney Opera House is one of Australia's iconic buildings and is recognized around the world. It is has become a global symbol of Australia. The Danish architect Jorn Utzon won the architecture competition set out by the NSW government for the new building in 1957, and the construction started in 1959. Utzon's design was a modern expressionist design. The roof of the opera house was to resemble the sails of a ship in the form of three overlapping shells. It presented many unique design and structural challenges that would need to be addressed. The project was to be completed in three stages over a period of four years at a cost of $7M. The project appeared to be doomed from the start. Due to political pressure, the project start date was accelerated, and began on March 2, 1959. The project had serious cost and schedule overruns that were the result of poor project planning and execution, specifically in the area of cost management. These problems led to the resignation of Utzon as the project manager in 1966. After 14 long years, the Sydney Opera House was completed in 1973 at a cost of $102M.

Project Analysis: Success and Failures Factors

As a management project, the Sydney Opera House had so many issues and fall backs that included goals of the project, design, stakeholders, organization, financial, and timelines. These problems had a direct impact on the ability to control the project budget. Additionally, these problems may not have been avoidable, but they could have been identified and mitigated in advance. A diamond analysis is a technique to access the scope of a project prior to approval. This process was developed by Aaron Shenhar and DovDvir. It assesses the project in four basic categories, including technology, novelty, complexity, and pace. Though a diamond analysis wasn't used at the beginning of the Sydney Opera House project, it can be utilized in hindsight to compare how the project was originally treated and how it should have been assessed.

Originally, according the diamond analysis, the opera house project was underestimated. The technology assessment is utilized to assess the amount of technological uncertainty. It divides its assessment utilizing four descriptors (from low to high): low-tech, medium-tech, high-tech, and super high-tech. It appears the original selection committee treated the opera house project as high-tech. This assumes current design techniques were sufficient enough to support the project. This assumption was not correct as many of the techniques needed were not available so it is a super high-tech project.

The novelty assessment focuses on how new your product is to the market. For novelty, it appears the project was initially assessed as fitting into the platform category. The project sponsor treated the opera house as if it was a new model to an existing line of unique opera houses.

The complexity assessment focuses on the system scope. Initially, the project team appears to have viewed the project as a system. This means it was a moderately complex project requiring a system of subsystems to complete the work. An example of this type of project is the manufacturing of automobiles and computers.

The pace assessment of this analysis focuses on the criticality of the project timeframe. It appears the project sponsors treated this project as a blitz, which means a project that is time-critical or urgent. This was evident more so by the early start date than the required completion date. Due to the lack of foresight regarding the geometric shape of the roof, the corresponding acoustical challenges of the ceiling, and the support structure, this project should have been classified as an array. It would require the development of design techniques beyond those of the time.

Finally, the pace assessment should have revealed this project was time-critical. The original deadlines were too aggressive and unrealistic. The true motive behind the original timeframe was solely for political reasons. Time-critical projects are usually projects that fall into a window of opportunity, not driven by urgent deadlines.

Goals of the Project

At the beginning of any project, goals and objectives have to be clearly defined by the client to provide a guideline for what the project must complete. There are three main factors, which constitute the iron triangle: time, cost, and quality. In the case of the Sydney Opera House, no indication regarding time or cost limits were provided for the competition. Thus, the architects were allowed total freedom in their designs. The cost restraint was set to AUS$7 million. The funds came almost entirely from a dedicated lottery, so the project was not a financial burden for the government (Tombesi, 2004).

However, the most important factor was quality because it was an almost unrestricted goal of the project. It was the reason why it was launched, and it also determined the time and cost objectives (Murray, 2004). But the aim was also to make the new Sydney Opera House one of the world's architectural wonders, inspiring world recognition and admiration. In the case of the Sydney Opera House, the goals set at the beginning proved to be quite overoptimistic within the time and cost restraints (Murray, 2004).

Design

There appeared to be problems from the start of the project. Apparently Utzon protested that he had not completed the designs for the structure, but the government insisted that the construction get underway. In addition, the government changed the requirements of the design after the construction was started, from two theatres to four, so plans and designs had to be modified during construction.

The design created by Utzon was an architectural feat that had never been done before. Even after four years of construction, Utzon still altered the geometry of his design, which was to save time and cost of the construction. The project was subject to many delays and cost over-runs that were unfortunately blamed on Utzon. During the year of 1965 a new government was appointed in NSW and they withheld payments for Utzon's plans as they were opposed to his building methods. This forced Utzon to resign from the project in 1966 and a team of Australian architects were appointed to finish the construction. Considering that this construction began in 1959, the building methods and design were nothing short of revolutionary and it is no wonder that this building has become the marvel it is today.

Stakeholders

Newcombe defines the project stakeholders as "groups or individuals who have a stake in, or expectation of, the project's performance and include clients, project managers, designers, subcontractors, suppliers, funding bodies, users and the community at large" (Newcombe, 2003). Thus, they can be people inside or outside the project. Stakeholders interact especially within two fields: the cultural arena, where they share values and reinforce co-operation; and the political arena, which can be subject to expectations and objectives and conflict between stakeholders. Olander & Landin (2005) give a definition of stakeholders and add that they can be a threat or a benefit. The point is to identify "stakeholders who can affect the project, and then manage their differing demands through good communication in the early stages of a project."(Olander & Landin, 2005).

The main stakeholder, the one who did the design of the Sydney Opera House, was the Danish architect Jørn Utzon. He was much more concerned with the design aspect rather than time and costs objectives, which proved problematic. When he resigned in 1966, the architectural consortium Hall, Todd, and Littlemore replaced him. During the project, Utzon collaborated with Ove Arup, who was in charge of the structure and the engineering. Another of the most important stakeholders is the client, the state of New South Wales. A part-time executive committee was created by the client to provide project supervision but the members had no real technical skills. The government eventually became an obstacle to the project team by inhibiting changes during the progress of the operations and thus contributed to cost overrun and delays. When a more conservative Liberal Party won the elections and a new government was created, Davis Hughes was appointed Minister for Public Works and eventually stopped paying Utzon.

Finally, the public was an indirect stakeholder because they were concerned with the project's success. And while only some citizens would be customers of the Opera House, the Opera House would also prove to be an integral part of Sydney and the country's history. In addition, the public contributed to the funding of the Opera through a lottery set up by the Government. Utzon also became part of the public's perception of the project, and when he resigned, the Australians supported him and asked for his return (Murray, 2004).

Organization

Regarding organization within the Sydney Opera House Case, it is documented that there was no real project manager. Instead, Utzon and Arup both managed the project. Utzon managed all architectural aspects while Arup and his partners were in charge of all structural and civil engineering aspects. This included electrics, heating and ventilation, and acoustics and theatrics. (Murray, 2004). While Utzon and Arup headed the project together, there were eventual problems. The client, New South Wales (NSW), formed an oversight committee to keep an eye on the project, which was known as the Sydney Opera House Executive Committee (SOHEC). The actual project was divided into three stages. Stage 1 was the podium, stage 2 was the outer shells, and stage 3 was the interiors and windows (Murray, 2004). These stages proved later to be a large problem, because the design team and the construction team would often work simultaneously, which is difficult to do with a continually changing design.

Financials

The Sydney Opera House could probably be seen as one of the most financially disastrous construction projects in history. The winning design from the competition was originally meant to have a budget of AUS$7 million (Murray, 2004). When stage one was completed in 1963, it had cost an estimated AUS$5.2 million and it was already 47 weeks over schedule for the whole project. In May 1974, the minister for Public Works announced that the final bill for the Sydney Opera House was AUS$102 million (Murray, 2004). The lottery system that was created to help fund the Sydney Opera House, was largely responsible for the prompt reimbursement of the construction bill (Jahn, 1997).

Timeline

The timeline of the project was dramatically altered throughout the project. The estimated completion was 1962, with the grand opening in 1963. In 1958 Arup was selected as the structural engineer, and by January 1959, the design team was well underway and the construction team was contracted. In 1961 the reinforced concrete foundation was completed. Arup completed the design for the roof in 1962, about the same time the project was originally intended to be finished. Instead of 1963 acting as the grand opening year, portions of the foundation had to be demolished in order to support the new roof design. In 1965, the project was still far behind, and the client decided, specifically David Hughes (the Public Works Administrator), to reclaim payment responsibilities (Ramroth, 2006). He used his new power to stop meeting Utzon's funding requests. In 1966, Utzon quit the project and the replacements were announced. In 1967, stage two of the project was finally completed. By 1972, there were test performances in the house, and finally, in 1973, the project was finished. The opening occurred on October 20th, 1973 and even included Queen Elizabeth II. In 1999, Utzon was reinstated as a design consultant to prepare the Opera House for the new millennium (Murray, 2004).

Risks for failure of the project

The Sydney Opera House encountered a multitude of risks and delays throughout the project. The design competition was a great incentive to find new talent among many international architects, but it also failed to review how much experience the entrants had with large scale projects. Utzon was later found to have not enlisted the assistance of any engineers for their approval of his design before submitting it in the competition.

The internal risks of this project were seen within the management and organization of the construction. There was no project manager appointed to the job, and it was assumed that Utzon was to take the role for all decisions regarding any design, construction or development. In actuality, it was Arup who was in charge of construction and development, even though Utzon usually had the final decision. The power given to Utzon saw many re-designs and rebuilds of several aspects of the Opera House; this caused many delays and cost overruns that eventually caused the distrust of the Government. The formation of SOHEC was used as a way to guide the process and design of the Opera House. However they never really had much input, they mostly agreed to Utzon's requests and never had any problems with the issues that were coming up. However after two full years of construction, the appointed committee wanted to increase the number of rooms inside the building, showing that they tried to have input, but lacked the technical knowledge to do so. To change the design of the building so late cost the project a lot of time and money as a lot of re-structuring was required. This lack of knowledge of what was required and how it should be handled was a large pitfall in the management of the Sydney Opera House.

A great external risk was the general failure of the project, since it was so deeply rooted with the public of Sydney. If the project were to fail, it would reflect on the ability of the Australian work force in construction. On top of this, the NSW government had a large impact on the construction. While Utzon largely controlled the initial stages, by the middle of the second stage the government thought it was best to step in and control the budget of the construction.

There were numerous technical/quality/performance risks involved in this project. The construction techniques that were required for many parts of the construction had never been done before, and while Utzon was breaking new ground in architecture, the process for completing his design was unclear. For the first time in construction, computers needed to be used to calculate stress points within the roof of the Opera House. With all these new technological advancements in construction, it is no wonder the cost estimates were understated. Another risk was the fact that Utzon was required to start the construction of the project before his design was even close to finalization. One of the main problems faced in the project was the construction of the outer shell. The initial design never would have been structurally sound. To make matters worse, the design of the interior rooms kept changing, which constantly meant that the outer shell design had to change with it (Murray, 2004)

Outcome of the project

The Sydney Opera House was opened in 1973 by Queen Elizabeth II, after 17 years of redesigns, underestimates and cost overruns (sydneyoperahouse.com). By 1975, the building had paid for itself, its total cost amounting to over AUS$102 million. The building holds over 3000 events per year and more than 200,000 come only to attend the guided tour (Architecture Week, 2009). It encompasses over 4.5 acres of land, and uses the power equivalent to a town of 25,000 people. The seating capacity of the main concert hall is 2,679, while the Opera Theatre holds 1,507 (Sydney, 2009). The construction consists of three groups of interlocking shells roofing two main performance halls and a restaurant. Terraces that function as pedestrian concourses surround the shell structures. The building is one of the architectural wonders of the world, and included in the UNESCO World Heritage List (UNESCO, 2009).

Today, more than being a world-class performing arts Centre, the Opera House represents Sydney and even the whole nation the same way as the Eiffel tower represents Paris. It's known not only for its outstanding architecture, but also for exceptional engineering and technological innovation. Moreover, it has had a continuing influence on architecture around the globe. Utzon's work was recognized as an incredible feat of architecture, and in 2003 Utzon was honored with the Pritzker Prize for architecture, the most renowned architectural prize in the world.

While studying the Sydney Opera House it became apparent that it was one of the most unplanned and mismanaged stories in history. In light of the article by Söderlund, Berggren & Anderson (2001), it can be seen that there were many issues between clients and project teams. The nature of the Opera House required the NSW government to acquire an agent for their task at hand. In this case the agent was Utzon and all managerial privileges were given to him to ensure the successful completion of a new Opera House. This caused very opportunistic behavior in Utzon since he actually had most of the management power, instead of the NSW government.

Conclusion

A main issue that lasted throughout the project was the fact that the construction work was ordered to start before the design work was completed. On the other hand, if Utzon, in cooperation with the engineering team, would have had the chance to finish the design, the estimation of the project cost would have probably been so high that the project would never have been implemented. The involvement of engineers and suppliers at an early stage in the process was a criterion for the successful outcome of the project.

Utzon's delay and withholding of the designs he created, caused a problem of learning for the next architect who took over. For these reasons, and more, Utzon was seen to be a dangerous stakeholder, and his power in the project led to erratic decisions and many re-designs. Utzon's ability to oppose his will without having legitimacy was a direct consequence of SOHEC's lack of urgency. While the NSW government was absent in a lot of the management decisions, it was ultimately Utzon's responsibility to monitor his own actions and focus on the goal in respect to the client. His lack of self-control gave the definitive stakeholder, the NSW government, an opportunity to remove him from power. If stakeholders throughout this project were managed properly, cost over runs and re-designs could have been minimized. Through this analysis, it has shown the importance of identifying stakeholders, and how their influence can affect the outcome of the processes of such a project.

2. The Failure of the Energy Sector Project in Lebanon

Background

Over the past decades Lebanon's energy sector has been largely ignored and this has led to high economic and environmental costs. The sector is characterized by electricity poverty, an expanding and mainly unregulated transport sector and a lack of energy savings spanning through all sectors of the economy. Recently, the Government of Lebanon has committed to increase the share of renewable energy to 10% of the total energy supply by 2013 and to 12% by the year 2020; it also aims at reducing energy consumption by 6% by the year 2013.

Since 1990 several projects were put forward by subsequent government and ministries yet despite all the money spent, Lebanon is still without twenty four hours coverage of electricity from the Government. So people resort to alternative private sources to compensate the deficiency. The Lebanese electricity system has been evaluated in terms of its sustainability. The findings show that the Lebanese electricity system is characterized by a weak performance in all analyzed aspects related to the sustainability of energy systems. Specifically, the system lacks adequacy and security leading to a supply–demand deficit and poor diversity. It gives rise to significant environmental emissions (including green-house gases), and produces large economic inefficiencies.

Current Situation

Electricity of Lebanon (EDL) is the national electricity company, which operates autonomously. Because of its enormous debt (approximately $1bn in 2006-2007, $1.3bn in 2008), EDL is a huge financial burden on the State. Over the last three years, the Government (the Treasury) has spent $3.5bn in financing EDL's deficit, becoming the third largest public expenditure after wages and debt services. The situation is explained by the company's total dependence on oil products; the high distribution losses (estimated to be around 50%) caused by illegal connections and outstanding invoices (15% of technical losses and 30% of nontechnical losses); and the fact that the average price paid by consumers is much lower than the production cost (it represents about 55% of the production cost). The privatization of EDL has not yet started and has been postponed until its financial situation improves. Between the years 2001 and 2005 efforts were made to subcontract the electricity distribution, to collect the invoices and to fight fraud. Moreover, EDL entrusted the management of various local authorities or suburbs to several private or international companies; EDF, for

example, was in charge of the suburbs of Beirut. Nevertheless, those operations were not renewed.

The country has an installed capacity of 2.4 GW, with thermal power accounting for 80% and hydro power for 20%. The thermal capacity is concentrated in 8 power stations: Zouk (435 MW and 175 MW), Jiyeh (142 MW), Hreyshe (272 MW), Baalbeck (2*35 MW) and Sour (2*35 MW), and two combined cycle power stations, Zahrani (435 MW) and Deir Amar –Beddaoui (435 MW), which were installed between 1998 and 2000 and both of which can function on natural gas.

The country has 5 main hydro-power stations; 2 of those stations are managed by EDL, and the other 3 sell their production to the company. Auto production was developed in order to deal with the frequent power cuts. It is estimated that more than 90% of the country's electricity production is thermal (10.6 TWh in 2008). Lebanon is interconnected to Syria through two 220 kV lines, which make it possible for the country to import approximately 0.5 TWh/year. In April 2004 a 400 kV interconnection was commissioned within the framework of the network integration project involving 6 countries in the area (Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, Egypt, Turkey and Libya).

Analysis of the Current Situation

The Ministry of Water and Energy supervises the electricity sector and, since 2000, also coordinates the oil sector. The Council of Development and Reconstruction (CDR) was created in 1991 to coordinate the reconstruction of the country, and in particular the international assistance. The CDR coordinated the "Horizon 2000" reconstruction plan, which was implemented in March 1993 with a budget of US$11.5bn over 10 years (1994-2007), and which regards energy as critical step toward opening the doors for the rest of investment.

.The projects carried out in the electricity sector cost a total of US$1.4bn and consisted of increase in production capacities, the extension of the transport network and the replacement of outdated facilities. The CDR is now a planning agency and coordinates the development of major projects, particularly in the electricity sector. The CDR is also involved in financing projects. It receives funding from bilateral or multilateral financing institutions in the form of soft loans, commercial loans and grants to fund projects.

Projects for Electricity

At the same time as the country was being rebuilt, it put forward a five-year plan concerning its public debt, plans for the introduction of new taxes to balance the budget, and a privatization program (telecommunications, electricity, transport and water). To date the development of the privatization program has been limited to the preparation of sectoral laws which have been submitted to Parliament.

There are four main objectives behind the reorganization of the energy sector: security of supply; the use and promotion of renewables; the promotion of energy efficiency; and the quality and competitiveness of energy services.

In September 2002 the Lebanese Parliament adopted a law for the reorganization and privatization of the electricity sector, involving the State's gradual disengagement from EDL. The two main activities carried out by EDL (the production and distribution of electricity) could be sold through international tenders; the transport network would remain in the hands of the State.

An energy efficiency program was launched in 2002 and involved the creation of a body, the LCCP (Lebanese Center for Energy Conservation), which received a budget of US$4.4 million over 5 years from the GEF. This program was expected to end in December 2010.

In November 2008 UNDP, in cooperation with the Ministry of Energy & Water and the Lebanese Center for Energy Conservation (LCEC), launched the National Campaign for Energy Efficiency Lamps. The Government set up a national road map to reach 12% of renewable energy by the year 2020.

The Government's planned budget for 2010 amounts to $9m, $7m of which will be used to promote 3 M CFL and $1m to support loans for solar water heaters. The country plans to speed up the development of water heaters. The equipment level is still low: 26 m2/1000 inhabitants compared to 615 m2/1000 inhabitants for Cyprus.

There are no feed-in tariffs for electricity production from renewables. An energy conservation law has been drafted and is pending approval by the Parliament. Energy efficiency labels and Minimum Energy Performance Standards (MEPS) have been prepared for 3 appliances: solar water heaters, CFL and refrigerators. Standards for air conditioning and electric heaters are currently at the planning stage.

Analysis of the Current Electricity Project

In order to meet the high electricity demand the country has developed a program that involves the modernization of the existing electricity installations, the construction of new gas power stations and the conversion to natural gas of existing power plants. According to various scenarios and depending on the economic growth, the Government hopes that the country's electricity consumption will increase by between 4%/year and 8%/year over the 2005-2040 periods. With that objective in mind, the country has plans to install nearly 500 MW/year in additional capacities by 2040.

Lebanon plans to overhaul its power sector and provide it with electricity 24 hours per day within 4 years. The plan involves a production capacity of 5,000 MW as of 2015, as well as the revamping of Electricite du Liban (EdL). The required investment is estimated at $4.82bn, $1.5bn of which will be financed by the Government, $2.32bn by the private sector and $1bn by international donors.

Lebanon has long battled with an inadequate electricity supply, a situation that has shown little sign of improvement in the two decades since the end of the country's civil war.

Government plans to improve supply have been met with little optimism, as more than 60 studies on the same topic since 1996 have resulted in little improvement. We note that the ambitious plan to finally put an end to Lebanon's deeply entrenched electricity woes appears optimistic at best.

Following an incredibly hot summer, when electricity supply in some parts of the country dipped below six hours per day, protests have been mounting, according to the Financial Times (FT). Electricity supply was around a third lower than the 2,500MW estimated demand, according to the Energy and Water Minister Gibran Bassil. News that there may be an impending water supply shortage presents a threat to future power generation, as the country relies on hydropower for a considerable portion of its electricity.

The shortages in themselves are a major drag on economic growth, with an estimated US$2.5bn cost to the economy every year from unreliable electricity supply. Those residents and businesses that can afford to have set up private power generators in a form of parallel electricity supply, accounts for around 35% of electricity consumption in the country according to World Bank estimates cited by the FT.

Bassil's US$5bn plan to significantly improve Lebanon's electricity supply, with an end to electricity shortages targeted by 2014, is predicated on increasing generating capacity to 4,000MW from the 1,500MW currently, over the same time period. In keeping with these plans, the draft budget submitted 9 September 2010 included funding for construction of a 700MW natural gas power plant.

A more extreme solution to the shortages was suggested by Hezbollah, which called on the government to consider building a nuclear power plant to put an end to electricity shortages. Inspired by Iran's Bushehr nuclear power plant, which is in the final stages of testing, Hezbollah chief Hassan Nasrallah, said he hoped it could make Lebanon an electricity exporter, as quoted by AFP.

However, Lebanon's electricity woes are not solely caused by a lack of generating capacity. The presence of the inefficient state-owned utility Electricité Du Liban, which generates more than 90% of Lebanon's electricity, is in itself a substantial part of the problem. The company is losing up to US$1.5bn per year due to unpaid bills and stolen electricity supply, which combined account for 25% of losses, the rest being technical, according to the FT. This has, in turn, limited its ability to expand capacity and rehabilitate existing generation and transmission infrastructure.

Plans to privatize the distribution of electricity hold some merit and would increase motivation to collect bills and reduce sabotage of the lines. However, concerns over the country's business environment present a major barrier to this idea. A high level of corruption is one of the biggest obstacles. As an illustration of this, in June 2009, Bassil announced that of the unpaid water and power bills, US$8mn was owed by officials and politicians.

This has led to political momentum being largely against solving the problems.

For this reason, we feel that the ambitious plan to finally put an end to Lebanon's deeply entrenched electricity woes appears optimistic at best.

Effect of Political Situation

Political tensions are currently undermining economic policymaking, but if it can move beyond the current impasse, the government might make some progress on economic and social policy, possibly including much-needed reforms to and investment in the dysfunctional electricity sector-although even here the past record encourages pessimism. However, corruption and patronage permeate the political system, and many politicians have their own interests in maintaining a bloated public sector. Privatizing state enterprises will remain a highly sensitive issue owing to ideological differences and vested interests, as well as to questions about the likely transparency of any sales of state assets.

There is a need to the formulation of a more comprehensive energy strategy for Lebanon by analyzing the recent changes in policy direction and by recommending legal, regulatory and policy measures in order to transform current shortcomings into opportunities allowing the country to become a regional 'success story' in the deployment of renewable energy and energy efficiency.

The costs and benefits of optimizing the performance of the centralized electricity system are presented, indicating substantial net benefits (together with considerable benefits in reduced environmental impacts across the life-cycle assessment categories, including carbon emissions) from improving the transmission and distribution networks, upgrading existing conventional plants to their design standards, and shifting towards the use of natural gas. The expected liveliest cost of various energy sources in Lebanon also indicates that renewable energy sources are competitive alternatives at the present time.

Conclusion

It is critical for a project manager to understand what the stakeholders consider as a successful project. In order to avoid any surprises at the end of the project, there is an urgent need to identify the different perspectives of what success means before the project goes live. It is also vital to remember that success criteria are the standards by which a project will be judged , while success factors are the facts that shape the result of projects. Success criteria have changed considerably through time and moved from the classic iron triangle's view of time ,cost and quality to a broader framework which include benefits for the organization and user satisfaction .An additional framework to capture success criteria depending on time was also described. As for success factors, they were grouped into five distinct sets and the literature views were found to contradict on the issue of how critical a project manager is to the final success of the project. A common factor

mentioned by many authors is senior management support for the project and it is recognized as one of the most important factors of all. In conclusion, early definition of success criteria can ensure an undisputed view of how the project will be judged and early detection of success factors will guarantee a safe path to deliver success.

Traditional Project Management metrics have served the PM community well over the years. However, these metrics are very often shortsighted in their view of whether a project will ultimately be successful or a failure in real business measurements.

Identifying metrics and monitoring them throughout the process and as one or more post implementation audits is essential to fully understanding the success of the project in both implementation and business perspectives. The PM needs to not strictly focus on the specs, money and time; in many cases, this shortsightedness may doom a projects ultimate goal.

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Environmental Vulnerability vs Increasing Urbanization in Developing World: A Sociological Appraisal

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Abstract

The paper explores how population growth and urbanization affect the environment. The process of industrialization rapidly contributes to more urbanizing societies. Such a scenario as the engine of growth, promotes scientific, technological and socio-cultural development. The whole interaction is one of the main causes of environmental destruction and pollution. Almost all the developing societies started their modernization since 1950, to be able to meet the increasing needs of their people especially those residing in urban areas. Though urbanization started with the high hopes of more security for human beings, it soon turned into a nightmare of environmental destruction. Through that, green lands turned into buildings and industrial installations. That is, units which produced further air pollution, waste, sewage etc. However, environmental stress, hunger and poverty are huge icons of the increasing developing countries, and by far worse in the African continent. China too, as a newly industrializing country is widely facing environmental problems and challenges.
Key words: Urbanization. Modernization. Industrialization. Environment. Population growth.

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Objective

One of the topics closely related to sociology is urbanization. Population shows the objective relationship between urbanization with the environment. Any change in population in quantitative or qualitative terms, while impacting urbanization, affects the environment too. Nowadays, the factor of population, and as a result, increasing urbanization has endangered the environment. Therefore, governments and the decision-making systems need to make proper decisions to keep the environment safe and clean. Environmental safety widely impacts the population; in that, babies, mothers and the aging people find more security.

Probably, most of the problems and challenges of the 21st century are the results of the 20th century problems which were not administratively and politically observed and paid attention to, sufficiently. Weaknesses and shortcomings pertaining to policy-making have contributed to the 21st century challenges as stemmed from population, urbanization and the environment. Those are the key points to be explored in the present article.

Introduction

The premier question in this article is how and why urban inhabitants increased in the past 300 years, and when and why the urban growth happened? The process of urbanization gradually and widely affected the environment. Also, the expanding urbanization will lead to how the conditions will be in the years to come? It is expected that sociology and physical sciences will answer such questions.

However, the expansion of the world cities in the past three centuries happened because of more population growth rate. The response to why the number of cities increased, is because industries, economic exchanges, application of expertise and skills, competition and economies grew. Such a multi-dimensional process largely impacted the environment. Environmental status has deteriorated in an unprecedented manner; a phenomenon that needs more social studies,,

application of scientific plans and methods, and other approaches to be able to keep the environment safe and healthy. However, through catalyses and other relevant means , urban environments could be benefited and kept under control.

Up to the mid 20th century, levels of urbanization were lower, and the number of cities was smaller; the conditions created almost safe environments in cities. Due to industrial and economic development however, cities have physically witnessed various changes. Emergence of industrial installations, birth of motor vehicles, and increasing consumption, have all variously endangered the urban environment. In addition to that, physical expansion of cities continued during the 20th century; a phenomenon which needs multiple therapies. Cities need therapies in order to be successful, and for that, they need change; every successful city must be competent in its competition and sustainable in its entrepreneurship. Such a process has been recognized in the past few decades (Harvey, 1989).

Following the expansion of urbanization and environmental reforms, much of the agricultural land, mines and forests were opened up for use. In this way, the exploiting of mines and forests, while it had economic benefits, led to degradation of the environment, destruction of forests, over-exploitation of resources, and depletion of resources etc. Such a scenario not only affects the current generations, but it will affect the next generations too, so far as security and natural resources are concerned. Therefore, demographic, social and environmental planners must predict and project the future in an integrated manner. By the year 1900, there were only 43 cities in the world with a population of over 500 thousand, and also only 16 cities with one million settlers registered (Berry, 2013). From the year 1400 onward, population increase, enlarging cities, and appearance of industries in cities, all brought vulnerabilities and dangers to cities that was increased over time. Hence, city planning, cities and the environment must be the priority of social planning, and if not, environmental safety will be in critical danger.

The number of one-million-resident cities has been on the increase since 1950, and today there are more than 400 of them in the world. That is because of expansion of industries in cities followed by economic development, and an increasing number of people have migrated to cities. Such cities need more transformation rather than resilience (Pelling, 2011).

The consequence of such a situation is pollution of the environment and other side effects. Currently, in countries like Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Dubai and Iran the consequence of such migration is obvious and reflected in environmental pollution. Therefore, and sociologically speaking, environment and the balance between population and urban space must always be kept in mind by socio-environmental planners.

Method of Research

Methodology used in the present article is of the qualitative type, in that, various paradigms have been used to find facts. Qualitative research usually studies people or areas in their natural settings. In finding facts for the research, the researcher engaged in careful data collection and thoughtful analysis of what was relevant. In the documentary research applied in the present article, printed and written materials were widely regarded. The research was performed as a qualitative library type in which the researcher had to refer to relevant and related sources. In the current research, various books on environment were thoroughly investigated, and the needful inferences were made. The data fed by the investigator into the present article is reliable. Though literature on environment is very limited, yet the author tried to investigate many different resources in order to elicit the necessary information to build up the text.

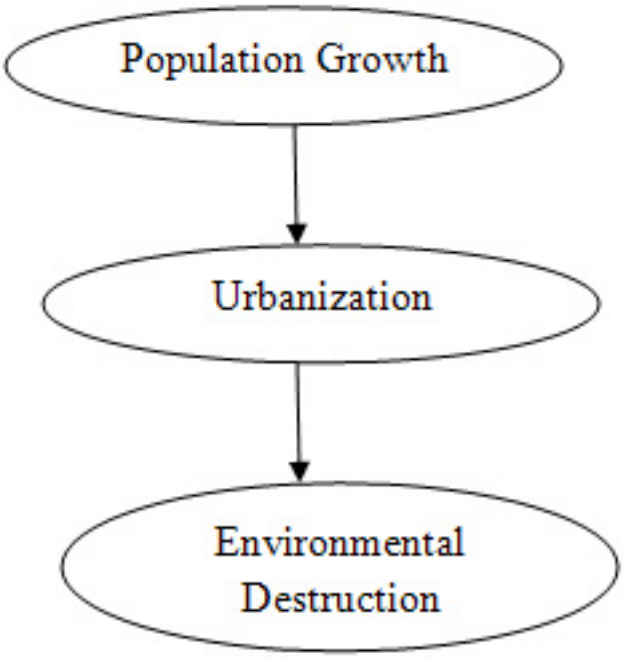
Modernization and Expansion of Cities

Expansion of large cities followed by modernization has led to environmental change and increase of more cities; further endangering the environment. Due to the development plans and modernization, many green spaces have been destroyed, and that has culminated in shortage of green space in city areas. Similarly, due to the density of population in cities and shortage of water, air pollution is observed too. Risks of such kind have been encountered by social planners with limitations in many developing countries. As a result of which reversal plans of migration are encouraged in those countries to send migrants to rural areas. In the meantime, in case of expansion of cities, necessary infrastructure of water networks, sewage systems, roads, electricity, transportation services, hygienic services and the like must be thought of, and planned for. To process the above networks well, national and technical potentialities need to be thought of (Taylor, 2012).

In developing countries currently modernizing, their urbanization process is expanding, and because of that environmental destruction is happening in various dimensions. While industrial and economic investments do not take place in all cities in developing countries, increasing citizens migrate to large cities in search of jobs. Such type of increasing urbanization leads to numerous social disorders, environmental pollution, crimes etc. In such a process, safety of the next generations will be negatively affected too.

Therefore, environmental destruction in urban spaces of the developing world is far larger than that in the developed countries. Some such examples are Egypt in Africa, United Arab Emirates in the Middle East and China in Asia. Density of population in such areas is accompanied by environmental change in the same areas. Demographically speaking, a sort of balance between population and environmental potential must be maintained in order to protect the natural resources for the next generations.

Figure 1: Impacts of the Three Main Variables



Urban Ecology

Urban ecology includes investigation into ecological systems pertaining to human beings living in cities and urban land spaces. Urban ecology as an interdisciplinary subject investigates how human processes can coexist with the systems in which human beings dominate. Coexistence of man with nature is currently the agenda of scientific and academic schools of thought. Population of different age groups have been migrating to cities in the past few decades; such a process has endangered urban ecological balance. On the contrary, the environmental advocates are generally of the opinion that exploitation of resources must so happen in an orderly balanced manner. For example, migration should not happen to particular areas to exert pressure on the environment. Therefore, balance between population and environment contributes to sustainable resources for the next generations. To control environmental damage, social ecologists believe in a decentralized society in which citizens at urban and regional levels regulate the industrial and production processing appropriate to the local resources (Bookchin, 1990) and in this way the environment could be better protected. The theory of ecological modernization emphasizes on suitable application of technologies to better exploit resources (Spaargarten, 1992); (Mol, 1997). Application of intermediate means and technologies to clean up the air, means to control pollution and as a result, it could play a good part in safeguarding the environment.

Population and Productivity

To better understand the role of population growth, it is advisable to study the high population growth in some of the Southern countries of the MENA region. In those countries, production of goods, and services are not proportional to the rate of growth of population; leading to increasing number of social and economic challenges such as migration within these countries. Many countries in the Middle East and East Asia are currently facing the mentioned challenges. The set of countries that we mentioned have been in a better state in terms of food accessibility, quality of healthcare systems and had lower mortality rates since World War II.

Consequently, the young age population is emerging in those countries and they have a better chance of giving birth to more children, in the upcoming years. Prior to that, the children who were born usually did not have as great a chance of becoming parents as a result of early mortality. Eventually the urban environmental destruction took place. Generally speaking, the countries that experienced the highest economic growth rates, had the lowest population growth rates in the 20th century. The scenario caused better preservation of the environment. Based on estimations, till 2025, about 84% of the world population will be living in the developing World (Encarta, 2001).

While facing high urban growth rate, the developing countries cannot manage their economies. Under such circumstances, and due to low wages more flexible laws in environmentalism prevail as the other Western countries largely produce their products in those countries; the countries which must tolerate more pressure on the environment (Vakilianen, 1999). Therefore, a considerable portion of environmental destruction or pollution in the developing world is caused by industrial countries. However, the priorities for planning in the developing world should properly utilize water and land in order to provide suitable and sufficient food (UNEP, 1999). Similarly, mounting evidence suggests mental and physical health issues are related to the built-environment, such as human modified places like workplaces, homes, schools, industrial areas, farms, roads, and highways etc. The built-environment depends on quality of mediating and moderating factors (Srinivasan, s., et.al.,2003). However, developing countries that are following further modernization in different areas, are confronting environmental pollution, shortage of water and many more challenges in social health.

Conclusion

Environmental vulnerability is on the agenda worldwide. Not only, the developing world is facing it, the industrial countries too are confronting environmental challenges. Factors of population growth and migration widely play a role in environmental destruction in developing countries. Environment as a matter of discussion has attracted the attention of experts. Sociologists too are expected to play a great role to address the issue, and create an improved environment for the future generations. Because of industrialization, the changing lifestyles, more consumption, the never ending modernizing efforts and other factors, the environment is highly vulnerable specially in the developing societies. Densely populated urban areas are suffering from pollution of water, air, housing and waste. They are facing the shortage of food, medication and low job openings. They face high rates of crimes, corruption etc. Therefore, sociologists need to constantly appraise and predict the existing and future needs of environment. Modifications and reforms are always needed to provide a safe environment for all ages.

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Armageddon

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Armageddon definition:

" a dramatic and catastrophic conflict, especially one seen as likely to destroy the world or the human race."

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Introduction

Economic disparity, cruel dictatorships, baseless wars, corrupt self-serving governments, destruction of the environment, land, air and sea, global lack of parity and equity, mass movements of refugees, mass species extinction, droughts, dangerous weather events, floods, famines, wildfires, proliferation of arms sales, slavery, sexual exploitation and unbelievably, return to amassing of nuclear weapons makes the above description of Armageddon perhaps tame in comparison to what is happening on planet earth.

So why is nothing being done and why are governments turning a blind eye to what is happening?

Firstly governments are, or were, meant to govern. The mark of a true leader is being able to see further than the present and to make the difficult decisions that need to be made to secure the future for all members of society.

Corruption – across the world

Those governments which are not blatant dictatorships are mostly corrupt and at the least, self serving – this happens right across the world, and the new breed of politicians are mostly entering the fray for personal gain or at least to further their political agendas - which may or may not address current world needs, for example the short-term economic benefit of a coal mine versus enduring planetary viability. The worst of them, especially the plethora of dictators, are happy to lie, obfuscate, slander, threaten, and imperil for reasons of personal power and wealth.

The problems all seem to come down to one single matter, good versus evil. Okay humans have been battling against evil dictators, exploiters, enslavers, rapists, murderers and thieves since we started out on this once fresh and clean world. This planet was once WAS once the paradise many long for. We had paradise, a Garden of Eden and we filled it with rubbish and poison and filled the seas with our own faeces and we killed the animals and the plants and each other.

The fate of life on earth has always been in our own hands and it is humans only who have caused Armageddon.

It is not just the dictatorial psychopath classes sticking the knives into the back of humanity, it seems a huge number of our species are also ignorant, greedy and evil, yes evil. It is something we need to contemplate at this critical point of time and work hard to find solutions and a system for the planet where evil and greed does not make the decisions for everyone. Evil and greed cannot make sane and sensible decisions. Many decry globalism, and it is not without its faults, but it has been put forward basically to save us all from ourselves and each other. It is to make sure that everyone on the planet has a place to live and food to eat and basic healthcare and education. Currently those with their self-gained privileges on the planet are grabbing every bit they can for themselves while they still can, indeed they always have done so, *ad nauseum*. And we need truth - truth and a free press are the cornerstones of a true democracy.

It is lack of truth and the current war on honest unbiased, unaligned media that has allowed those who rule in brutal dictatorships and those who share in the spoils they are not entitled to, to bring life on Earth to its knees only 200,000 years (or about 5,000 generations) after we, 'modern man' emerged from the jungles and plains of Africa.

Meanwhile those who are trying to sound the alarm across the world on the imminent collapse of society, not just their own, all societies of men and animals and plants, are belittled and besmirched and slandered and slaughtered by those with their vested interests of greed and love of possessions. What the greedy are grabbing at, of course, has no inherent value whatsoever but they are too stupid and uncivilised to realise that.

Poor Greta Thunberg , a child we should all be proud of, just like little the little boy in the fable who said the "Emperor is not wearing any clothes"; her anger and insight is lost on fools and fakes. The governments and their corrupt mouthpiece media mostly decided to attack a young girl with their lies and derision.

Extinction Rebellion (XR) a global movement of the young and intelligent, caring older people, are fighting against the global governmental torpor around the world and are subject to violence and ridicule, and imprisonment and fines. simply because they speak the awful truth that no-one it seems wants to hear, especially those who have comfortable lives and who won't be affected by these issues in their own lifetime.

Okay the dinosaurs were also once wiped off the face of the earth, but they didn't do it to themselves.

The psychology of denial, acceptance of evil and the cult of self-destruction

Despite the world's scientists' urgent plea to try and get humanity to accept the truth / reality people are not listening as they are putting their personal self interests (i.e. their own lifetime) above the future of all yet to be born. If this is the nature of humans we will not be here in another 1,000 years, let alone another 100,000.

Proper education and good leadership would get around the problems of denial. If people are easily led, easily frightened, show them the far more frightening reality and show leadership and direction. Even in the less corrupt governments there is a fear of not being re-elected which goes above the population and planetary interests; best to allay the fears of voters in case you are not re-elected. The TRUE systems of democratic government was lost decades ago and it is now 'stay in power at all costs' even if you have to bankrupt and destroy the very country you were entrusted to govern.

The total lack of proper governance on this planet is destroying the past, present and future. We are destroying the endless trials of previous humans who have built up education, knowledge and skills, architecture, public works and amenities, sanitation, systems of justice and law, democracy, health facilities. They have lost all they died fighting for. **Those of us living in the present,** are choking on pollution, suffering drought and wildfires, facing famines and utter despair. Quantum physics itself shows us that the past present and future are with us now, anyway - It is just the facile, primitive, human brain that cannot comprehend that, on a physical level or metaphysical level **(1).**

The traits and modus operandi of the current 'ruling classes' - steal everything out of fellow citizens pockets while you can, suppress the free press, award any government deals to their fellows for their own financial benefits, or "kick backs". Keep the people poorly fed, under surveillance, bowed and low and in despair, while parading their never ending lines of traitorous troops and armies who have sided with evil over their own families, and for money and the right to kill and rape.

Of course it is not just the evil governments (I use the term *'government'* very loosely) it is those who support and even vote for them – those who also side with evil over their fellow people as they think they can get their share of the spoils now. They are those who burn or destroy the forests and the other species that live in them – those who pollute and poison the land, air and seas and kill the very food we were going to eat tomorrow.

(Footnote 1) Metaphysics is the branch of philosophy that examines the fundamental nature of reality, including the relationship between mind and matter, between substance and attribute, and between potentiality and actuality.)

As for the future – at this stage we don't have one. And we are fast running out of time and natural resources to even have a glimmer of hope that our collective fight against the evil in our midst and those denying their complicity in the total destruction of an entire planet in the universe.

Greta Thunberg: *"If you want advice for what you should do, invite scientists, ask scientists for their expertise. We don't want to be heard. We want the science to be heard."*

Now is the time to be wise and not leave the fate of life on earth to the screaming media personalities and 'shock jocks', the evil, ignorant, brutal and greedy.

Of course the genuinely 'ignorant' among us who believe what comes out of the mouths of politicians and the media , need to simply be told the truth. They are capable of then making a value judgement. The truth is what news services once did before they became the mouthpieces of dictatorships.

Technology companies

As a pioneer in the use of multimedia for philanthropic global medical education projects for purposes of justice, parity and equity I have previously lauded the benefits such technology was going to bring all humanity. Sadly many of the tech giants turned greedy and use their carriage services for exploiting people for their gain, stealing identities, aiding and abetting dictatorships, and selling the bodies, lives and dignity of women and children. It is the new global brothel, exploit and devalue and denigrate the masses for all you can gain from them.

Fossil fuels – the major destroyers

It is well established that fossil fuel companies have long known about climate change, yet sought to hide the truth with meaningless advertisements, pimping their lies, buying undue influence through political donations and kick backs and setting up lobby groups whose lies are given as much airtime as the truth speakers by the complicit corrupt camp of the media,

Not only do they lie about the longterm effects of their destructive industries they even cover up massive environmental damage caused by their careless practices.

Further, clean energy solutions have been rejected and marginalised by governments, and are not given funding or encouragement – not while the fossil fuel puppets have political power. It is all about money.

And of course if enough lies are printed or broadcast on television people are confused and then rely on their corrupt governments to make these "difficult decisions'. Yes, it is all about money for the few.

For example, a recent analysis of anonymised YouTube searches (www.frontiersin.org) found that videos supporting the scientific consensus on climate change were outnumbered by those that didn't.

• 81 per cent concerned about more droughts and flooding caused by climate change

• 77 per cent think climate change is already happening

• Two-thirds think Australia should have a national target of net-zero emissions by 2050.

• Almost two-thirds think humans are responsible for climate change.

• Most Australians think climate change is causing more extreme weather events and hurting food supply.

• Most blame electricity companies and their profit margins for rising power bills.

• Solar power is Australia's favourite energy source for the fourth year running.

• Young adults are more concerned about climate change and more supportive of reducing emissions than older generations.

• About two-thirds want the federal government to stop building new coal mines. (1)

Societal factors can also lead to denial. If enough air time is given to those who scream about the young generations disobedience and the media demagogues demonise them and call them stupid and mentally ill, then people will be reluctant to speak the truths they know in fear of the same backlash and fear of not 'fitting on' or not being with what the rest of society ***seems*** to be saying.

How do we fix this? Proper leadership and public education.

The defining trait of good leadership is to make the unpopular decisions and explain to those who they 'lead' the imperative for those tough decisions. Tragically most of our leaders are only concerned with staying in power and are focused on their personal gain. Faced with irrefutable evidence of imminent destruction of planet earth they should no longer claim that the science is not clear or that the token words they suggest are in fact sufficiently addressing this catastrophe born of greed, ignorance and selfishness.

Simply, what is happening now is not only a crime against humanity but a crime against life itself.

But the numbers are on our side, and collectively we are the vast majority, albeit the least powerful.

So what can ordinary people and business people do that is practical and not just a token display of our total disdain?

We need international clean standards that all industries and businesses need to meet as we no longer can just 'stop polluting' we need urgently to start repairing and rescusitating.

This paper proposes along with implementation of global industrial standards we produce a logo or banner to identify companies and groups who engage in earth and people friendly activities and commerce. This logo or banner that symbolises the future we must have, can only be used by those entities whose business or endeavours are completely earth friendly.

As a by-product the banner may also indicate the holders of future wealth and influence as we will only survive if these entities become the future we must have. There may thus be incentive for the current dirty and greedy entities to lift their game and meet such protocols and standards. The disincentive to the miscreants however is that the requirements of such a global status also requires any profit, wealth or product to be evenly and fairly spread across all sectors of society. This is the now tarnished and forgotten dream of parity and equity, fair trade and fair pay and the many other guises these sentiments have tried and failed under. The only way to succeed now is for ALL entities, including governments, NGOs, and commercial enterprises to adopt such unwavering standards – and at the same time fix the damage already caused. There are so many business opportunities in that aspect alone.

It does not negate fair return to companies or negate reward and acknowledgement of invention and intellect; after all some of us are ants and some of us are albatrosses, but a fair structure that firstly in no way harms the planet and life and that also provides a fair and living wage and is fairly priced, you would have thought was a simple starting place.

Another immediate concern if we are not all to starve to death in the next 50 years is to urgently address the effect of climate change on agriculture and extinction of species.

Climate change

The author has previously laboured the many needs that need addressing but several require further mention. Droughts and floods and loss of biodiversity, especially extinction of the insects that pollinate our crops are major issues to be addressed. The acidification of the oceans will wipe out the biggest source of food humans currently rely on.

Insectageddon

For nearly 30 years, a group of entomologists has been collecting and counting bugs from German nature reserves over 30 years. Their shock findings threaten to change farming practices across Europe.

Three decades later, the scientists released their findings.

The results shocked Germany, leading the country to start transforming its farming and land management practices. Insect numbers had crashed by 75 per cent over 27 years, prompting global headlines of "Insect Armageddon". Politicians across Europe suddenly faced demands to do something about the crisis. Farmers were blamed for excessive spraying of insecticides.

An estimated 80 per cent of wild plants depend on insects for pollination and 60 per cent of birds rely on insects for food.

"Almost nothing works sustainably without insects," Dr Martin Sorg said.

The cause is undisputed. "Bucketloads' of chemicals and poisons have been spread across the long suffering earth for decades and decades.

"The whole system of having food production, a way of farming, which is entirely reliant on chucking on bucket-loads of chemicals is not and never was sustainable,"

In February this year, green groups in the southern German state of Bavaria launched a petition demanding government action to save bees our great pollinator that has kept us all fed – even in our current plague numbers.

Fossil fuels

Again everyone on the planet knows by now the destructive effect of fossil fuels – yet there are so many other sources of energy we can and do use. Sadly those other forms do not make great and obscene amount of wealth for those in power but they do provide good business sense for others and developed properly the world can be weaned off one form of energy to another, if given the opportunity to do so.

Human fertility

We have read the apocalyptic future of "The Handmaids Tale" but quite a while ago human fertility rates dropped dramatically.

Sperm counts in western men have halved confirming what experts already knew. The reason is all rather obvious. If poisons in the environment kill off other species then surely they build up in humans as well, putting our own species, eventually, on the endangered/extinct list. If lack of food and clean air does not kill us off. The poisons we have allowed to be sprayed at will, will end us. Indeed evolution may be at play – killing off the old style human and favouring another type. Evolution is all about survival of the fittest and currently humans have to 'fit' in a fetid, poisonous world.

"Almost every aspect of modern life – from mobile phones to smoking and oral contraceptives [contaminating drinking water] – has been blamed for declining sperm counts, but no convincing evidence has emerged to link any of them to the problem," said Professor Allan Pacey of Sheffield University.

The reality of the problem is also supported by the rise in cases of testicular cancer that has taken place in recent years, he added. This also suggests that problems appear to be occurring as the male foetus develops in the womb. In some way, it is becoming more and more vulnerable to changes in conditions there. Men outside the western world appear not to be as affected. It is likely evolutionary change based on conditions of western capitalist society.

War

So what is it with humans and war. Is it the unceasing demand of dictators for more territory to own. Or is it an endless cycle of vengeance. Is it a sense of anger at being wronged. If so we need to re-appraise our history If you look into the past every country has produced evil and cruel people - and wars continue because people seek revenge for the 'most recent event'. Over a long period of time, no-one (no country) is innocent, and no-one is to blame. We have all been equally disgusting and cruel and equally victims.

I always say the first country that does NOT defend itself or does NOT retaliate - will have finally 'won the war'. Our preoccupation should be – how do we stop this from ever happening ever again – anywhere.

Also dictatorships rise and fall as they are always about one man only. One nation may be poor and suffer economic woes now but the pattern of human history shows that all nations rise and fall – along with their dictators and despots . The 'fall' seems to be a direct consequence of the rise.

Capitalism

Yes capitalism requires constant sales and the way for poorly focused companies is to cater to that with very shoddy goods that don't last, cheap unnecessary products, or to use marketing to PREY ON consumers to tell them they must have the latest model, colour, size design etc. In science classes we were taught that most light bulbs should last a lifetime but they are deliberately made poorly to generate ongoing sales.

We are meant to be intelligence and creative and surely we can come up with a better way for almost anything. This paper calls for international standards on all global companies. Reapparaisal of business processes will also generate innovation in production processes and provide business opportunities. We need an international logo and we ask interested parties to send ideas from which we will judge the best. While many countries and EPA's have current standards, formal or informal a global standard by which all business, big or small will provide focus on our global problems and hopefully inspire us to rethink our place on this planet and in the cosmos.

It will also be good to have a grading scale of business compliance to earth friendly and people friendly practices so consumers can choose who to deal with, which will provide further incentive for companies. Preferably a relevant International organisation will govern it.

Consumer boycotts

Some companies are noticing drops in sales due to consumer boycotts – this shows us that boycotts work. Consumes are boycotting those who use poorly underpaid third world labour or that have environmentally poor practices, or both. This shows boycotts work. If a business is only concerned about money this may force better production practices and processes. There is likely a whole new range of business and manufacturing processes waiting to be born in this realm and with it greatly advantages to all concerned.

Now it is time for companies and businesses to do things properly.

The United Nations Economic Commission for Europe says part of the problem is that consumers have been gripped by an "era of fast fashion" that has led to an "environmental and social emergency." The clothing industry is responsible for about 10% of global greenhouse gas emissions and consumes more energy than aviation and shipping combined, according to the UN.

What Bloomberg Intelligence Says:

"Low-priced fashion obviously encourages consumers to buy more frequently and to discard still-wearable garments. Consumers could easily choose to make this decision but as in most areas they want to see retailers helping them to make environmentally good choices."-- Charles Allen, Bloomberg Intelligence retail analyst

Currently people are demonstrating in the streets in Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Venezuela, US, Russia, Turkey, Libya, Australia, UK, France, Iran, Iraq, Lebanon, Hong Kong, Africa, - indeed likely everywhere just to be able to survive in a poisoned unfair world, to have food to eat, even to be able to stand somewhere on the earth that is not owned by some idiot or been turned into a golf course or has development plans for a country club. Armageddon will not be over until the evil elements of humanity and their 'rules of life' are removed from their positions of power and preferably be put into work gangs to start picking up all the mess they have strewn across our beautiful planet.

Those countries where there is a dictatorship are destined to fall as people who see themselves disempowered lose faith and give up wrking and trying or flee to other places.

There are armies of decent people around the world fighting in the streets for basic justice and a right to live. The despots and dictators, the greedy and the gross, the fools and the warmongers, the dross who rule us and who currently run the world are the destroyers of our future. Even those who are passive are destroying the world as we need every human to mobilise to rescue it from those who are sitting and watching the world burn. **Worse still many leaders are ACTIVELY preventing us from saving our planet.**

Time for us all to get real

We all heard our doctors tell us not to use antibiotics for trivial illness or they would no longer be effective.

We knew we should not spray poisons and chemicals anywhere and everywhere – as it all washes into the sea (the great poison and faeces repository).

We wondered if it was right to use dishwashers which used an acid effect to clean dishes as that also goes into the sea eventually and kills the fish.

We knew not to spray our plants with poison as it will poison food and the insects and the birds and us.

Our combined laziness and negligence also caused this state of affairs along with those we chose to lead us or allowed to dictate to us .

We all need to change our ways and fight for our planet and species.

- and we need to speak the truth and search out the truth as false truths can be bought from bogus media these days.

Many of the illegitimate or quasi governments are not focusing on the real problems that face humanity. They are focusing on their own wish to retain power. The spoils of government corruption being the driving force.

The planet has been destroyed under the stewardship of evil or corrupt men. It is the end of all time for planet earth and we have to call them for what they are and stand up to them not just for humanity but for life on earth itself .

Conclusion

This is and should be a time of great opportunity – a time to develop new processes and new techniques. We have come a long way since we crawled out of the swamps. We are a carbon based life form yet we don't seem to be able to deal sensibly with carbon! There should be a world of possibilities. We just need to work it out, develop the science, it cannot be that hard!

On an ethical level – we brought the word 'armageddon' into existence, so we must have known this total destruction of an entire planet was a possibility, a fatal flaw of human nature. It is about time we all grew up –citizens, politicians and dictators alike and find our true potential. That is also within us.

Addendum

So what do the large religions say about Armageddon.

(In the New Testament of the Bible) the last battle between good and evil before the Day of Judgement.

o the place where the Armageddon will be fought.

o a dramatic and catastrophic conflict, especially one seen as likely to destroy the world or the human race.

In Islam, a number of major and minor signs foretell the end of days. There is debate over whether they could occur concurrently or must be at different points in time, although Islamic scholars typically divide them into three major periods.

1. Sexual immorality appears among people to such an extent that they commit it openly, except that they will be afflicted by plagues and diseases unknown to their forefathers;

2. People cheat in weights and measures (business, trades, etc.) and are stricken with famine, calamity, and oppression as a result;

3. They withhold charity and hoard their wealth, and rain is withheld from the sky from them; there is rain only for animals;

4. They break their covenant with God and His Messenger and God enables their enemies to overpower them and take some of what is in their hands;

5. God causes those who do not live according to His book to fight among themselves.

Reference

(1) www.frontiersin.org

Global snapshot

Floods in Europe

Starvation

(I sincerely apologise for the lack of dignity afforded these unfortunate people. They are included as their plight deserves justice)

Fires in Russia

War

Injustice

Injustice


PUTiN
NET


ЗА ГэБэШНЫЕ
ПРОВОКАЦИИ


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Climate Justice

Rescue me

Dr Ebtisam Elghblawi
Libya
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I am the fresh air
A piece of peaceful land
The globe as a whole
The green nature
The blue sea
The deep ocean
The free flying bird
High in the bright blue sky
Intrigued with the cloud
In ecstasy
Reflecting shining stars
But,
Struggling to breathe in
Struggling to make a healthy life, moving on and to love
Collecting my old remains
Assembling to survive
Nurturing to behave
Aiming to learn not to misbehave
Aiming high, high
Shouting out loud stop!
The cruelty!
Of all human race!
Saddened by the news
Hurricane typhoon flooding and the list goes on
Wake up!
Before it's the endless return
Sickness and madness
In the horizon
Imminent danger
A total waste
A toxic melody
Terminating all human race

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