

Preface by Dr. Franz Alt

TV-Journalist, editor and bestseller author.

German Solar Award 2004 and 1994, Human Rights Award 2003, Newsletter Award 2003, Environment Online Award, "Top Business Site" 2002, European Solar Award 1997, Environment Award "Golden Swallow" 1992, Siebenpfeiffer-Award 1987, Karl-Hermann-Flach Award, Drexel-Award, Hans-Thoma Medal 1983, Adolph Grimme Award 1979, Bambi TV-Award 1978.

The Solar Energy Change is possible

At the last UN World Summit the condition on our planet has been described as follows:

- half of the world's population has to survive with less than 2 l a day
- 26,000 humans die each day of hunger and of lack of water
- the industrialized countries spent each day as much coal, gas and oil as nature generates within 500,000 days
- the US is spending for military and wars each 32 hours as much money as the UN's annual budget due the greenhouse effect each day up to hundred species of animals and plants are becoming extinct
- each day humanity grows by a quarter of a million people
- the four richest men of the US process more money than one billion of the poorest of the planet

Are we insane? Can we be rescued?

This book will search for answers on that central question of the future.

We are in front of the largest moral, economic and social challenge in human history.

We are already fighting several great wars at the same time:

- Wars for the last resources of our earth, e.g., Oil in Irak
- A World War against nature and thus against us

Climatic change may turn out into a climate-collapse and may be life-threatening for humanity. Consequences of global warming just during the last months: flooding in Bavaria, Austria and Switzerland with billions of euros of damage, typhoons in East Asia, which caused 150 lives, the hurricanes in the south of the United States with several thousands of deaths and damages of 200 billion dollars and increasing hurricane activities in the whole

Caribbean region.

The climate researchers predicted that situation amazingly accurate. We didn't want to know about it and dismissed the hazard. Greed, ignorance and indolence have been stronger than comprehension, humbleness to the laws of nature and our willingness to change.

Even more dramatic for the future of the entire humanity and for all life on our planet is the fact that in the future **all** 6.5 billion people want to live like the 800 million in the industrial countries. We know that the planet will not bear that development. On the other hand that development cannot be stopped. The past "have-nots" will claim their fair right to live like we do.

Citizens towards the sun, towards freedom - the Solar Age begins

The most human vision for 21st century is called the Solar Age. We can achieve 100% of renewable energy within the next 40 years. We do not need oil from the Middle East, no gas from Siberia, no uranium from Australia. We have all energy carriers that we need in the future at our doorstep: sun, wind, hydro power, geothermal energy, biofuels from the farmlands and from the woods.

According to a study by the European Commission world's energy consumption in the year 2050 could look like this:

- 40% Solar power
- 30% Biomass
- 15% Wind power
- 10% Hydro power
- 5% Oil

A path towards an economic, ecological, peaceful and forever durable energy supply is demonstrated in that study. Also, the multinational oil companies such as Shell and BP have elaborated similar energy scenarios internally.

Oil, gasoline, coal and gas are getting more expensive, are destroying the environment and are becoming depleted within a few decades. It is more intelligent to shift duly, than to further ruin the planet. It is correct, that the solar energy change will cost some money, but no energy change will cost the world.

Sun, wind, hydro power, geothermal energy and biofuels are available forever for a fair price. And all will profit from: The climate, the economy, the jobs, you and me, and all the more our children and grandchildren.

Unemployment in Germany, Europe and the world is high, the economy is stagnating - but

renewable energies are a growing branch of industry. Examples:

- China installed in 2004 more than 18 million square meters of solar thermal collectors
- Japan has the world's largest photovoltaic enterprises and created hundreds of thousands jobs by them (mainly using German solar technology)
- Germany is the world leader in production and application of wind turbines. Six percent of its electricity is already generated by wind power in 2005.
- California will produce, in the reign of its governor Arnold Schwarzenegger, a third of its energy necessities via renewable energy sources and the Philippines will reach 40 percent by that time.
- Brazil is already generating more than 25 percent of its car fuel via regenerative raw materials.

Can that all be financed?

The great economic advantage of ecological energy generation is that sun, wind, hydropower and geothermal energy do not send an invoice. The matter is available almost everywhere where we need it - with no global transport routes necessary. What we need is mass production of the new energy technologies. The prices of those have fallen by 50 percent since 1995 - and the costs of the old energies doubled by that time period. The one who is burning wood-pellets nowadays instead of using fuel oil for heating pays about half the price. You will become acquainted more with similar surprising examples in this important book by Stefan Krauter. The message of this book and the message of the *RIO 6* conference is: The Solar Energy Change is possible and the Solar Age already begun.

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