

INTRODUCTION TO THE 56TH JOHN ARTHUR WILSON LECTURE

by
ANDY RHEIN

A PhD chemist graduating from University Witten/Herdecke, Dietrich Tegtmeier in 1989 commenced his career in the chemical industry in various management positions and international assignments with Bayer, Germany. He became involved in the leather business in 1999 with responsibilities for Bayer headquarters leather R&D; then later was in charge of global marketing for the business unit leather. 2005 he has been employed by the spin-off company LANXESS as vice president for product and applications development. Since 2015 he focused in his new role as VP “Innovation and Leather Industry Relation” on development, scale up and implementation of game changing, innovation project ideas.

Industrial representations:

- Since 2008, executive member of the International Union of Leather Technologists and Scientist (IULCTS); Chairman of the R&D Council,
- From 2009 to 2014, executive member of the Leather Working Group (LWG).
- Since 2011, vice president of IULCTS,
- Since 2012, member of the board of the German counterpart of ALCA, the VGCT.

Dietrich Tegtmeier is married and has three daughters. Please welcome Dr. Tegtmeier.

THE 56TH JOHN ARTHUR WILSON LECTURE SUSTAINABILITY – THE PASSPORT TO OUR FUTURE

by
DR. DIETRICH TEGTMEYER

INTRODUCTION

For the past ten years I have participated in many discussions about sustainability around the leather world. In today’s John Arthur Wilson lecture I will attempt to summarize key points I learned during this time in symposiums, readings, debates and various companies programs. I also did some research for this presentation; one book by Iris Publé¹ has me inspired most; and many of the statements in this lecture are somehow linked to thoughts and theories of this book. If I didn’t made always a correct reference it is not done by purpose and a result of translation.

The title for this speech – Sustainability, the passport to our future - was inspired by a comment I picked up in a shoe sustainability summit last year in Shanghai; I made a note, because I found it a good fit, at least to my understanding of this.

In terms of sustainability we need to see our planet as one single bio-dome.

Recently Alexander Gerst, a German astronaut from my hometown Cologne, was for the first time in his life aboard the

ISS space station. After arrival I was listening to an interview with him via satellite on our local radio station and I found it remarkable what he said. He was speaking about his thoughts when he was sitting the first time here, on this famous place in the station, looking out of the window and watching the incredible view of our planet Earth.

He said “I was looking for hours, it was completely silent... first I thought, how wonderful our planet is, so colorful, so perfect, so nicely placed in this dark orbit.

Then looking in the endless universe I became aware how small our planet earth actually is; what a tiny part in this huge black orbit.”

“But then,” he said, and this really attracted my attention, “I became aware how sensitive and how fragile our planet really is. I have seen the tiny blue layer of atmosphere around the planet, which actually is our life saving protection shield between the warm climate on earth and the black, cold death in the universe. Without this magic safety membrane everything would be dead, and it is so thin, it can be destroyed so easily. Therefore, it up most important for everyone in everything what we do to maintain and preserve this life saving atmosphere.”

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Chart 1. View from the ISS.

With this introduction I wanted to attract your attention to this lecture and try to project you, for the next hour, on a level outside our day-to-day world and local problems, to observe sustainability issues from a real global perspective. Sometimes this helps to adjust our compass; as the Apollo astronaut Eugene Cernan has put it in nice words, being 400,000 km away from the earth: “We left to explore the moon, but actually we discovered the planet earth.”

In the last 100 years the economy was driven by growth and innovation optimism. Inventors and researcher of course didn't know, where all the developments would finally end up, but the playground was so big and discoveries have been so interesting and fascinating, that the development process was perpetuating and couldn't be stopped or redirected. Unfortunately during this rapid innovation and development process both public health and the environment suffered, they were not the focus for a long period of time.

MAIN SUSTAINABILITY ISSUES THE WORLD IS CURRENTLY FACING

Three issues we face are characterizing our major problems:

1. Steadily increasing demand of consumption, at least for the next 50 years: Global population has tripled since the beginning of industrialization. Although some theories predict, that the growth overall is reaching an asymmetric plateau value or even a tipping point soon, due to the fact, that the quality of life hopefully will increase in the developing countries the amount of consumption continues to increase still for several decades. How dramatic this increase volume wise actually is and what kind of impact it has from an environmental point of view becomes obvious in the following example: It is well known that the mass production of concrete for

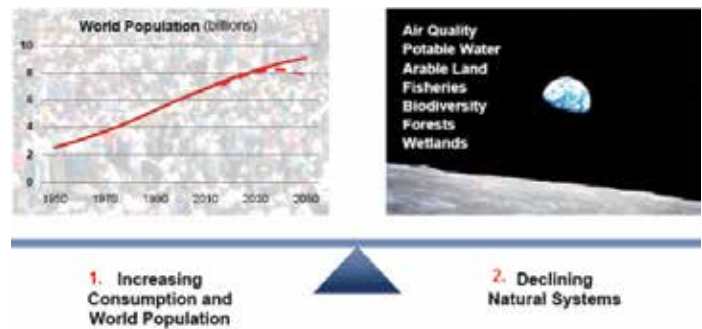


Chart 2. Balancing out the increasing consumption with the world's resources.

construction has a terrible environmental footprint, because it is a big CO₂ contributor. Recently in the Forbes magazine it was published,³ “in the last 3 Years China only has used more concrete for construction than the U.S. used up in the entire 20th Century!” Similar explosion of volume demand you can allocate to the forecast of many other goods in emerging countries.

Parallel to this dramatic prediction we face declining natural systems. The fast global population growth has led to a point, that the human race occupies nearly all currently livable land on this planet. Our resources, of course the non-renewable ones like oil and gas, but even the sun powered renewable biomass, are limited. Already today our economy consumes more resources than what is available. Recently I have seen a study, in which the 27th of September 2011 was declared as a very sad day; you know why? Actually it was the day, when the global demand of natural resources for this year 2011 for the entire world population was already consumed – 27th of September. This means normally nothing was left for the rest of the year. It's called the Earth Overshoot Day. It is like our annual salary would have been spend in full on 27th of September and we have to live the rest of the year from our savings. If we continue living like this, it is estimated, that in 2050 all savings are consumed and we would need 2-3 back up planets just to continue living like today. It is clear, this is impossible and our current economy has an inherent problem to solve. So balancing out the world's resources with consumption as it is written here on the headline is essential for our long term survival, otherwise we will really get into deep trouble. Herman Daly, a professor at MIT, has precisely described our situation in a different way: “A fishing boat on the ocean without fish does not make sense anymore.” The current economy model leads to an empty ocean.¹

2. The third big issue we face is an increasing amount of divergences and imbalances on our planet. This is naturally an instable, not sustainable situation. From a scientific point of view we can explain this with the

2nd and 3rd natural laws of thermodynamic, which are immanent and cannot be ignored. They are describing the principle of entropy. In casual words the laws are simply stating: big differences in an isolated system – and our planet is an isolated system – these differences always pursue an equilibrium, and there is always a constraint for only one direction of a change towards a maximum of entropy. Differences are a natural driving force, and they are forced to migrate, balance out themselves at some point of time.

It is my understanding, that this natural migration principle can be applied to all types of differences we face in our world today, no matter what kind they are, if in regard to a social or an economic dimension. Differences in climate will lead to weather changes to correct imbalance in the atmosphere. Differences in poverty will lead to massive people migration – we see this happening more and more especially in Europe. Such distinctions cannot be kept isolated from each other, or maintained artificially by big walls. Maybe we can slowdown this migration process, but we cannot avoid it. It will happen, so we have to manage it. In any case, in terms of people migration I believe it is even not fair and we do not have the right to stop this process.

These are, for me, the three big sustainability issues of today. If we and our next generations' still want to continue enjoying life on our planet, a huge process of change is ahead of us. "Never before in human history have we faced such an awesome task to deal with."²

EVOLUTION OF CURRENT UNDERSTANDING OF SUSTAINABILITY

It took quite a while until we reached today's understanding and perception of sustainability. In particular over the past decades an impressive evolution process has taken place in this regard, which has broadened our minds and our scopes significantly. To see where we are right now in this process, it is interesting to take a closer view back into history; the entire process I have divided in 7 major phases:

Phase 1: The sustainability cradle: Literature says, all started with Carlowitz's Forest Farming Principle, 1713 in Freiberg; he actually was the first person creating, defining and publishing the term "Sustainability." It sounds trivial today, but before that time people have seen the world differently. Isaac Newton for example has described the world as a big machine which to be fueled permanently by resources. Any movement was based on a corresponding cause/effect principle, directly linked to each other.

This new Carlowitz approach was fundamentally different; there was no cause/effect principal anymore, it was a system

approach. He defined his forest as the world's first sustainability model. Instead of a power machine with single movements he has seen it as a permanent flow of multiple streams. All are somehow dependent on each other and need to be kept in balance; like a mobile – if you pull one string, all the other are moving as well. In practical terms his theory was the wise and smart use of his forest in a way, that - on one hand – it remains preserved while - on the other hand – the system is producing profits. So in its origin sustainability is an economic resource principle; a resource can generate a crop permanently without getting out of balance. Again, this knowledge was generated and scientifically published for the first time more than 300 years ago, in the year 1713, and it is exactly the sustainability principle of today.

Phase II: In the 19th century industrialization was in full swing. This went along with the start of my second phase, the so-called **sustainability ice age**. Economy and ecology clashed together, in contradiction to the example of Carlowitz' forest now opposite principles became guiding rules. Single profit maximization doctrine had stopped abruptly the intelligent and smart wood felling thinking of Carlowitz; the new economic lesson is asking just for maximum return of the forest capital in a short period of time, nothing else. Instead of a moderate, permanent timber gain all of a sudden the optimum financial gain has been placed in focus with the naive and stubborn belief, that there are enough resources available for endless growth. This economic thinking became and unfortunately remained the main driver of the industrialization process, and is still valid for many operations today.¹

In the 1950s and 1960s phase III started, which I have named: **environmental corrective measurements**. Ecological consequences in the western world became so obvious, that pollution in many areas required immediate corrective actions. Environmental protection push programs became a priority in our society and scientific world. Universities and industrial R&D centers started developing technologies to combat pollution. Political initiatives were formed and governments in the western world have forced the industry and cities to build "end of pipe" cleaning technologies like waste water treatment barriers between any operation and a river as well as filters and catalysts to reduce air pollution. Speaking about my personal experience, in my childhood I lived beside the Rhine River, the main "artery" in Germany. The river was heavily polluted by industry and was not able to sustain any aquatic life. Today it is a completely different story; you can go safely swimming and fishing in the river Rhine again.

Having installed the end of pipe treatment, a 2nd generation of environmental protection technologies came into play focusing more on recycling solutions. Decentralized concepts were developed and implemented, to solve problems already at their root cause in a manufacturing operation – even in tanneries

we do see many good examples. Then, a 3rd generation of push programs was forced in the 80ies with the so-called integrated environmental protection. Products get developed according to a “benign by design”- principle targeting the use and after use of the manufactured product as well as included already an assessment of its hazardous potential – this was the start of the restricted substances lists, and it resulted in lots of product changes especially for the chemical industry. All this has led to a nice clean up the western world and much more healthy consumer goods.

Then, a truly game changing phase IV started which I call: “**Rude awaking.**” It was in 1972, when the Club of Rome initiated the study “Limits of Growth.” Dennis Meadow’s so called report hit like a bomb blast in the western world. Based on computer simulations of system dynamics he drew clear conclusions, that if the increase of population, industrialization, pollution and the irresponsible extraction of resources continues as usual the limits of growth will be reached in 100 years from then. Sustainability became a new dimension. After a century of booming industrialization the basic principle of economics – the growth – was fundamentally questioned for the first time.¹

Computer simulations have shown, that the fatal element of any kind of growth is, that it is recognized as not being a linear, moderate increase, but an exponential shape, as we observe it in any natural growth of bacteria. A growth scenario always starts slow, and then it becomes so powerful, that finally only a collapse of the system is going to stop it; it ends mortally. Unfortunately this is the basic principle of any growth scenario. A possible change is only likely to be manageable in the beginning of the slope, so that a collapse can be prevented and an asymptotic level reached.

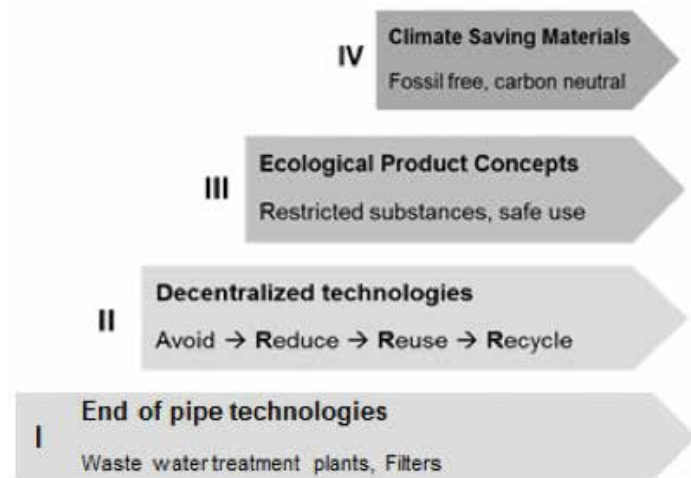


Chart 3. IV generations of push initiatives.

In Phase V of the sustainability evolution scale the UN took over the lead as the **Global Governance** Institution. 1983 they organized a World Commission on Environment and Development, the well-known “Brundtland Commission” according to the name of its president. The final report was issued under the headline: “Our common future.”

The famous outcome was born: “Sustainability aims to meet today’s human needs without compromising the ability of future generations.” This was an epoch setting dogma!¹ In more simple terms it is the acknowledgment, that life of future generations shall not be inferior than the life of our generation. In the conference report even the huge difference between rich and poor countries, the problem of the dramatic raise of the population, pollution etc. were addressed; it generated significantly more awareness on a global stage. The term Sustainability was used a first time officially as overwriting expression and it was explained with the three-pillar model:

- the ecological pillar addressing issues like global warming, deforestation, fossil based energy, health threatening
- the economical dimension reflecting problems of unemployment, financial instability, outstanding debts,
- and the social, cultural pillar, which stands for issues such as e.g. poverty, child labor or violent conflicts.

Phase VI could be considered as the ultimate globalization reach: the big milestone was the huge Rio summit in1992: it was the biggest event in history on the topic sustainability with participants from 178 countries. In addition 20.000 people joined a parallel, separate forum. Finally actions should follow theories. The main agreement was, that sustainability is a common goal for the entire world community. Of cause now the conflict between the political will and national interests started. First metrics and priorities were established and were clustered in different headlines: Fight of poverty should have priority, 60% reduction of CO2 emission until 2050, convention for protection of bio-divisibility, declaration against deforestation, convention of fight against desertification, just to name the most important ones.

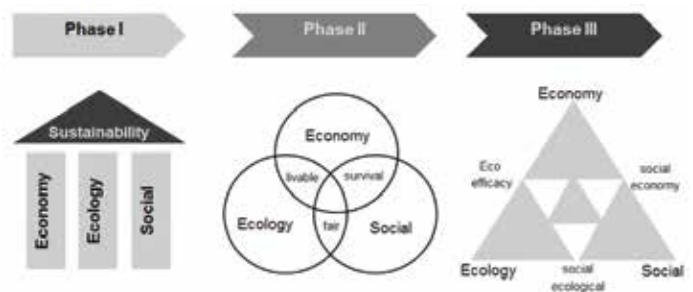


Chart 4. UN 3-pillar model (Phase I) and its further progression to 3 a ring and a triangle model.

The symbol for sustainability further developed to three rings as shown in chart 4; it should demonstrate that the former pillar areas cannot be seen isolated from each other; there are even interdisciplinary aspects, which are important to respect.

During this period even Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO's) have become an important driving element. Because they have reached such an importance I think it is appropriate to spend some extra minutes on their history and role. NGO's are not an invention of the 90's: the first NGO e.g. was founded in 1839 for human rights in the US against slavery. However, the overall number of NGO's was pretty straightforward; Amnesty International, Greenpeace, Human Rights Watch, Misereor and World Vision, just to name a few big ones. But then in the 90ies founding an NGO became pretty popular and they were popping up like mushrooms. In 2007 already 7.600 single NGOs existed.¹

Why have NGO's been so powerful? There are two major answers: 1. unlike many governments, they really work, act and think globally, and usually do not care about any boundaries. 2. Inspired throughout the global use of the World Wide Web they became extremely powerful, they can reach individuals in every corner of the world on a 24/7-B2B base and - in addition - an NGO can put extreme public pressure on companies with very little cost involved.

This empowerment was the main reason why NGO's have become spearheads of many global sustainable development initiatives. While many companies try to go for profits, political parties for legitimate power, scientist for majestic dignity, a NGO focuses on the right thing for such a difficult process of change while "putting its fingers in the open wound" – as we say. They are focusing on social divergence and environmental imbalances, which in general is a good thing.¹

However, there are also valid arguments to question NGOs: The main concern is their existential dependency from private funding, which is often in contradiction to their credibility, and they cannot question the extreme positioning of their creditors. This leads often to purposely misleading argumentation in media and a non- or only partial scientific approach. Another issue is, that most NGO's do not have a democratic structure and are not thinking economically, which means, results are often unrealistic or "worldly innocent."¹

So, NGO's opinions have to be analyzed carefully. I think the leather industry knows about these disadvantages quite well, because we are pretty much brand marked and in the hot spot of many media campaigns. But overall also we have to acknowledge, that positive sustainability developments such as the stop of deforestation in the amazon area need to be credited to a certain extend to NGO initiatives.

Phase VII for me is the **new millennium phase** because in particular two topics became a much higher priority: Climate and social responsibility together with more binding targets.

It started in 1997 with the 3rd UN climate protection convention in Japan, which issued the famous Kyoto protocol. The Kyoto conference was a real milestone, because it was the first time that international binding limits – in this case for CO2 emissions - were agreed upon. Unfortunately, the US and China, being the biggest national polluters, still have not signed the protocol, and this is still valid until today.

Around the year 2000 the UN has published first an Agenda 21 and then the Millennium Development Goals. Social and cultural difference gained much more attention. "Peace, Security, Development go hand in hand with Prosperity and Growing Markets" concluded Kofi Anan. The main target of the 8 goals, with global reach, are to cut down global poverty by half by 2015, push education and health programs and eliminate unfair social and cultural misbalances. 189 nations have signed the Millennium Development Goals. A first follow up was done 10 years later in NY; the acknowledgment was, yes there is progress, but the world is still behind their short-term targets. The good thing is, the 21st millennium is still quite young and there is still some time to go to reach the goals.

Even the finance world started recognizing the value of increased social responsibility, or human capital, as they call it. Not only economic factors get considered, but also factors like social wellness, good partnership, family and intact natures are important and now even get rated.

Moving ahead again the model describing the elements for sustainability has shifted now towards a triangle (see chart 4) showing that all belongs together equally and results 100% in one single shape.

More recently in 2012 the agreed follow up conferences of Rio plus 20 years, the World Climate Conference in Durban took place. It was even the deadline for the famous Kyoto protocol, where all signed Nations had agreed on the ultimate target: "keeping the global warming below 2 degree Celsius above the time prior to industrialization." The presented actual CO2 emission numbers were unfortunately telling the truth; the target wasn't achieved, and the question was, under which premises the protocol could be extended to achieve at least the ultimate target. After long discussions and negotiations the conference agreed on an extension of the Kyoto declaration until the next big conference end of this year in Paris. Actually in this week in Bonn/Germany a small UN Climate protection conference takes place to work out a binding formula and agreed targets for the big conference at the end of this year, which all states should be able to sign, hopefully including US and China. How important it is we can ready on daily news in the news about the drought in California.

Since this event in Paris is still going to happen I'm now at the end of my retro perspective view getting started in 1713 in a little German forest. Of course, this was only a very comprehensive, fast motion summary and only a selection of all-important steps and people. Today I believe since so many issues and to-dos are identified, we shouldn't ask how to broaden our horizons further, but we should focus on the implementation of solutions. So let's try to look in the future and what has to be done ... it is my belief the world is ready for a turn around, for a new chapter; most likely we even have started it already.

TECHNOLOGY CYCLES AND FUTURE PREDICTIONS

This understanding of a new chapter fits even nicely in Konradieff's diagram, which tried to model the future already 100 years ago. 1926 this Russian economist has published a theory of economic cycles. According to his analysis and prediction every 50 years a new boom inspires the economy for a growth period. Later, an American scientist perpetuated the model for the 20ies century.

To honor Kondradieff, who was brutally murdered by Stalin, because he was ahead of his time and didn't fit in Stalin's regime, this future modeling he called "Konradieff Cycles." Without going into details, the interesting thing is, it shows, that today we are again at a beginning of a new cycle. As the IT and telecommunication boom in slope 5 slows down, the prediction and hope is, that the focus for the next 50 years will be on something else, hopefully "green technologies."

PARADIGM SHIFTS FOR ECONOMY

Now I'm coming to the important part of my presentation, which refers to the necessity of paradigm shifts. What does all

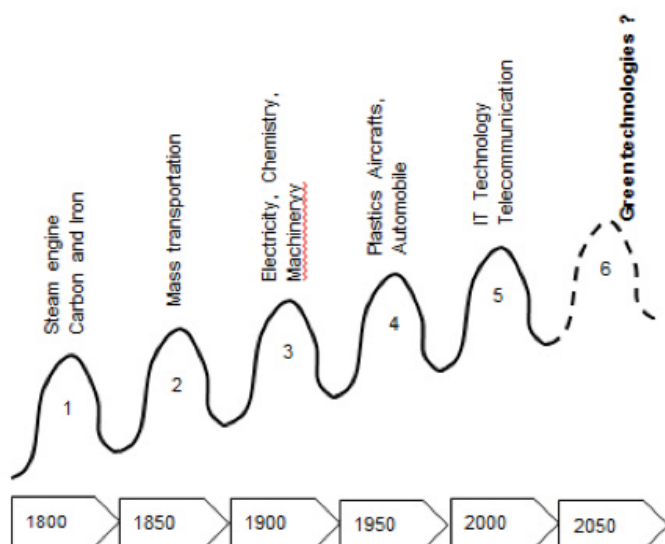


Chart 5. Konradieff cycles.

this mean for us and our day-to-day life, for our companies, businesses etc.? I will begin on a very general level, with paradigm shifts for the economy. Here economists have identified fundamental changes.

The modern literature in the economic world differentiates between two types of Sustainability: a "Weak" and a "Strong" form. Let's look first on the weak part; I have chosen 3 major characteristics for its description:

In center of all this weak economy form stands the human kind, in Latin language called the "homo oeconomicus,"³⁴ he is the result of a long lasting, minimum 10.000-year evolution process. He sees himself in the middle of the world. He is the one, who believes having inherited the alpha gen, all he does is more or less directed to the satisfaction of his needs.

Possibly to everyone's surprise weak sustainability is also called all the formerly mentioned efficient sustainable efforts like wastewater treatment and pollution control mentioned earlier. But why are they weak? – Weren't they great initiatives?

The answer is: Yes and No – Yes, of course they are important investments and helped a lot to improve environmental conditions. But No, because these end-of-pipe technologies are only reparations, only corrective measurements they cannot heal and safe the world. They are comparable to a medicine treating just symptoms and not the root cause; this is a cosmetically environmental protection not more. Think about the ozone hole, a terrible damage of our atmosphere, which generates higher UV radiation. Yes, we need to protect ourselves not to get burned and we should do it. But this is not the solution to this problem; the root cause cannot be prevented by a UV protection sun cream. The solution to the problem needs to be something else, and therefore it is called "weak" in literature.¹³

The third issue I want to mention, the purpose and target in this weak economy form is the aspiration of permanent growth according to on the old neoclassic economic thinking. There is the naive belief or underlying understanding behind all of this, that we can forever grow and we have unlimited ecological resources. What a nonsense. We all know this is not true because it is impossible! Remember what I said in the beginning with the overshoot day at 27th of September... we cannot continue like this; if we do so, this overshoot day soon will be already a month earlier, 27th of August, then July, and so on ... we need to watch carefully and analyze our situation; the risk is there, that we acknowledge this fact too late, that we are surpassing crucial limits with irreversible consequences.

To put it in numbers... experts have calculated, the world needs a slowdown of resource consumption by 2050 of 50% overall, and the contribution of the industrialized nations has to be even 80% - this is huge, but – the good news is – it is not

unrealistic. Chances for a more efficient use of resources are there, and, for example, summarized in a nice book called “Formula factor 5” for sustainable development by Ernst U. v. Weizsaecker.² Hundreds of clear examples are listed and shown there, that global resource productivity can be increased at least by 70-80%. It is technically true: we can get 5 times more benefit out of 1 kWh of power or out of 1 ton copper ore. Most proposals are pretty common, simple like better isolation, smaller cars, etc.

We have to move into a strong sustainable world; what does this mean for an economy? Strong sustainability distinguishes itself from this weak counterpart fundamentally in all mentioned aspects.

Instead of the “homo oekonomikus” the opposite, the “homo sustines”⁴ in the Latin language, comes into play. It is an idea of man who is in natural harmony with the principles of sustainability. Translated into today’s world this “homo sustines” is not anymore standing in the center of his world, using up non-renewable resources to feed and energize his life like his counterpart body, no, the “homo sustines” now is being an integrated part of an ecological, self-running system.

How does he behave, the “homo sustines?” In contradiction to the weak guy he is not a “repair guy” anymore, an ecological “handyman,” he tries to act preventively and does risk assessments. He is anticipating, what’s going to happen. He wants to avoid negative outcomes and gives priority to solving a problem in the early stage at their root. Then, no expensive corrective measurements are necessary at all. Let’s get reminded on the very recent awful accident of the oil platform “deep horizon”... what kind of efforts had been necessary to minimize the damage; all could have been anticipated and prevented in a wise risk assessment up on front.¹

To be effective a system of change is required rather than several single corrective measures. This is the challenge; this is why it is so difficult. Therefore the “homo sustines” cannot think locally, he has to think and act globally. Results and profits of single operations in a strong sustainable economy automatically get a lower priority. Instead of it, long term system impacts, such as change of weather conditions, loss of bio diversity get recorded and respected as part of his daily business world.

Growth in the strong sustainable business world is not anymore the “magic word.” What we need is an alternative KPI. But it is important such a “non-growth scenario” may not be seen as a “stand still”; the term “growth” needs to be redefined. It should be replaced by parameters like efficacy and life quality, always reflecting to be in balance with nature, health and in peaceful societies.

Since 2012 the UN continues going in this direction and publishes a World Happiness Report – it sounds maybe

funny, but this report includes analysis about mental illness and importance of ethics. The King from Bhutan, a little country next to India, Mr. Jigme Singye Wangchuck even went a step further, and his KPI for the countries’ development is not the GDP, he created an economic term: “Brutto national happiness value.”

By the way: Bhutan and Ecuador are the only two nations, which have anchored a sustainable, non-growth orientated economy in their national constitution¹ – maybe two good starting examples.

In this context it is even interesting to note, that many old religions - for example the Buddhist philosophy - clearly manifest an objection against weak economic principals like profit, growth and consumption. It looks like the people at that point of time have been already ahead of our time thousand years ago. Therefore, Buddhism is not only a religion; it is a true form of sustainability. And the modern term for reincarnation actually is nothing else than “cradle to cradle” principle.¹

PARADIGM SHIFTS FOR COMPANIES

We can only manage a change, if we measure and report something. Without numbers no tracking...

Traditionally a company is rated by the Profit and Loss calculation – its P&L –. It is the reporting tool to describe strength and weaknesses of a company in the traditional KPI system. As mentioned earlier, the economic system behind it is the mainly profit oriented thinking, expenses for environmental protection are ok as long as they are still within a budget or even generating savings to remain in a reasonable profit region. The value strategy is mainly focusing on cost leadership and/or quality leadership. This is of course the weak form, which I have explained earlier.

Strong sustainable company strategies on the other side do significantly broaden their scope, expanding their horizons, because they are including with the same importance and priority also social aspects in their decision-making processes. These companies create business cases for sustainable solutions; they invest in innovative thinking and differentiation. Therefore John Elkington in 1994 has developed a new reporting tool for these companies, he expanded the financial P&L calculation to the so called: Triple Bottom Line calculation, the TBL: it refers to the bottom line of a new way to evaluate and express the true company performance. The success of an enterprise is measured with an extended spectrum of criteria, again the economic result, and in addition equally valued for social and environmental compliance. Corporate Responsibility becomes an adequate goal and gets valued and respected by the financial world.

This is something we can see since quite some time changing already, and this is really encouraging to see and follow. Social and ecological responsibilities become increasingly important, and get valued in the financial business world e.g. with the introduction of the Dow Jones Sustainability Index or the Carbon Disclosure Project. Even a change in the mindset of managers is going on; 90% of 250 senior managers in a recent Emnid survey are convinced, that companies, which are following a sustainability codex, are in a long run more profitable and competitive than exclusive profit orientated companies. This is an encouraging result.¹

The EU commission has approached companies to publish a Triple Bottom Line report. Many banks and investment funds today already value a company according their TBL. World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD) values this as evolution of management process, where the acknowledgement of global changes plays an equal role than strategic moves. Since global organizations and the financial world now pay attention, even here we see a pull effect, which will accelerate this important move.

It is also extreme important to find a way to roll out best available, sustainable technologies to a global standard, make it an imperative license to operate for every enterprise. Here global brands and OEM's should take the lead. They need to ensure and create the necessary funds with their pricing, that their suppliers are implementing and maintaining at least a minimum standard for workers safety, pollution prevention and environmental.

Unfortunately in today's world changes in emerging countries do often require a huge accident or scandal to shake up decision makers in the industry and get them ready for a move. Recently I was reading about the follow up in Bangladesh after the terrible catastrophe last year, where a textile company building collapsed and 1.000 people were killed. So many things have changed since then to a much better world: ... the main thing however is the need for a change in the minds of the local politicians and company managers, and even this is seems to be underway.

Another extremely important role for the companies to further pursue sustainable development is Innovation. Technological Innovations are the most powerful drivers for the change. We need to invent and implement best practice technologies were ever it is possible. Very often this are simple, easy solutions of efficacy improvements, like "old wine in new pipes" as we use to say. In addition to such improvements we also need to trust and believe in something what still has to come, what we do not know today.

One of the Master of Innovation on this planet – particularly regarding sustainability - is our mother nature. Over hundreds of thousands years evolution the nature has become perfect in terms of adaption, flexibility, redundancy, and tolerance for

disruption. Biomimetic is the conceptual approach to transfer this in our consumer life, to use this as a source for our innovations (Lotus effect, Biopolymers, etc.).

IMPORTANT ROLE OF POLITICS

If we come to the question of implementation, we come to the important role of politics. To manage sustainable development on a global level, a powerful and loyal global governance is necessary, which has the authority to set sustainable guiding rails and define basic principles.

Unfortunately the opposite is often the case, and I will give an example in regard to an environmental aspect, politics need to address. Industry nations cleaned up their landscapes in recent decades, cities and country side have developed to nice looking landscapes, many old industry quarters have been turned in cultural centers, pubs and parks. We can do this, because production is not eliminated, but just outsourced. And together with the production even the environmental problems got outsourced in underdeveloped countries, far away from our own, nice looking home yard.

This is called a hidden environmental footprint of the industry nations, which leads to this uncontrolled over utilization of the planet's reserves; we have to make it transparent. If the material and energy intensive life of rich countries on one hand do provide a high level of life quality, but if on the other hand this is going on the expense of poor countries the global politicians have a system immanent problem to solve. Politics need to find a way to ensure, that issues around health and environmental problems are no longer isolated issues, they need to become more visible and understandable to the normal consumer like you and me. How could this be done?

An answer is we need to allocate the hidden footprint in the cost of goods sold. Let's have a closer look into it. Today, for the manufacturing of a single consumer item there are so called internal and external cost involved. Internal cost are the accumulation of all operating cost of all stake holders along the supply chain from starting materials up to finished goods. These internal cost are finally reflected on the price tag of an article, they represent today its economic value.¹

But this is not reality. It does not reflect the real value of an article. Throughout the manufacturing and distribution process there are also hidden, so called external cost generated, which are today not counted at all. To give an example: What is the real value of a piece of leather, which sells for 1 or even 2 \$ per square foot, and which was produced under appalling conditions? What about the external hidden environmental damage it has generated during its production? Who is going to pay for it? And this is just one little piece of leather. Worldwide the financial impact of such measurements is

exorbitant¹: Estimation of the world bank state, that globally 8% and in China even 15% of the Gross National Product is used for corrective measurements of environmental damage. All these cost are not and should be somehow allocated to the respective consumer goods as well. If they become somehow visible on the price tag. I'm convinced many, many consumer decisions would be taken differently.

How could this be changed? The answer is not an easy one due to the problem of cost ownership. There is a principle problem in this context: private, internal cost you can allocate easily to the originator, to individuals following market mechanisms. External cost cannot be allocated to the originator, because they belong to public assets accessible for everybody; there isn't an addressable ownership in place to claim. Nature does not has a price tag, there are no cost known for air, water, a tree or soil. What is the value of a sun set... ? does it cost more than a cappuccino or a beer? ¹

A step in the right direction in making such external cost at least visible to end consumers is to have a separate sustainability tag on an article, a label, which insures, that the article was produced under environmentally sound conditions and was fairly traded. But here comes the next problem ... our smart business world has already discovered this labeling principal as a fantastic business opportunity. Currently a jungle of labels all over the world are popping up. Although in many cases there is a good attempt, organization and idea behind such a label, they are not anymore an effective support in a decision making process of a consumer, because definitions are not aligned and standardized. So, this in general good attempt is going to drift to a moneymaking, meaningless marketing spin. It would be an important step to consolidate this confusion and stop this eco-inflation. Less would be more ... international governance – politics - need to agree on a few, trustful, easy understandable and then well promoted labels, which cover the three major sustainability areas: social aspects like fair trade, environmental aspects and the health of the consumer. In the EU currently is program started, which tries to consolidation this mass of national green products which are not accepted in other EU countries. At least, a first good start.

As explained, economic growth in the old terms cannot be the magic engine anymore, envisioned to run faster or bigger year by year. What can a government do in terms of resource efficacy? There are good theories/proposals available to manage the consumption if a “resource productivity delta” gets monitored. It is defined, as “how much resources could be saved by efficacy.” If this resource productivity delta is bigger than the GDP delta of a country, its economy automatically would be on the right track. Then, year-by-year, the country will reduce its resource consumption, and shift the overshoot day not backwards, but forwards. This formula global governance needs to implement, track and report without exceptions. If a country does not follow this resource formula they have to pay a fee, a penalty or even compensation.

POSITION OF THE LEATHER INDUSTRY

After all these statements it is important to mirror the theory with the position of the leather industry regarding sustainability. The good thing is, our industry has a remarkable story to tell and leather is a material to be proud of, as frequently described by Prof. Mike Redwood, the founder of Leather Naturally⁵:

- Our basic material, hides and skins is a naturally, renewable substrate; if we now convert the majority of the chemicals used into a fossil free origin, the final leather article would be an ultimate sustainable material.
- In the final application leather normally substitutes for a synthetic material, and even lasts longer than the synthetic counterpart. Leather is a perfect material for repair in case of damage and will even extend its use. I remember when a leading airline had switched to a new edition in leather seats; the old seat covers – of course cleaned on a frequent base - have been in use for 12 years. This would be never possible with a synthetic seat cover material.
- Leather creates a lot of work places even downstream industries; particular in emerging countries; an extreme important factor for income and employment opportunity.
- Following best available technologies, leather can already be manufactured today with a very low impact to the environment and a significant reduction in energy consumption. The remaining pollution is sustainable, because it can be absorbed by the environment without any harm.
- Management of water consumption and solid waste are fully understood and can be handled efficiently. Water usage for 1 quarter meter of leather is less than 100 liters; in comparison, 1 quarter meter of blue jeans fabric requires up to 1,300 liters of water.
- The leather industry has already phased out critical chemicals many years ago; clear instructions are given to tanneries how to apply today's chemicals safely and how to use proper protection equipment. Today, the product line of a responsible chemical supplier fulfills all legal requirements and even the latest regulations of Material Restricted Substance List of the Roadmap to Zero-Initiative ZDHC. One of the biggest issues the industry faces in terms of chemicals, is the use of substances like simple salt.

So, while there are still more to be improved, a lot more to invent, we should not hide from it. We from the leather industry can be proud to have adapted a lot of the game changing manufacturing and processing steps, and this short list allows us already to see how much better leather is than plastic that comes from carbon deposits.⁵

CONCLUSIONS

Chart 6 visualize nicely the situation we are in today, in the 21st century. Our position is similar to the excavator, there isn't too much left that we can take from mother earth without harming ourselves!

The powerful "homo oeconomicus" from our generation has to progress into a successful "homo sustines" in the next generation. We, as we are sitting here, will neither win nor lose anymore, a natural collapse will not happen in the next 20 years. The only winners would be our kids and their following generation.

The biggest obstacle in this process of change is a very paradoxical thing: the vision of sustainability very often is fully understood and accepted adequately – I guess everyone in this room feels the same. However, if it comes to the point, to sharpen the vision, and breaking it down into concrete and precise actions, and coming even to conclusion for the personal life, it often clashes with so many different interests. Everyone wants to save his own benefits.

This is a terrible conflict, a "catch 22" so to say, which we and in particular the next generation need to break through. Up to now it seems to be still a non-negotiable imperative.³

Waiting for politicians and companies try to solve this conflict is definitely the wrong conclusion. Everyone can do a lot of things right and wrong, day by day, without scarifying life quality; and this will be my last message:

Let me try to give an allegoric comparison first. Always when I see a big anthill it comes up to my mind: "this is very similar



Chart 6. Excavator picture.

to our position in the world." Each single ant is so small as we as individuals are on our planet. It's all a matter of the perspective. The fascinating thing which can be observed in such an ant colony is, it seems to be all the ants are following an imaginary plan, specific rules. By this all together they are quite powerful and capable enough to build a big anthill.

Keeping this in mind I'm now ending my lecture with 10 real practical day-to-day examples for a sustainable life, 10 rules that we as individuals could or should respect:

1. Choosing healthy, fairly priced bio approved food in reasonable amounts instead of eating to excess unhealthy unbalanced diets; this is false economy and not sustainable. Less is more... make sure if possible, that the food you buy even is fairly traded. Sometime there are labels for this.
2. Do not throw away good food; in our western world up to 50% of the food is ending up not in stomach's, but in garbage; this is a shame and not sustainable.
3. If you can afford it, sponsor the education of a godchild in an emerging country; it costs only one USD/day if you sign up at a respected and official organization. Once a year you get a nice report from a local agent about your godchild, which tells you what all have been done with your little investment. Often there is a photo or a painted picture from the child included in the letter together with some thankful words from the parents. It is not only a good investment; it can be even a nice sustainability-education element in your family and a learning for the kids.
4. Educate the younger generation, our children and even our grand children about the necessary change of mindset whenever it is possible and appropriate. They are the decision makers of tomorrow and need to inherit the new thinking.
5. Rather than spending time in shopping malls focusing on further consumption only, enjoy family life in the open countryside surrounded by nature; that is life quality in a sustainable form.
6. Save water and energy in your home; invest in a good insulation, pay a little bit more and switch – if possible - to a green energy provider, who generates energy from wind and water. If it makes sense at your location invest in solar panels, possibly you will be amazed about the return on investment.
7. Pay attention and take your time to first reuse and then recycle as much as possible from your household waste. It is amazing how many resources can be used again or used for another process. Here even the leather industry still has a big area of improvement.

8. Speaking about cycling... sustainable is also using a bicycle for your personal transportation, even a bus or a train whenever it makes sense, instead of always taking a car.
9. Treat yourself to a good quality leather jacket and use a durable leather bag rather than seemingly cheaper synthetic alternatives, which don't last long. The genuine leather article is a sustainable and sound investment one which you can enjoy over its long life.
10. Last but not least, another important hint; think global, act and drink local! For example a good locally brewed beer, even if not tasting superior, is certainly much more sustainable than a globally shipped mineral water or any other beverage.

Coming back to the allegoric comparison of the ants: if everybody would follow these 10 rules like the ants are following their imaginary plan, the world would be much cleaner and nicer and we wouldn't have to bother about the future so much anymore. As Mahatma Gandhi once said, "Be the change you want to see in the world."

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ALCA for the invitation to give this prestigious lecture, Stahl USA for their generous sponsorship of the event, and my colleague Chris Tysoe, who helped me to put my thoughts into formal English language.

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Dietrich Tegtmeier receives Wilson Award from Andy Rhein.

PRESENTATION AND ACCEPTANCE OF THE 2015 O'FLAHERTY AWARD

by

GEORGE STOCKMAN AND CAROL ADCOCK

George Stockman

The Fred O'Flaherty Service Award recognizes ALCA members who have made significant contributions to the Association or to the leather and leather products industries through the ALCA. This year's selection committee consisted of Chris Koelblinger, Gary Rennerfeldt and me. We actually volunteered for this assignment, with the idea that it was about time that we recognize Carol Adcock for her outstanding and longstanding contributions to the organization. Not only was the selection process an easy one, the drafting of this introduction was also a simple task. I sent requests to the many past officers of the ALCA asking for their thoughts about Carol's importance to the Association. Their response is best summarized, "Carol is the ALCA."

I would like to offer some of the many thoughtful replies I received from past officers:

- Carol has been a valuable asset as Executive Secretary of the ALCA for the past 16 years in ways that are too numerous to mention and in ways that we will never fully understand.
- I particularly appreciated how she would go the 'extra mile' to manage the textbook, printing, and shipping costs, so that we could continue to offer an affordable education product to our students.
- Carol's resume showed that she was exceedingly qualified; moreover she came highly recommended by Dr. Dennis Shelly. I knew immediately we had made the right choice. At a very difficult time for the ALCA she dealt with a myriad of problems, competently, efficiently and quietly; she went on to make the organization what it is today.
- Like every other President / VP / VP-Elect, Carol's dedicated assistance was the key factor in my ability to meet deadlines and remain on track for the production of the Annual Meetings.
- I was also impressed by how Carol was one who put the organization first. For example, she was dedicated to saving us money on flights she had to take to attend the conventions. She would book the lowest possible airfare even when it required multiple stops. One flight home from the convention involved four flights!
- Carol was instrumental to the ALCA in our move from our former location on the Texas Tech campus to the Lubbock offices. (We were very fortunate to have her assistance and organization skills to make this happen.)
- As some of you remember, the year 1999 proved to be a very challenging year in the history of the ALCA. There was a secretary who made off with organization funds, the disruptive move of our offices out of Cincinnati, and an attack by a major international leather magazine that considered the ALCA had lost its relevance.
- September of 1999 was also a time of good fortune for ALCA, with the serendipitous selection of Carol Adcock as Secretary. When Carol was hired in Sept 1999 (has it been that long?), she quickly started putting organization and structure into our operations. She put our journals in order, assisted greatly with logistics of meetings and conventions, created job descriptions.
- During the planning and orchestration of the Washington, DC - joint ALCA and IULTCS meeting we were extremely lucky to have Carol to pull this very large and highly visible and successful international event off without a hiccup. Again - largely due to Carol's exceptional capabilities, this in spite of Carol's being called away at the last moment to attend personal matters at home! That meeting also showed how we can't live without her. A good handful of us stepped in to try and cover her duties and all combined we barely held it together.
- Because of her good fiscal sense, she has kept the ALCA financially stable particularly during difficult economic times.
- She is the most honest, trustworthy, dependable and straightforward person that I have ever worked with in any organization.
- I always view her as the mother hen. She keeps us in line and directs us down the correct path; she is the one thing in the ALCA you can count on. So many of us come and go and she is the only real staple in it all. She is the go to person for everything. Nothing slips through the cracks with that woman!

- On a personal note she is a devoted mother, grandmother, wife, and daughter, who keeps her family on a steady course through the vicissitudes of life. Finally, I am honored to say that Carol is my friend.
- I don't know how she does it all. Throw in her smile and southern drawl and she is quite a lady! She is my friend.
- Her kindheartedness is second to none, and her personal words of advice remain with me to this day.
- Her openness and good humor soon drew her into the hearts of ALCA members. She is not above "stirring" things a little from time-to-time – this helps to raise awareness and get decisions made – but she is always open to different viewpoints and goes out of her way to help.
- Today, Carol is the ALCA. (However, she does kindly allow some members to carry the title of Council Member, Vice President, or President for a while). Thank you Carol for all you do, and most of all for being the embodiment and spirit of the ALCA.

Carol Adcock

After nearly 16 years with this Association, I really thought there weren't any more surprises, much like a marriage. However you have truly surprised me in naming me the 2015 recipient of the Fred O'Flaherty Service Award.

Dietrich Tegtmeyer has used my words for the ALCA in that we are a family. A few years ago while leaving a convention and traveling to the airport with John Rodden and Scott Beloli, Scott said that the ALCA was like a family, and the convention was the family reunion. I was touched that Scott felt this way, and I realized I too felt that way. The ALCA has taken me in and made me a part of its family. For this I am truly grateful. This job has become so much more to me than just a paycheck as it is truly an extended family for me.

Not only is this convention special to me as the recipient of this service award, but it is also very special because I believe we had the greatest number of past presidents in my history in attending the conventions. We had ten past presidents with us this year. I would like to take this opportunity to introduce the past presidents I have had the privilege of working with over my tenure with the Association in order of their presidencies.

First, there is our distinguished Editor, Bob White, who was President in August of 1999 when I was hired by the ALCA. The ALCA was undergoing a very tough time and had no existing Executive Secretary when I came on board. I have been told that I was not the first choice of the person in charge of collecting resumes, but some how Bob, the other officers, and Council selected me.

The next President was Elton Hurlow. Elton is truly the one who created job descriptions for many of our positions including the Convention Committee, the Officers and the Council. He really helped to get us organized.

After Elton was someone who I call friend, Maryann Taylor. She is the kindest person in the world. She and I have always marveled over how God watches over the ALCA. There aren't enough words to describe how I feel about Maryann and her gentle soul.

The next three presidents I worked with are not here but are still a great part of our past history. They are Jerry Levy, Dean Didato and Rodney Hammond. All three were great to work with just as all other presidents of the ALCA.

Our next President still works hard for the ALCA as Convention Chair this year. His name is Doug Morrison. Rodney had to resign as President of the Association after only a few months, and Doug was gracious enough to fill the vacancy. Doug had already been President of the Association so he knew just what to do to keep the Association running smoothly.

Next came a quiet and unassuming man whom some might not know was President, Nathan Mullinix. He was wonderful to work with and still is a great supporter of the ALCA as evidenced by his sponsorship of the second technical session.

Our next President, Dennis Shelly, passed away several years ago. He was the one who asked me to apply for this job and then didn't put me as his number one choice for the position. In spite of that, Dennis and I were great friends. He loved the ALCA and supported it 100%.

Next was Bill Marmer who is now retired, and we don't see him at convention any more. After Bill was Steve Yanek. Although Steve is no longer in the leather industry, he continues to be a part of the Education Subcommittee and is responsible for one of our newest members who is here with us tonight, David Karon. David met Steve while taking the Leather Technology Correspondence Course and was encouraged by him to get to know the ALCA by attending its convention.

Although he had to leave, we did see the next President, Dave LeBlanc, for a few hours yesterday. He is no longer in the leather industry, but he still manages to drop in and keep up with us.

Our next President was Craig Keyser. Craig was able to attend most of the convention, but he had to leave this morning for the long drive home. Craig was a great supporter of the Association and its technical committees. He tried very hard to keep them vital and adding value to being a member of the ALCA.

Our next Past President is my go to guy. Whenever we're in trouble and need money, he is the guy I call. He is Andy

Rhein. Andy is also Chair of our Ways and Means Committee. If you noticed the significant drop in the principle of our investment account, it is because we had to take funds out of the account to pay some convention attrition a few years ago. Andy helped us through that process and kept us solvent. He always tells me not to worry about money for the Association, as he will take care of it as he always does.

Our next Past President was President when we were at Pinehurst in 2013. He is Steve Gilberg. Steve too was great to work with like all the others.



Carol Adcock receives the O'Flaherty Service Award.

To make my life easier and help my memory, the next Past President had the same name as the prior one, namely Steve. Yes, our next president was Steve Lange. Steve is a great guy who made work very enjoyable.

I would be remiss if I did not include our current President, Sarah Drayna. I have already worked with Sarah for the same amount of time I usually work with our presidents; however, Sarah is our first president to have a two-year term since we amended our bylaws in 2013. She will be our President for another year. I look forward to continuing to work with Sarah.

I thank you for this great honor and making me a small part of the leather industry.



Maryann Taylor and Dr. Ellie Brown with ALCA Service Award certificates.

PRESENTATION AND ACCEPTANCE OF THE 2015 ALSOP AWARD

by

CHENG-KUNG LIU AND ELTON HURLLOW

Cheng-Kung Liu

Mr. President, members of the American Leather Association, and honored guests. The ALSOP Award was established 76 years ago by ALCA council in 1939 and is given in the memory of the late W. K. Alsop. LANXESS Corporation has generously donated the annual prize to be awarded for outstanding scientific or technical contributions to the leather industry. This year (2015) ALOP selection committee (consisted of Beat Schelling, Jose Luis Garcia Gallegos, and C.-K. Liu) has unanimously chosen Mr. Elton Hurlow of Buckman Laboratories to be the recipient of Alsop Award. This is largely due to Elton's many contributions to leather science and technology, particularly his work on the antibiotics in hide preservation and the fungal growth on wetblue have made significant impact to leather industry.

Elton is originally from South Africa. His leather experience started at Rhodes University in Grahamstown, South Africa where he worked on an environmental project at the Leather Industries Research Institute (now closed). After graduating with a MSc degree, he moved to the USA to take up a leather research position at the Pfister & Vogel tannery in Milwaukee. Experience in production and international sales followed, and during this time Elton also completed an MBA at the University of Wisconsin. Elton moved to Canada as General Manager of AR Clarke Tannery in Toronto following its acquisition by the US Leather Holdings (USLH) group. As the USLH group started unwinding – with the North American leather business moving from USA to China - Elton joined the chemical supply industry, taking a position at Buckman in 1997. He currently holds the position of Global Marketing Development manager for Buckman's leather industry interests.

Elton has served a term as President of the ALCA and President of the IULTCS. He remains active in professional industry associations. Elton serves on the executive committee of the Leather Working Group and the IULTCS. He serves on the Editorial board of JALCA and gave the John Arthur Wilson Memorial (JAW) lecture in 2013. He has published a number of technical papers and is a regular contributor to industry magazines and makes presentations at industry Conferences and Seminars as follows:

1. *The Value of Leather as a Component Brand*, 54th John Arthur Wilson Lecture. *JALCA* 108, 319–335, Jun 2013.
2. *Biocide Regulations – Implications for the Leather Industry*, Presentation at 2nd Freiberg Leather Days, Germany and SLTC Convention, Northampton, UK, Apr 2013.

3. *Development of CHED Fungicide for the Leather Industry*, Paper presented at FLAQTIC Convention, Uruguay, Oct 2012.
4. *Investigation of Red Stains on Wetblue Leather*; Proceedings of 31st IULTCS Congress, Valencia, Sept 2011.
5. *A New Antifungal Agent for the Leather Industry*: S-Hexyl-S-Chloromethyl-cyanodithiocarbamate; *JSLTC* 95, 7-10, 2011; (Also presented at 8th AICLST, Kolkata, 2011).
6. *Fungal Growth on Wetblue: Methods to Measure Impact on Leather Quality*; Proceedings of 30th IULTCS Congress, Beijing, Oct 2009 (Reprinted *JALCA* 105, 1-7, 2010).
7. *Antibiotics in Hide Preservation and Bacterial Control*. *JALCA* 102, 62-67, 2007.
8. *Emission of Fungicides from Furniture Leather* *JSLTC* 89, 210-213, 2005.
9. *Monitoring Methods for Effective Microorganism Control*. LGR Lecture, March 2004.
10. *Microorganism Control During Leather Manufacture*, Coauthor Chapter 20: Leather Technicians Pocketbook 339-352, 1999.
11. *Effect of Polyphosphate Chain Length on Shrinkage Temperature*. *JALCA*, 81, 197-207, 1986.

Elton lives in Memphis Tennessee with his wife Jennifer who is a wound expert – she heals skin, Elton tans it. Their daughter Angela is a second year student at Rhodes College.

Now, please join me to welcome Elton to give his Alsop Award acceptance speech.

Elton Hurlow

C.-K., thank you for your kind words, I am deeply honored by this recognition.

Generally, you can separate people working in the leather industry into two groups. Those who are continuing a family business or tradition, or those who got into the industry by accident. I fall into the latter category and am grateful that I have.

My first job out of university was making explosives and propellants for the armaments industry, this sounds exciting and fun, but in reality it is very boring and conservative - one cannot afford mistakes! So as a young chemist I decided to continue graduate studies and found a paid research position

with the Leather Industries Research Institute linked to Rhodes University in South Africa. This accident (or serendipity?) led to a life career in what must be one of the most fascinating industries. Where else does one start with something that is smelly and putrefying and then end up, through hard work and creativity, with a product that is unique, really useful, even sensual, and one that is sought after by the world's top brands. Leathermaking has a lot of traditions and contradictions, it is challenging, complex, and some of it not fully understood. But, there is amongst those who work in the industry, a universal love of the end product and a passion unites all involved in leather worldwide.

I landed up in the USA in the late 1980's at Pfister & Vogel tannery in Milwaukee – a tannery that many of you know well. My career since then has included research, production, special projects, leather sales, and tannery management, and more recently work in the chemical supply sector. Much of this time has included a lot of international travel. One of the things that I have valued most during this journey is the unique and fascinating people that I have had the pleasure to meet and work with, worldwide. I have also had the opportunity and enjoyed participating in the leather industry organizations, such as ALCA and IULTCS. These are good and necessary organizations. Not just for the work that they do on behalf of the industry, but it provides an opportunity for those of us in the industry to find an enhanced purpose in what we do; we interact with likeminded people, exchange ideas, and form friendships that affirm our life's work and the professional decisions we have made. The industry has allowed me to



Cheng-Kung Liu presents Alsop Award to Elton Hurlow.

indulge wide-ranging interests. In a world that values specialists, I have always thought of myself as more of a generalist. I do not consider myself particularly expert in any specific area of leather production, but I have tried to contribute where I can and feel affirmed by just being part of industry discussions. If this award is recognition that something I have done or said has been found interesting or of value for others, then I am most grateful. Thank you to the company Buckman for allowing me to indulge my interests, thank you to each one the members of the ALCA for your friendship and for allowing me to be part of the conversation, and for this award that celebrates Alsop – a true scientist.

CLOSING REMARKS BY THE ALCA PRESIDENT

Sarah Drayna

Thank you to all that helped put this conference together:

Doug Morrison- your attention to every detail and excellent communication are appreciated by all. This convention has flowed perfectly. The evening activities provided a great opportunity for networking and friendship building. Thank you for all your efforts. A special thank you as well to Jim Haggerty and Simon Yarwood for their continued support of the Fun Run.

David Peters- What an impressive and diverse group of papers you assembled this year. Truly interesting from beginning to end. The sessions were full each day and that is a testament to the interest you have created with your speakers. Let's see how you top yourself next year!

To all of our speakers and sponsors- thank you, thank you, thank you! You are the reason we are all here this week.

To our Vice President, councilors, editor, editorial board, technical committee chair, and committee members, thank you for all your efforts throughout the year. Time is a valuable resource and the fact that you freely share yours with the ALCA to keep the organization going is greatly appreciated.

Carol Adcock- What words best capture how I feel about you? You walk on water... You are the wind beneath my wings... You had me at hello! It is the greatest pleasure to work with you. Your dedication, drive and heart are what make the ALCA what it is today. One of the main drivers for my volunteer commitments to the ALCA is knowing that I get to work with you. You are the glue that holds this group together and I speak on behalf of everyone when I sincerely thank you for all you do.

A Look to the Future ...

A review of the technical session topic is a perfect mirror of what we are seeing in the leather industry in the United States. The first convention I attended in 2005 was filled primarily with technical research topics. This week's sessions included such topics, but they also added global market perspectives, regulatory and legal implications and of course, sustainability. Our industry is changing, and the leadership team of the ALCA is working to make that change as well. We have formed the sustainability committee (headed by Beat Schelling) as one such response. The first topic the committee undertook was that of restricted substance lists. As you heard in Steve Lange's presentation today this is a complicated issue



President Sarah Drayna



Vice President David Peters

and we all recognize that alone we will likely accomplish nothing, but if we come together in one global united front we can face this challenge head on. To start this effort we held a meeting today with several wet blue tanners, representatives from the LWG, the IULTCS and the ALCA. We are defining an action plan of how we can move forward together and combine resources to reach our end goal. There will surely be many updates we provide to our membership on this topic and all outcomes will be shared via our website or email communication.

The officers and councilors will hold a call in July to identify additional projects to undertake for 2015/2016. We have several ideas of what other challenges we can work to overcome, but I would like to invite each of you to come to us with additional ideas as to where the ALCA can make a difference in our industry.

I would like to take a moment to discuss our 2016 technical Program. We start today the process of putting together the group of speakers for 2016. We have learned from the past that it is never too early to start. Our goal is to have this program put together earlier in the year so that there is less last minute chasing of abstracts and papers. So I open it up to the membership to go to David with suggestions on speakers and topics. If you know you will have something interesting to present in 2016 then please reach out to David by year-end. As Technical Program Chairs we often exhaust our pool of resources putting the program together. David is the lucky man to get to do this in back to back years. We could see how deep his resource pool is, but I prefer to call on our membership to help us identify those individuals that would add value to our organization by presenting next year.

Last, but not least, let me comment on member involvement in the ALCA. We are always looking to engage our members more. That may be by helping out with one of our sustainability projects or it may be by serving on a committee. I showed several committee appointments during our business meeting today. Do any of them sound interesting to you?

Several of them require very little time but play a big role in our organization. In about 11 months I will be looking for a brand new set of candidates to fill those committees. Please reach out to me if you might be interested in taking on such a task. We will also be looking for a sports chair for 2016 so please let Doug Morrison know if you might be interested.

In closing, I would like to thank each of you for taking time to attend this year and hope that we met and perhaps exceeded your expectations. I wish each of you a safe journey home and hope to see you in 2016!