

EU Sustainable Energy Week and Energy Days 2017 Brahma Kumaris contributions in Europe

This year the Brahma Kumaris in Germany, Denmark, Belgium and Spain contributed to raising awareness to the importance and impact of climate change in our world today.

EMPOWERING PEOPLE FOR A WORLD IN TRANSITION , 14 JUNE, BERLIN, GERMANY

The event opened with key note speeches from:

Golo J. Pilz, Adviser Renewable Energy, Brahma Kumaris and World Renewal Spiritual Trust. He

started by making the connection between meditation as a practice to build consciousness and climate change which calls for a change of mindset, diet and lifestyle. He also shared that with a clear vision and aim can make the impossible possible. India-One, Solar Power Plant in Rajasthan is such an example and it recently went live.



Dr Marco Bischof, Future Science & Medicine, European Creative Centre Weissensee, pointed

out that sustainability is usually understood in relation to material things. However on the road towards developing sustainable lifestyles, it is necessary to include in the term "sustainability" the non-material factors eg; the ability be non-egocentric and the learn to self-regulate discernment (start to live values). Dr Marco reminded us of the deep connection between ones world view and perception.



Sonja Ohlsson, Meditation Teacher and International Co-ordinator of the Brahma Kumaris Environment Initiative, built on the thread of Dr Bischof's thoughts : regarding the connectedness between a spiritual consciousness and sustainability. Sonja stated that the experience of connectedness is very important, because when one feels that one belongs to a whole system just like to belong to a family, there is automatically a sense of care and responsibility for the whole system.



Prof. Dr Ilan Chaby, Head of Strategic Research, Institute for Advanced Sustainability Studies,

reflected on the relationship between consciousness, collective behaviour change and sustainable futures. Society is a system and an environment and as a complex system it cannot be separated one from the other but often people do not realise this. It is the how each individual defines their relationship with the environment that leads to their sense of urgency, sense of reality of its condition and responsibility towards it. Further Prof.

Dr Chaby, pointed out, it is important that we develop a sense of the "kinship of interdependence" what happens in all the unseen relationships, eg: to all the people involved in the production of my cloth? In this aspect consciousness, awareness and adaptive learning are the key ideas that need to be addressed.



After the keynote speeches 4 workshops were introduced:

1. Tracing Consciousness: What are the characteristics of an earth-loving consciousness and how does it feel? How to awaken and foster this consciousness?



2. World view and collective consciousness: Which collective consciousness could lead to systemic change?

3. From consciousness to implementation: What role can consciousness play in enabling or enhancing behaviour change towards sustainable futures in diverse communities? How does consciousness, world views and mental models

influence meaning making and decision making on systemic risks - eg: climate change?

4. Vision: In which world do we want to live?

5. Which consciousness is the foundation for such a world? How can spirituality help to develop my creative potential? What is my personal contribution towards a positive transformation?



After the workshops presentations were made on what had been discussed. The outcomes of this event along with the new friendships been made will be taken up further to create a larger conference in September this year.

THE ART OF A POSITIVE WORLD VIEW IN TURBULENT TIMES

16 June, Berlin, Germany



Speaker Golo J. Pilz : Adviser for Renewable Energy of the Brahma Kumaris and World Renewal Spiritual Trust, Head of the India-One Project (www.india-one.net).

Golo covered three very different areas. He started by presenting an overview of the complexity of climate change referring to recent research on the development of climate change and showing the clear urgency needed for a global energy transition. He followed on by giving an overview of the different alternative renewable energy solutions on offer. He also showcased the work done in the India-One project. Finally he shared a new perspective on the global challenges of climate change pointing towards the inner shift individuals need to make. The shift required lies in a change of consciousness and attitudes and to start thinking differently to initiate a just and green transition.



OUTDOOR MEDITATION FOR THE ENVIRONMENT **18th June, Copenhagen, Denmark**

In order to nourish both our souls and the planet with peaceful thoughts an enthusiastic group of meditators gathered in Frederiksberg Park. It was a quiet and still Sunday morning in this old royal park in the middle of Copenhagen. The gathering of around 35 people was welcomed by Sonja Ohlsson from the Brahma Kumaris and Noura Kindler from Metfree Mondays Denmark. Karen Blincoe, Director ChoraConnection shared about the importance of making the Sustainable Development Goals part of our daily lives. She emphasized Goal 16 about Peaceful Living. During the event such a powerful atmosphere of peace and compassion was created that busy people just passing by commented on it. It was a very powerful day that saw 3 events merging together: EU Sustainable Energy Week, late World Environment Day, International UN day of Yoga and Brahma Kumaris World Peace Meditation every 3rd Sunday of the month.



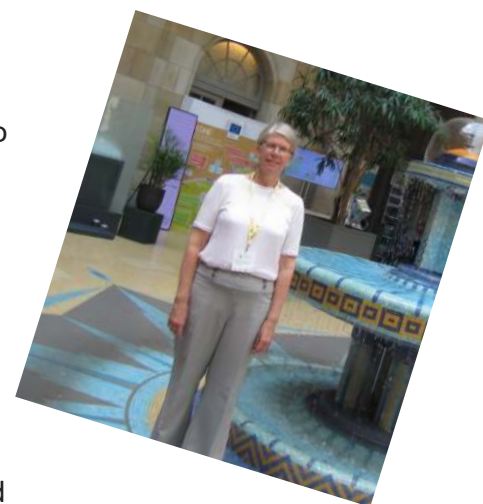
Speakers Corner, Residence Palace, Brussels - Clean Energy for all Human Beings **22 June, Sonja Ohlsson, gave a presentation at “Speakers Corner” during the EUSEW Conference. Title: Clean-Energy Responsible Leadership**



Sonja shared the that “our basic premise is; if we want to change the climate, we have to change lifestyle and therefore we need to change our mindset! She raised the question, Why are we not changing? For example the sun provides 1000 times more energy than we need why don’t we use it? Because we need strong leadership for the future, leadership in setting examples, leadership in values, leadership in more innovative solutions for a sustainable future. Sonja shared that recently there was an article published by Sustainia, it stated we live in a leadership constrained world, it is one of the scarcest resources of our times A leaders ability to create the needed action begins with a radical shift in mindset. Leadership today is in the community, we have to work together to tackle climate change it is not a “one mans show” nor is it up to one country only.

Are you fit to work in groups and work together?

Are your listening and tolerance skills up-to-date? I take the example of our own organization the Brahma Kumaris, we have gone from a purely spiritual organization to a sustainable organization and we are big 8,000 centres run by volunteers. Because of climate change we feel as a spiritual organization we have to walk the talk and start with the self so we setup an environmental initiative. We started 25 years ago to drive solar energy research in India and today we have the oldest running solar steam system in India. In 1999 we were the first in India to cook food on a solar steam system on a large scale, 38,000 meals per day. Our latest research project a 1 MW solar thermal powerplant has just been completed, it was the idea of one individual, many opposed investing money into steel and technology in a meditation school, but the team kept their vision and values and the project took 2-3 years longer because of a non-corruption policy! The current climate change situation has given enough proof that we can not afford selfish values anymore, where only I or my part of the world benefits, we are interconnected whether we want it or not!



WORKSHOP : CREATE A CLIMATE FOR CHANGE!

22 June, Evening - Antwerp, Belgium

Sonja Ohlsson, International Co-Ordinator of the Brahma Kumaris Environment Initiative, facilitated the Change-



maker Workshop on Global and Individual Change, on inner and outer climate. It was a moment of great synchronicity as it was an exceptionally warm day. Sonja inspired the participants to reflect on change : Am I ahead of change or do I wait till situations force me to change? It was an open dialogue with questions and interaction on change, resistance and creativity. All attendees left recharged and motivated.

CONSCIOUSNESS & CLIMATE CHANGE - RESPONSIBLE LEADERSHIP

23 June, Brahma Kumaris Centre, Brussels

Lasting change starts with the individual - with a change in consciousness. Nature is now demanding of us as individuals, businesses and governments to change.

What is the necessary shift needed for a positive transition to take place?

What are the characteristics of a consciousness which nurtures sustainable decisions, behaviour and leadership in contrast to material, fragmented mindset?

What fosters a new more sustainable consciousness, attitude and lifestyle?



The evening provided a lively dialogue and many deep questions were asked from the gathering. **Julie Nazerali, EU Lawyer, Sonja Ohlsson, International Co-ordinator of Brahma Kumaris Environment Initiative, Anders Marvik, Vice President Statoil EU Office, Brussels.**

Each participant shared the importance of leadership as a way forward. A leadership that is strong and real. A leadership that includes others as nothing can be

achieved alone. Nature does not have conflict its an ecosystem that co-operates, take the example of the body it is a natural ecosystem and you don't see a kidney trying to be a liver! each plays their part accurately like in nature, but what we see happening through climate change eg: insects come from other places because it might be too hot etc, the result is that whole systems can be destroyed this is the result of one insect that has changed places. Today there are over 66,000 books on leadership, imagine!

Anders was reflecting that the biggest changes to be seen today are in leadership, he shared the message from one of Statoil's CEO's who said that all companies speak of values, but we have to do more, we have to live them, regardless of ones position in the company or salary we need to start using them practically, in fact our assessments are based 50% on how much we use the values in the working environment and the other 50% is on performance even though we are putting billions of dollars into renewables unless we change our attitudes and consciousness then nothing can really change? So we are seeing this positive change from the leadership side.

We need to remember that we are all part of the problem, we are all responsible, it's not about fighting for climate change, blaming others for the problem, no, we all have to take responsibility and leadership in this, because we are "in this together" regardless of where we work. We just completed our report for 2050, and what this tells us is that, the world can get back into balance, the world is not doomed, but there is the need for all of us to change and take responsibility, each one has to take the initiative, not wait for someone else to do it, otherwise we are doomed! and it's not about fighting with others about this or blaming no, we have to do something!

The audience sat together and crafted some deep questions that were taken up by the panel. It was a very meaningful evening enjoyed by all. The event was live-streamed on Facebook and received many watchers and likes.

Healthy Mind, Healthy Planet **Palma, Spain 29th June 2017**



The last program dedicated to the EU Sustainable Energy Week from the Brahma Kumaris took place in Palma, the main city of Majorca. Around 50 people had gathered this beautiful summer evening in the Cultural Center Sa Nostra in the middle of the old town. Ramon Ribalta from Spain introduced the program Healthy Mind, Healthy Planet with Golo J. Pilz as the main speaker. We started on a serious note, discussing how climate change affects all walks of life. He shared about the

importance of renewable energy and how Brahma Kumaris in India has taken a lead in the use and research on solar energy. Golo underlined the importance of changing habits - in lifestyle, in use of renewable energy and in our thought patterns.

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