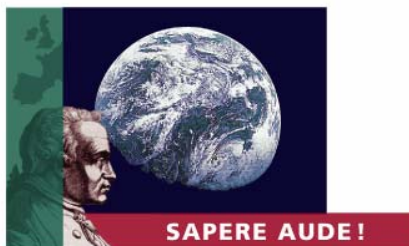


Freiburg Kant- Foundation



“We hold these truths to be self-evident....“
(*Declaration of Independence, USA 1776*)

BONN MANIFESTO FOR THE PROTECTION AND SUSTAINABLE USE OF COMMON GOODS

“Maximize profit!”- that has been the success measure of civilization in dealing with natural and public resources. The price is already evident: climate change, famine, wars for resources, mass migration, social inequalities and the destruction of the cultural and biological variety on our planet.

Should it continue this way?

The 9th CBD-Conference paints a portrait of the condition of our natural basics of life that confronts us with the rapid destruction of biological diversity and with a climate that is out of balance; the same results were only recently published in the 4th IPCC-report and at climate conferences in 2007.

We experience the progressive concentration of economic power and disproportional increase of wealth by multimillionaires next to a simultaneous famine in large parts of the world's population. This leads us to the question concerning the structural, social, economical and political causes of this development and the issue of dealing with them. – The destructive freedom to treat local, regional and global **natural common goods**- such as the oceans, lakes and rivers, virgin forests and vegetation, raw materials and the atmosphere- as **“no-man’s-land,”** and to use **public common goods**- such as traffic- and healthcare systems- as a **“maneuverable mass”**, mostly for the purpose of maximizing private wealth, has to finally come to an end. In the age of economic globalization, a **new global “Social Contract”** as well as a **“Declaration of Independence”** against antiquated property and power structures is required for reasons of **“global domestic policy.”** The survival of mankind cannot be secured without justice in the use of natural and public common goods. To those goods, next to our natural heritage, also belongs mankind's cultural heritage. We need legislation that will protect the common goods and, at the same time, secure justice in accessing, distributing, and generating the use of resources.

The great philosopher **Immanuel Kant** offers in his *Philosophy of Law* and the chapter entitled **The Universal Right of Mankind** a concise legislation towards such demands. He says: “All nations originally hold a community of the soil” This fundamental thought based on natural law can nowadays be applied to the whole biosphere. Social agreements and rules have to be fundamentally adjusted to the necessities of a globalized survival community. In this case one could be guided by the “Golden Rule”, which can be found in all cultures, and which has been expressed by Kant in the form of the **Categorical Imperative**: **“Act only according to that maxim by which you can at the same time will that it should become the universal law ”**

In this spirit the present Manifest understands itself as an enlightened, European voice. We want to contribute to a debate on basic principles about the importance, the use, and the preservation of common goods.

We demand:

1. that the **priority of fundamental rights of every citizen of this world** to life, and physical and psychological integrity and development be politically, judicially and legally secured from private power- and property interests - **for the purpose of protecting their natural, cultural and socioeconomic base of life.**
2. that **all** people, in international solidarity, respect *the biological and cultural diversity* as **common property** and protect **the rights of various communities** which preserve such goods; and that they **ward off the destruction** of these communities' respective space of life and culture.
3. that **climate protection**, which has in fact been declared a **public goal** at German and European level, is **extended to further common goods** and embodied in a law (compare German Constitution Article 20a)
4. that **these goals be realized through national and European legislation, and**, furthermore, through **international negotiations in a UN-Convention for the protection of common goods ("Umbrella Convention")**, which should be **based on: the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Framework Convention on Climate Change, the UNESCO-Convention on cultural diversity, the general and specific human rights, the UN-Declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples and the Aarhus Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice, as well as on the earth Charter**
5. that **sustainable development** at the **international level** in the case of undeniably **global, natural common goods** (airspace, oceans, polar areas) be guided and encouraged through **users' fees** (see WBGU- special certificate)
6. **the prohibition and outlawing of patenting life** (e.g. enforcement of §2 of the German patent law) as well as **sanctions against the culprits of the increasing loss of the diversity** of species, kinds and races **through pollution and** systematic, i.e. reckless, **displacement.**
7. **the prohibition and outlawing of the privatization and commercialization of the socio-cultural common good** of a **constitutional monopoly on legitimate violence** (e.g. *sovereign rights of police and military*)
8. the implementation of **political requirements on all levels for the protection of common goods in a subsidiary manner** (in Germany, for example, by using the existing federal divisions of communities, states and federation up to the level of the EU); **in addition to this** we demand **concern for those affected locally**, and the **establishment of environment councils and fiduciary committees**, which are independent from private economy and political parties, have **scientific and civic representation**, and **should be heard concerning all decisions dealing with common goods.**
9. **the Veto-right for representatives of those affected locally, of environment councils, and of fiduciary committees regarding plans of socially or ecologically incompatible privatization of public goods** (e.g. traffic- and supply systems); we also ask for **the Veto-right for indigenous peoples and local communities, as well as for the local, national and international public** in dealing with private or state operations (i.e. the assignment of private concessions referring to common goods which did not prove their social and ecological tolerability), as well as in dealing with human rights issues.
10. **the respect for the rights of indigenous peoples and local communities**, especially their right for free, well-informed consent regarding decisions about their land, their resources and their knowledge; we demand **mechanisms for the punctual information and effective participation of those inhabitants concerned**, which should make possible independent legal, scientific and technical advice and affordable access to just decisions regarding their common goods.
11. the legislation for the **use of resources** according to *norms of obligation towards public welfare* and towards the *principle of prevention.*
12. the compensation for **the consumption or destruction of common goods according to the principle of responsibility.**

13. that the *protection of common goods* be the object of lawsuits **also in front of international law courts**, such the *European Court of Justice* or rather the *International Court of Justice*, and that serious violations are brought before the International Criminal Court.
14. that the **UN-convention on biological diversity** be established as an international authority on common goods and also that it be strengthened, together with further **international authorities on human rights, the environment, and common goods**, in relation the World Trade Organization (WTO) in such a way, that they are placed **at least at the same level as the WTO** regarding their authority, liability and self-assertion.

Please support this concern of mankind with your signature of the Manifesto, available on www.kantstiftung.de! A memorandum-version of the Manifesto with further developed arguments is also available on www.kantstiftung.de
(Manfred Ladwig, Berthold Lange; Freiburger Kant-Stiftung, www.kantstiftung.de)

The undersigned: