



**European
Partners for the
Environment**

European Union's Metamorphosis.

Rome March 2017

By Raymond Van Ermen, Advisor to the EPE President. 2nd January 2017.

Summary.

Rome 2017 should be the launch of a "Movement Transforming Europe through Agenda 2030". The moment when state and non-state actors affirm their vision of a "transformed" European Union to meet the Objectives of Sustainable Development (SDGs) and those of the Paris Climate Agreement both approved by all Member States, open a "new development cycle" for Europe and its partners, implement a joint action plan of non-state and state actors "SDGs and Climate". It will so be demonstrated in these times of anxiety that, based on the SDGs and ambitious climate commitments, the succession of the political, financial and economic leadership of the Anglo-Saxon States (United States and Great Britain) is there. It is necessary to mobilize in Europe, create new alliances with the 'resisters' in the United States and elsewhere, build an effective coalition of bridges, increase resilience and innovation, in support of 'champions of the new world'. It will also be necessary and above all to change gear, create a scale effect that will accelerate the transition while we are in a race against the clock. This will imply that all types of non-state actors (Regions, Cities, Enterprises, Finance, Trade Unions, NGOs, Churches) are opening up to new forms of action and that every agent of change is ready to change business model, way of cooperating transversally and influencing both the institutions of the European Union and the market. This will require a concerted reflection on the method. For example, there is an abyss between on the one hand the means available to switch the market and finance as politics in the digital era and on the other hand their use by the crowd. Also, a new EU narrative presenting a vision supported by the green leaders of business and finance, *Generation S*, should be submitted to the Heads of State and Government. As well, the Pax Americana in the Mediterranean as in the Middle East as contemplated by the successive US presidents from Carter to Obama has completely failed. We propose to set an objective of an alliance of the riparian states of three seas (from Russia to Morocco, including Iran and Turkey) and the European Union in an "Alliance of 3 Seas", inspired by the Helsinki agreements, for the implementation of the SDGs, with the United States and China as observers. Faced with the choice between decomposition and metamorphosis, Rome 2017 should be the moment when Europeans assert themselves at the head of the 'great transformation' where we change structures, change society and at the same time change ourselves.

The European Union will celebrate in Rome, in March 2017, the 60th anniversary of the Treaty of Rome, a work of peace in Europe. At this occasion, state and non state actors (leading Companies, Financiers, Regions, Cities, Trade Unions, Civil Society Organisations, Universities) should present why and how the 60th anniversary of the Treaty of Rome is the time to initiate a *metamorphosis*¹ of the European Union to face the challenges of the XXIst century inside and outside Europe. It is necessary to build a new “*european software*” for a “*transformative cooperation*” intended to better manage our interdependence between Europeans and between Europeans and our neighbors and their neighbors, on a planet facing profound changes.

We face three growing risks:

- A European crisis due to European institutions trapped by outmoded ways of thinking about 'development' in Europe and governance in a post-paternalistic era² for which they are not ready. The EU is not fit for the new challenges. This has been confirmed by the conclusions of the informal Bratislava European Council - without Great Britain - promising to present within six months a vision of an attractive EU on the basis of a roadmap in which the Sustainable Development Goals are not included. By not making the Agenda 2030, titled “*Transforming our World*”, the framework of a 'European transformation' to make the EU more attractive, the European institutions are committing a major and historical error.
- A geopolitical crisis linked to the end of the Anglo-Saxon States (the United States and Great Britain) leadership in Europe due to the takeover of power in the USA by the former capitalism, the position of the President-elect in support of the Brexiters and the development of a *Coalition of Walls*. This may lead to a possible deterioration of international relations due to the shocks associated with the beginning of the end of the US empire that we are witnessing³.

¹ Notre Europe. Décomposition ou Métamorphose ?Edgard Morin et Mauro Cerutti Fayard 2013 Paru en Italien ' La Nostra Europa'

² Commission Vice-President Timmermans

³ the contemporary resonances of some Roman history — specifically, the tale of how the Roman Republic fell. Here’s what I learned: Republican institutions don’t protect against tyranny when powerful people start defying political norms. And tyranny, when it comes, can flourish even while maintaining a republican facade. One thing all of this makes clear is that the sickness of American politics didn’t begin with Donald Trump, any more than the sickness of the Roman Republic began with Caesar. The erosion of democratic foundations has been underway for decades, and there’s no guarantee that we will ever be able to recover. But if there is any hope of redemption, it will have to begin with a clear recognition of how bad things are. American democracy is very much on the edge. Paul Krugman, NYT 19/12/2016

“The USA can no longer be expected to act as the world’s policeman, the leading voice in free-trade negotiations, nor a country that necessarily holds its friends and allies to high standards of democracy and rule of law.(...)Being ready is what will stand between Europe and a geopolitical disaster of proportions unseen since 1945· [Dalibor Rohac](#) is a research fellow at the American Enterprise Institute.

- A crisis linked to the acceleration of the degradation of the planetary boundaries, in particular climate, biodiversity, water, food, while inequalities accentuate the costs borne by the less affluent⁴.

The good news.

Facing these 3 bad news and against these threats, *'humanity needs, fast, to find a myth – or a set of myths – capable of transcending our current predicament and inspiring us to a radically new course. Dry policy alone will not do it : we need to be inspired to form a new global movement, akin to the great campaigns of the past –slavery, civil rights – to bring about the transition so urgently needed*⁵. This is why we applaud the 2015 'good news' : a 'Global Coalition Agenda 2030', has emerged, a sort of 'Coalition of the Bridges'. Such global 'Coalition Agenda 2030' united around the theme *'Transforming Our World'*, and drawing on the SDGs and the Paris Climate Agreement - as well as inspired by the Encyclical *Laudato Si'* and other statements and commitments - is designing and implementing a new framework for action related to the Planet, Humanity and Capitalism, a new agenda for humanity that links issues of growing inequality between the rich and the poor and the protection of the environment, highlighting the planet boundaries and stressing that we will not succeed without reducing the gap between the rich and the poor, changing mindset, going from stewardship to care.

In this context, the other 'good news' of 2015 and 2016 must be highlighted:

- Partnerships between state and non-state actors for the implementation of SDGs and climate and biodiversity agreements are spreading from the global to the territorial levels.
- Key players in global and European finance are mobilizing for green and sustainable finance, Financial hotspots like Paris, Casablanca, Amsterdam intend to be leaders in green finance, divestment and investment movements are active, new financial tools are developing
- Whole parts of the corporate world are switching towards a low carbon and circular economy strategy
- Territories become islands of sustainability, they host new partnerships and develop links between them (Global Convention of Mayors for Climate Change and Energy, MedCOP Climate)
- A Transition Movement is spreading around the world with a vision of a new era of peace and prosperity for all.

⁴ Visit Felix Dodds blog [Understanding possible futures in an increasingly insecure world](#) and related Youtube

⁵ Alex Evans in his book *Eden2.0* joins the vision of Naomi Klein in her book on climate change, *Everything Can Change*

- In the United States, 12 States, cities and 360 large companies⁶ announce their intention to enter, if necessary, into 'resistance' and redouble their efforts to move towards a green economy. The TGV of the green economy is gone and D Trump will not be able to stop it.

Rome 2017.

Rome 2017 should be the launch of a **Movement Transforming Europe through Agenda 2030**, aimed at contributing to the implementation of a global framework of action for the Planet, Humanity and Capitalism. On the occasion of the 60th anniversary of the Treaty of Rome, the European branch of the 'Global Coalition Agenda 2030' should be heard. Rome March 2017 should be the moment when the European Champions of initiatives described above:

- Affirm **their vision of a "transformed" European Union** to meet the sustainable development objectives and those of the Paris Climate Agreement both approved by all Member States. It will be demonstrated in these times of anxiety that the political, financial and economic leadership of the Anglo-Saxon leadership is based on the SDGs and the climate. After Brexit, the EU has to "transform" itself to achieve the goals it shares with the international community, which Jacques Delors and 170 European NGOs have highlighted pre-Bratislava.
- Open a **"new development cycle"** for Europe and its partners that puts our intelligence at the service of value because the challenge of the 21st century is to move from the transformation of nature to the transformation of humanity, to redefine the common good, to deploy our potential of intelligence and conscience. It is a question of changing the EU software for a more dignified Europe that is able to 'reconcile' itself with its citizens. The SDGs should be for the European Union the framework of the programmatic rights that are lacking in the Charter of Fundamental Rights.

⁶ <http://lowcarbonusa.org/> Letter signed by 360 US Companies.

Dear President-elect Trump, President Obama, Members of the US Congress, and Global Leaders: We, the undersigned members in the business and investor community of the United States, re-affirm our deep commitment to addressing climate change through the implementation of the historic Paris Climate Agreement. We want the US economy to be energy efficient and powered by low-carbon energy. Cost-effective and innovative solutions can help us achieve these objectives. Failure to build a low-carbon economy puts American prosperity at risk. But the right action now will create jobs and boost US competitiveness. We pledge to do our part, in our own operations and beyond, to realize the Paris Agreement's commitment of a global economy that limits global temperature rise to well below 2 degrees Celsius.

- Implement a **joint action plan of non-state and state actors** SDGs and Climate to demonstrate resilience, resistance, societal innovation and re-foundation of their European commitment, thereby contributing to the transformation of Europe and to reach the objective to limit the increase of temperature well below 2°.

As underlined in 'Sustainability Now ! ' by Mr. Karl Falkenberg « *Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) requires new governance approaches at all levels, including at EU level. In line with Mr. Jean Monnet, institutional decisions will be necessary to secure the longer term validity of the Sustainability Agenda* ».

It is necessary to mobilize in Europe, create new alliances with the 'resisters' in the United States and elsewhere, build an effective coalition of bridges, increase resilience and innovation, support the 'champions of the new world', propose a new vision of our neighborly relations from Russia to Morocco, as with China, the ACP countries and... Great Britain and its Commonwealth.

A new strategy.

But it is also necessary to do otherwise when it comes to influencing the European Institutions - and especially the European Council – as well as the Market. The 'Coalition Agenda 2030' should have a strategy based on a triangle: Non State actors, Business, States. The civil society member of the Coalition Agenda 2030 must have a triple axis of action: towards Business on the one hand, and State Actors on the other, the Crowd finally.

At EU level the issue is the following : in the Institutional Dialogue between the EU Institutions, Business and the Trade unions, the voice of Business is the voice of the 'old capitalism' and the potential losers. This is very much reflected in the position of the European Council, the views of the Economists advising the Commission, the views of the President of the Commission. **This must change.** It is about organizing in a much more powerful way the voice of the non state actors 'Champions of the New World', including business and financiers, to 'weigh' politics at European level in such a way that it changes trajectories. This implies weighing much harder to change the vision of the EU, change the development model, change the governance model, empower citizens. This must be the great metamorphosis at EU level, that the debate between Trump and the multinationals on climate inaugurates at USA level.

The new EU narrative should also be a strong message to citizens. Rob Hopkins, Transition Mouvement, stated : « *We need to oppose an epidemic loneliness and re-create an optimistic mood in society. Implementation of SDG's is about re-connecting people* »

The role of Generation S

A new EU narrative presenting a vision supported by the Business and Finance Green Leaders, the *Generation S*⁷ should be submitted to the Heads of States and Governments

In a world where the United States has given itself as president a businessman whose ethics is questionable, surrounded by a government composed of many businessmen of the former capitalism, we need to use the new levers available to civil society in the digital age - aiming at the market - to put pressure on the business world so that it could convince D. Trump and other 'dear leaders' of the European Council, the Commission and the Parliaments. Each and every major company should review how it could contribute to the implementation of the SDGs if necessary be ready to change its business model and in any case take the necessary measures in terms of investment, innovative products and services, disclosure including on 'say on pay'⁸.

Territories.

Similarly Regions should participate in a 'collaborative spirit' in a new European and Mediterranean economic and industrial partnership development agenda, related to the nexus 'climate-circular economy- energy transition - mobility - housing- food-biodiversity-water' comparable to the role played by the Airbus and Ariane-space trans-european partnerships in and for many European Regions.

Successful regional strategy requires to have intelligence gathering tools, be prospective, pro-active and have access to new working methods and funding at 3

⁷ As **Georg Kell** states : *I have watched a movement grow. Indeed, this silent revolution from within markets has been stirring for the best part of two decades, promising to redirect entrepreneurial energies towards cleaner, greener, and more inclusive societies. And it is now speeding up. There is a march underway, not in one place but from all corners of the earth. Of individuals from all walks of life, old and young and from diverse religious and cultural backgrounds, who are all searching for new ways to conduct everyday business. To conduct life. They share a common vision that ethics based on universal principles of humanity, social inclusion, and environmental stewardship are not in conflict with economic value creation. They are collectively the custodians of tomorrow - as we all are - who understand the power of sustainability to create positive change. They are "Generation S".* And **Frances Buckingham** from Sustainability to write *"Now we are seeing the private sector not just collaborating with NGOs but stepping into the space traditionally occupied by activist groups and raising their voice on key environmental and social issues. (...)* As **Mike Barry** of Marks & Spencer's states in [Marketing Week](#): *"Brands have to have a political voice, but that is political with a small 'p', not talking about political parties but issues that concern your customers." Businesses are increasingly using their influence to more actively shape the debate and to persuade others to take action on issues that they believe are critical*

⁸ The proposal to revise the existing Shareholder Rights Directive ([Directive 2007/36/EC](#)) would tackle corporate governance shortcomings relating to listed companies and their boards, shareholders (institutional investors and asset managers), intermediaries and proxy advisors (i.e. firms providing services to shareholders, notably voting advice). For the first time, a European "say on pay" would be introduced. Today, there is an insufficient link between management pay and performance and this encourages harmful short-term tendencies.

levels : the Region, the State, the EU.

Each regional integrated strategy and the 'Covenant Region 2022' should be developed with the participation of all interested parties including organisations and individuals involved in the *European Innovation Partnerships* (EIPs) raw materials, climate, energy, sustainable agriculture, water, smart cities as well as EU *Smart specialisation* funding programme, Switch-Med, Switch-Africa and relevant *KICS*⁹.-

Scale Up.

It will also be necessary and above all to change gear, create a scale effect that will accelerate the transition while we are in a race against the clock. This will imply that all types of non-state actors (Regions, Cities, Enterprises, Finance, Trade Unions, NGOs, Churches) are opening up to new forms of action and that each agent of change is ready to change his/her business model, his/her way of cooperating transversally and influencing both the institutions of the European Union and the market. This will require a concerted reflection on the method.

As an example, the **crowd**, through the market, does not sufficiently reward the champions of the green and solidar economy, whereas it now has - thanks to the digital revolution - unmatched tools to reward the champions of the new world. There is an abyss between on the one hand the means available to switch the market and finance as politics and on the other hand their use by the crowd of buyers and consumers, savers and investors, citizens.

For this a 'Scale Up' initiative should be presented in Rome in March and launched on the occasion of the European Sustainable Development Week.

New Alliances beyond EU borders.

The US Pax Americana in the Mediterranean and the Middle East - as envisaged by the USA Presidents from Carter to Obama - has completely failed.

The objective proposed is to associate the countries around the 3 Seas (from Russia to Morocco including Iran, and Turkey) and the European Union, in an "Alliance of the 3 Seas" focused on the implementation of the SDG's., with the USA and China as Observers.

This alliance would be a sort of new Olympic circle linking the European Union and its neighbours (drawing on precedents such as the Helsinki Process) in an institutional

⁹ KICs in place or coming :

- first wave : energy, climate, digital
- second wave : health, raw materials,
- third wave : food, manufacturing
- fourth wave : mobility

architecture that ensures peace and respect for the law and contributes to inclusive development . Current forms of cooperation do not allow it or have failed. It is a question of putting in place new mechanisms to stop three forms of violence : the elimination of violence between states, the elimination of in-state violence (governance) and the elimination of class violence (social solidarity). Peace at the borders, internal civil peace and social justice are three precious assets. All three must be strengthened by implementing Agenda 2030.

Conclusion.

Faced with the choice between decomposition and metamorphosis, Rome 2017 should be the moment when Europeans assert themselves at the head of the 'great transformation' *where we change structures, change society and at the same time change ourselves*, to paraphrase Edgard Morin¹⁰.

¹⁰ Une vision spirituelle de la crise économique. Ed y. Michel 2012 p 29