

Values Communication

How to create values?

By Markus Vogt///Originally, the term “value” stems from an economic context. Economic values manifest themselves in prices which entail exchangeability, contain information about current demand and make conflicts of use easier to negotiate. In reference to land and property, which can be substituted only to a certain extent, this model of evaluation shows clear deficits. To protect the underlying ecological and long-term value of the estate there is need for an effective societal consideration of other evaluative categories as well as clarity about their attribution.

What are values?

Values are expressions of approval and appreciation, i.e. always subjective and individually different. They are the result of an evaluative judgment of individuals, actions and objects. They do not only have a descriptive but also prescriptive, and appealing meaning (e.g. “something is valuable” means “you should honour it”, “you might need it”, “you should protect it”).

Values are regulative ideas which help us to grasp the world as meaningful. They are societally generated constants of validity to steer and mutually tune our actions. They do not exist like things but evolve in processes of communication. They deposit in social structures as well as in cultural products and this way stabilise social life. The title given to me “How to create values?” already implies a thesis not to be taken for granted: values are generated by human beings, are “artificially” produced products. They are artefacts. Because of this thesis, my teacher, Wilhelm Korff, was summoned to face the tribunal of the Vatican Congregation of Faith.¹

Translator’s note: Numbers in the text refer to footnotes provided in the original German text.

Values are REGULATIVE ideas stabilising social life.

Despite its artificial i.e. cultural and societal genesis, values are not simply arbitrary and mere products of will (as claimed by Nietzsche) but referring to the perception of humans, things and situations. They are subject to their own kind of logic (Thomas Aquinas’ principle of non-contradiction of practical reason “Bonum faciendum, malum vitandum”; the autonomy of Kant according to whom the coherence of the ethical argumentation is constructed from the core of the principle of liberty leading to the categorical imperative). A consequence of this logic of practical reason is for example the priority of personal values over real values which pervade modern ethics and jurisdiction as a whole.

A purely constructivist view of values does not do sufficiently justice to the fact that in a certain way they must suit the structure of the things, the human psyche and the worlds of social actions.

Values are created by COMMUNICATION

Though “invented” to help us find our way in the world they are not arbitrary. Values are open to formation but not arbitrary; they obey an inner logic of anthropological stringency as well as linguistic, historical, cultural and institutional predispositions.

Values are not measurable in an objective way like weight or the colours of things. They are measurable only indirectly through words, patterns of behaviour and actions of humans. They partly withdraw from the grasp of our common scientific method. This is the reason why our discourse about values is often rationally underdeveloped and the position and ranking of values often appear as very unclear. They are perceived as a matter of emotions rather than of reason.

On the scientific handling of values

In contemporary culture the commonly held view is that communication about values is merely a subjective, emotional and extra-scientific issue. This leads to our debates on values being rationally underdeveloped. Its background for this is the postulate of value neutrality (Auguste Comte's Positivism, Max Weber for the social sciences). This has led to methodological steps of progress of empirical research and a clear distinction between description and prescription (evaluation). Today, however, we know that all establishment of facts takes place within a framework of certain research programmes behind which there are certain pictures of the world and humankind as well as certain cultural practices (dependency on paradigm, Thomas Kuhn)²

The anti-positivistic turning point of the theory of science is the basis of a new scientific approach to the discussion about value issues. Without being anchored in the theory of science, the current discourse about values e.g. in bioethics, technology risk assessment or many ethics commissions runs into a dead end as a from the beginning marginalised merely compensatory discourse that at its best refers to empirically gathered values of surveys – to use Plato's notional distinction – i.e. of mere opinions than knowledge.

However, values are not simply abstract standards which can be defined without any reference to convictions of humans or the objects to be judged. Therefore, it does not depend on the theoretical justification of values but on the reconstruction of the historical process of lived practice and acknowledgement of certain values:" If in the case of values, genesis and validity cannot be distinguished so clearly then one can formulate in positive terms what it is about. Then the history of genesis and spreading of values can be laid out itself in such a manner that narrative and justification are inter-locked in a specific way."³ Joas looks for the types of action and contexts of experience where the subjective feeling that something is of value originates. Additionally, he studies the historical processes of the generalisation and institutionalisation of values through which these were given validity in societal communication.

As a sociologist Hans Joas approaches values in this way and describes their formation in the manner of an affirmative genealogy: "Affirmative is the label of this contingency-conscious reconstruction of the past because the recurrence to the processes of forming ideals, the origin of values, does not negate our binding to them or elate us to a state of sovereign decision-making on our binding to values but because he opens up to us the character of appeal of the historical sense."⁴

Values arise in the encounter with something that is greater and more than the I.

Hence the analysis of how values are created starts with the human being and his attributions but also transcends them in a specific way. It is not only about educating the self but also transcending it. Values, respectively affinity to values, originate in the encounter with something that is greater and more than I, when the self, that is locked within itself, is broken open to another one and reveals itself. From the Christian field we know the tales of experiencing conversion and complete change which one might call a transcendence of the self. In the Christian tradition, too, this element of change and transcendence of self as the root of the genesis of values has faded into the background in favour of rather a traditional view of values as a link to what has been passed on and what one is used to.

Referring to the subject of estate management, it is mostly conservative patterns of interpretation of values that prevail. They are equated with links to things passed on and claims of property deduced from tradition. In modern-day Israel religious-conservative patterns of values are presently primarily made the subject of discussions for claiming land. But there would be completely different traditions, e.g. setting off to a new, unknown country by Abraham. At any rate, according to Joas, the following two components always belong to the genesis of values: the conservative-preserving bond and the innovative awakening which leaves behind known patterns of interpretation and action and responds to new challenges of life.

It would be a field of studies of its own to examine the normative patterns of justification and changes of paradigms of values in respect to land use in different epochs and to put them in relation to outer factors e.g. industrialisation or climate change. I am convinced that there are multiple “elective affinity” (Max Weber) between land use and patterns of values in a society. By means of reconstruction of the branching patterns of attitudes, “mental infrastructures can be disclosed and then be changed if need be. For example there are revealing empirical studies about the link between spirituality and values of sustainability among Dutch farmers and their manner of land use.⁵

Values in public discourse

The idea that society does not necessarily need common ethical and religious ideas of values was founded by the liberalism of the British Enlightenment. It is still of relevance. The individual striving for what the individual person deems as good and advantageous can in essence be integrated into markets through a legal framework and the “invisible hand”. In many areas collectively uniform prescribed values are dispensable.⁶ Renunciation of the attempt at pushing through uniform value patterns is conducive to freedom. It is appropriate to the human being because it does justice to the diversity of humankind. It furthers economic efficiency because individual talents and interests can better flourish under the conditions of freedom and plurality.

However, it is noteworthy that the law is an order of mistrust and does not offer a sufficient basis of societal integration in its own right. We also need a public discourse about the good life and shared ideas on objectives in society.⁷ We need a value-orientated moral engagement of individuals beyond the legally controllable. This is also the philosophical background for the Bavarian Alliance for Values established in 2010 by Minister President Seehofer which involves more than 100 party organisations and, among these, the churches. Reliable ideas of values are also an indispensable capital for the functioning of economics. Without them many co-operations would not be possible and efforts of control would be considerably larger.⁸ Thus religious and ethical ideas of values have a key function for economics. The strengthening and differentiated development of an awareness of values is dependent on the fostering in family and school as well as in the media and civic society.⁹ Education without rearing is unthinkable. If education takes seriously the claim to impart values, it must critically reflect on the media consumption of juveniles. The importance of familial and societal embedding of value forming processes must be given greater emphasis in educational concepts. A decisive factor for ethical learning lies in scopes for developing social engagement.¹⁰

To set free the POWER OF ORIENTATION debates on values must overcome the positivist superstition of values as subjective feelings and preferences

Values cannot be taught like factual knowledge. They need methods strongly related to experience and discourse. Enhancing self-respect and appreciation is the key to every values education. Here the Christian faith can offer a lot. Its central message is the unconditional recognition of every human being which sets free self-esteem and is taught by affection. Therein rests the revolutionary power of

Christendom. It wants to convey acceptance especially to the disrespected and marginalised and thereby enable them to act for their successful way of life. This concept of imparting values is strenuous in educational and political respect, but, in the long run, there is presumably no more effective method of value teaching than acceptance and affection.

Equally important as education are the lifestyles for the transformation of values. Lifestyles and ways of consumption are “lived values convictions” because in the decisions about what we buy and how we live there is much more authentically expressed what is of prime interest to us than in surveys on values. For successful debates about values for new lifestyles there are many promising examples such as Lifestyle of Health and Sustainability (LOHAS), (Slow Food, local agenda 21-processes, Living in Place or Green City).

A striking feature of the new lifestyle movement is the plea for regionalisation in the sense of furthering local chains of generating values. These often have a high ecological and social added value (less climate-unfriendly mobility of goods and humans, the economic interaction simultaneously become a structure of opportunities for social communication &c). Thereby comes up a multiple reference to the subject land, origin and homeland. The bond to a concrete place is rediscovered above all in the context of the ecological movement and politically implemented worldwide in diverse and creative ways. Guiding principles in space management are to give orientation how land, soil and landscape can be put to use. Obviously, these pictures are influenced by collective patterns of attitudes. In the Age of Fordism, the picture of an emptied landscape was regarded in a positive light. This is not the case anymore. The principle of sustainability is not missing in any process of space management.¹¹ And up to now, real patterns of decision-making and action are strongly influenced by value attitudes in which soil and landscape are given no value of their own. They are regarded as exploitable resource. The high consumption of land area in Bavaria proves a blind spot in respect to the esteem of real estate. So far the Bavarian Alliance for Saving Land Area which the churches took a part in from the very beginning has not been sufficiently effective. The challenges of our society in the conflict between the protection of nature and growing demands on wealth are so deep that they cannot be met by resolutions in conferences “from above”. A new discussion from “below” is needed about the guiding values and objectives of our society, i.e. what time horizons of political and individual planning.

For the COHESION of a society communication about values is indispensable

Theoretically there is awareness for this in the public to a relatively large extent but it needs an impetus to flourish politically.

Debates on values often appear as the mere issue of sceptics with restrictive prohibitions. The ethical debate, however, should be located on the level of objectives. Its guiding question must be: what society do we want to live in? Presently the debate about sustainability is the most prominent attempt at lifting the values debate in this way from the mere aftercare acceptance-seeking level to the level of objectives of societal self-determination.¹²

Values Pluralism as a challenge for communication

Tolerance is a basic value in a pluralistic society. It is located in a field of tension between the claim of truth of religious and outlooks on life convictions as well as situations in which the sense of justice is violated. Tolerance is the ability to cope with differences, to communicate about them and to solve conflicts peacefully and to act cooperatively despite remaining differences of interests and convictions. Value-related tolerance requires the ability to cope with conflicts of value without giving up one’s standpoint. In Germany, the readiness for tolerance is presently again being put to the test by the fear of Islam. According to the judgement of the sociologist for religion, Casanova, the current fear of Islam in Europe and Germany is the other side of the loss of religious identity in the Christian faith.¹³ At times of economic regression, there is simultaneously a growing fear for one’s workplace

and aggression towards what is strange. When recurring to Christian and national values becomes a means of ostracising others, it shows highly ambivalent effects. A sound foundation of values protects against xenophobia.

The demands in dealing with plurality increase at times of globalisation. It is expected that there will be an enormously increasing number of migration (e.g. merely because of climate change the UNO prognosticates 200 million migrants in the next decades) and through globalisation there will be a growing mixing of cultures and with it diverse patterns of values. For Europe, too, fending off as an island of wealth will become more difficult and morally questionable as we are part of the responsible party destroying living space elsewhere. Therefore learning tolerance towards strange value patterns and cultures is a basis for society to cope with peace making and the future.

As values are created by communication and the difference of perspectives and interests pose as an essential impetus for communication, they live on diversity and diversity. Only if there are different perspectives does exchange occur which is more than a confirmation of what has already been known. At least difference can enhance the intensity of the communication about values in which everybody is challenged to give reasons for his or her standpoint and reflect on it. The experience of diversity challenges us to reflect our own value pattern. "Acceptance of fellow-man" (Jürgen Habermas 14): From the outside perspective on one's own affairs and the ability of changing perspectives evolves self-reflection as well as the ability to communicate. Hence the "acceptance of fellow-man" is constitutive for the genesis of ethics including values which reach beyond one's own interests. "Closed" cultures are unable to learn and, therefore, risk stagnating and, not rarely, also "going under".

Values need diversity so that they stay LIVELY

The question how much diversity a society can put up with cannot be answered in general terms. It depends on the democratic ability for discourse, the endurance of the legal system, the cultural mentality and the kind of conflicts. The key for overcoming plural differences of value in democracy is, on the one hand, a lively i.e. a public open to discourse about diverse subjects and issues, on the other, the principle of decisions by majority vote and the protection of minorities.

Value pluralism is a gain of freedom because it allows individual different preferences and ideas of value. It enables for constant corrections and developments of ideas of value. It requires a forum and platforms for discussions and agreements to avoid mere parallel living. This would constrain or even block the opportunities of joint action. Ethics of pluralism should not be mistaken as relativism or "nihilism of anything goes" in the sense of indifference to questions about truth.

With the plea for the value of diversity there is a visual reference to the subject of land and biodiversity. Life needs diversity. The beauty and aesthetic value of landscapes increase with the diversity of the life forms it sports. Monocultures are fragile. According to a study of the UNO there is a worldwide significant correlation between the decrease of cultural and biological diversity.¹⁵

Not at least by the organic valorisation of arable land for example for rape seed monocultures is the diversity and integrity of soils in many regions acutely endangered."¹⁶

Different kinds of values and their ranking

Etymologically the term value stems from the economic context. Economic value adding visualises paradigmatically what the creation of values means. Juxtaposed the ethical use of the term "value", e.g. in the context of "value ethics" by Max Scheeler, which is completely tuned to emotions, is often much more difficult to grasp. Nevertheless, focussing of the concept of values on its economic dimension, which, these days, dominates in many fields, poses as an ethical problem. It

was already Bernhard Shaw who brought it to the point: "Today people know the price of everything but nothing of its value." Economic values are values of exchange and use. They refer to the interplay of demand and supply. Methodically, they consider the comparability and substitutability of the objects at hand.

Just in the personal sphere exchangeability is not appropriate. According to Kant a human being is a "purpose by itself" and therefore possesses dignity and not merely a price. This constitutes the uniqueness of our existence. Absolutisation of economic values which regards as valid only what can be calculated which is flanked by an understanding of science that perceives only what is countable today seems to enjoy the status of an ersatz religion. Its dogma is that there is no dogma, no truth above functional and economic values. Its cult is the market. Pastoral care takes place through advertising for goods of consumption which targets our most secret wishes and promises fulfilment. Occasionally, our public communication appears not to be marked by values but can be described as a "society of bonds".

This is to be opposed in ethical terms by the priority of personal values over material assets. From this is derived e.g. the priority of labour over capital (John Paul II). When a human being seems to be replaceable as a labour force thus turning him into a ware, his dignity is violated. Therefore, an economy orientated toward profit needs a strong framework protecting the dignity of man and woman, to save his/her humane face. Personal values often withdraw from economic perspectives which perceive values only in the mode of having.

Personal values are to enjoy PRIORITY over material assets

In all this one should not turn the critique of "economism" itself into a fetish by equating this criticism with the good. The tension between a personal valorisation by acceptance on the one hand and harsh economic facts of a function valorisation by exchangeability on the other cannot be resolved. One must have a sharp look at where economic communication about values through saleable products and services is appropriate and where this form of value communication conceals

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This ambivalence of the communication focussing on economic values becomes plain in the current debate about the value of land and biodiversity. The TEEB study of the UNO18 is based on the model of monetisation of services by the ecosystem. The quantification of the economic values of diversity makes possible their societal-political significance, similar to the economising of the climate costs in the Stern-review which initiated a breakthrough in the climate debate. However, it is very monolinear and, in the end, can hardly grasp the versatile importance of land.

Here the fundamental questions arise: What are the limits of the market? What goods can be handed over to competition and the interplay of demand and supply? What are private goods? Is it appropriate to rank land as a private good to a large extent? Air and water, however, are commonly regarded as a public good. At least the obligation to the common weal as regards property of land should be secured more effectively by legal means in view of globally and nationally encroaching degradation. This also needs a deep-going change of awareness in regard to the appreciation of soil which is often looked upon as "dirt under our feet".¹⁹

The value of land and soil

The encroaching degradation of man-used soil is a fact which at first was hardly noticed by the public but, in the meantime, has been recognised as a central environmental problem.²⁰ The consequences of this problem, however, have been widely underestimated because of multitude of material and cultural functions of the soil for the environment and society.

The DOMINANCE of economic values endangers the validity and implementation of moral, religious, cultural, ecological and aesthetic values.

Regional planning and its ethical foundation hardly play a role in Germany. In some parts antiquated and dated ideas and value patterns of former times still prevail. The deficits in perception as described above explain the predominantly reactive management of the soil protection which confines itself to remission or (partial) “repairs” of damages at the site that have already occurred. This way of acting can hardly be justified in view of increasing awareness of soil problems and their moral implications. Securing a sufficient soil quality for future generations is a long-term task for society at large which requires a deep-going revision of the dogmas and regulatory hubs of soil management. Steps in this direction have already been taken since 1981 (UN- Charta for soil protection) but so far there has been no internationally binding convention for soil protection. The UN-agreement for the protection of deserts should be turned into a general agreement about soil protection.²¹

“Biodiversity” means “riches of nature”. On its protection rests the future development of life on earth and with it human civilisation in a decisive way. It ranks- as well as climate- among the basic commodities of securing humanity’s existence. Biological diversity is a key factor for safeguarding ecological balance and the maintenance of important functions for nature and society. The preservation of the diversity of plants, animal species and habitats as well as the genetic diversity of plant and animal species is a commandment of inter-generational, ecological and global justice. For this purpose are needed respective initiatives and agreements. The commonly held view by the protection of the species that diversity is a necessary condition for ecological stability is not shared any more these days because cohesion is not stringent and cannot be grasped linearly. The ethical argumentation of the protection of the species thus must begin with the living being’s value of its own which does not necessarily presume a bio-centric view of the world. For example, the compendium of social teachings of the church (2004), which places special emphasis on the importance of biodiversity²², chooses a creationist-theological and moderately anthropocentric approach to the argumentation (diversity of species as humanity’s common good). For Christians the protection and preservation of the diversity of species is a call of duty to responsibly deal with creation which all people have been entrusted with by God.

For the difficult search for differentiated ethical evaluative criteria for the protection of the biosphere, the scientific advisory board Global Changes of the Environment (WBGU) of the Federal Government has formulated an expert’s opinion on “Environmental Ethics”. Therein it distinguishes between categorical i.e. non-exchangeable and compensatory principles.²³ There are areas which are to be protected categorically and which are inaccessible to processes of consideration in ethical assessment. Thus the WBGU demands categorically to (...) refrain from “interventions endangering the existence of humans”.²⁴ Interventions that significantly influence the important metabolic and energy cycles on a global level are also to be considered as actions to refrain from categorically. Also the preservation of the diversity of ecosystems and landscapes as well as key species is reckoned as part of the categorical principles. The remaining goods, respectively potentials of natural space, are accessible to the compensatory principles and thus teleological which means accessible to the implications of assessment procedures. In today’s debate about rules for the use of nature teleological procedures are primarily suggested.

The WBGU does not understand its concept as a final assessment but rather as a demonstration of dimensions of values and as a help for improving the efficiency of allocations in the decision-making for actions in the area of teleological assessment of services pertaining to the biosphere. Thereby it distinguishes between direct values (economic utilizable value), indirect values (functional value), optional value (potential opportunities of use for the future), values of existence and experience.

Fertile soils, beautiful landscapes and biodiversity have so far been INSUFFICIENTLY considered in the evaluative models grasping the foundation of human existence

Values of existence are values in their own right enjoyed by somebody or something completely independent of a direct or indirect furnishing of use simply because he/she/it exists.

As a central political conclusion from this ethical concept the Scientific Advisory Board demands:

*Instalment of an early warning system

*Establishment of international mechanisms for the protection of categorical values

*Creation of decentralised incentives for the protection of the biosphere

*Implementation of categorical guidelines after three categories:

-Complete protection (Noah-strategy as with the Biblical founding father with his Noah's Ark referring to survival),

-extensive use (censor strategy i.e. subject to control of information under state authority

-optimal, intensive but sustainable use (Demiurg-strategy i.e. open to creative formation).²⁵

All these are attempts at making concrete the ethical fundamental demand of "constant nature capital" through reasonable, in principle political, manageable rules for actions. The protection and care of the biological diversity is in this only a part whose importance for a sustainable development should not be underestimated, especially in Germany.²⁶ Of high priority, however, is the abolition of false incentives of meaningless regulations for farm subsidies which presently lead to a massive destruction of nature capital.

These legal measures will be successful in the end only if they are supported by a transformation of an awareness of values. Here the Christian belief in creation, which, at its core, is not about supporting singular imperatives but rather a fundamental revision of the relationship between Man and nature, can offer an essential broadening of the horizon for an understanding of values, especially in the management of soil and regional planning.///

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Annotations

- 1 Cf. Korff, Wilhelm: Searching the Rationale of Human Action, in: Theological Ethics Autobiographical, ed. by Konrad Hilpert, Paderborn, 2007, pp. 63-65. On the interdisciplinary debate about values and norms cf. Wertheimer, Jürgen: Norms, Standards, Values – Intrinsic Cohesion of the World, Worlds of Values, Vol.3, Baden-Baden, 2011 (in German)
- 2 Cf. on this debate Vogt, Markus: Empiricism in Ethics. On the relationship between facts, values and norms: Interdisciplinary Christian Social Ethics, ed. by Peter Schallenberg and Arnd Küppers, Paderborn, 2013, pp. 405-424
- 3 Joas, Hans: The Origin of Values, Frankfurt, 1997,10, I regard this book as the most important contribution on the origin of values, currently the issue of the philosophical-sociological debate.
- 4 Joas, Hans: Sacrality of the Person. A New Genealogy of Human Rights, Berlin, 2011, p.190
- 5 Cf. Saan-Klein van, Beatrice/Dirscherl, Clemens/Vogt, Markus: "(...) seedtime and harvest (...) shall not cease." (Gen 8,22). A Practical Reader on the Added Value of Sustainable Agriculture, Munich, 2004, pp.67-69
- 6 Cf. Kühnlein, Michael (ed.): The Political and the Pre-Political. On the Values Foundation of Democracy, Baden-Baden, 2014; Vogt, Markus: Tasks, Methods and Standards of Ethics, in: Ethics in Regional Planning. Approaches and Reflections, pub. by Martin Lendi and Karl H. Hübler, Hanover, 2004, pp. 14-30
- 7 Etzioni, Amitai: The Discovery of Community. The Programme of Communitarianism, Frankfurt, 1998, Jaeggi, Rahel: Critique of Lifestyles, Frankfurt, 2014
- 8 Against the background of North, Richter calculates that in contemporary economics 70% of the expenses are spent on initiating, control and completion of contracts; Richter, Rudolf: Institutions Analysed from the Perspective of Economics, Tübingen, 1994, p.5 ff. cf. also Vogt, Markus: Values-Orientated Running of Enterprises in Times of Crises, in: ZdW Bay 3/2010, pp. 108 -115.
- 9 Etzioni, a major proponent of communitarianism therefore denotes institutions and communication forms of family, education and neighbourhood as the "infrastructure of morality"; cf. Etzioni, The Discovery of Community, p. 105
- 10 Vogt, Markus: The Long Way to the Republic of Education, Remarks on Aspects of Teaching Values, in: Church and Society 386, Cologne, 2012, pp. 1-16
- 11 Lendi, Martin, Karl H. (eds.): Ethics in Regional Planning. Approaches and Reflections, Reports on Research and Meetings of the Academy for Regional and State Planning 221, Hanover, 2004
- 12 Cf. Vogt, Markus: Principle of Sustainability. A Draft from Theological-Ethical Perspective, Munich, 3rd edition, 2013, esp. pp. 110-215, as well as pp. 456-494
- 13 Casanova, Jose: The Place of Religion in Secular Europe, in: Transit-European Revue 27/2004, www.iwm.at/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=110&Itemid=278
- 14 Habermas, Jürgen: Involving the Others. Studies on Philosophical Theory, Frankfurt, 1996
- 15 15 Cf. Töpfer, Klaus: Global Environmental Protection and Fight Against Poverty, in: as to the debate 7/2003, pp.13 ff.
- 16 Cf. critically: Gottwald, Franz-Theo/Krätzer, Anita: Dead End Road Bio-Economics, Critique of a Totalitarian Approach, Berlin, 2014
- 17 For decades we have calculated ourselves as rich by means of the blown-up value system of the financial markets – at the expense of the poor (as money is always a unit of comparison), at the expense of future generations (e.g. because of the gigantic debts of nations worldwide) and at the expense of nature (e.g. climate change which is caused, among other things, by the inherent pressures for growth). Experiences with the financial markets, that have not yet been worked through completely, should sharpen the view on the uncertainties of an evaluative system based on monetary values.

18 The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity (TEEB): Integrating the Economic Importance of Nature in Decision-Making Processes – Approach, Conclusion and Recommendation – Synthesis, Bonn/Münster, 2010, www.teebweb.org

19 Montgomery, David: *Dirt: Why Our Civilisation Loses Its Ground Under its Feet*, Munich 2010.

20 Cf. Ligner, Stephan/Borg, Erik: *Preventive Soil Protection. Dimensions of the Problem and Normative Foundations*, Bad Neuenahr, 2000; Haber, Wolfgang/Brückmann, Walter: *Sustainable Land Management, Differentiated Land Use and Climate Protection*, Berlin, 2013. In the past fifty years, more than a quarter of fertile soil was lost for good. The sealing of landscapes, growing desertification, the large-scale damage to vegetation seem to be advancing incessantly.

21 Cf. Draft of a Convention For the Protection of Soil prepared in 1997 at the Evangelical Academy Tutzingen, Held, Martin/Kümmerer, Klaus: *Preserving Soils For Life. The Tutzing Project "Time Ecology"*, in: *GAIA* 6, 3/1997, pp. 212-216.

22 Papal Council for Justice and Peace: *Compendium of Social Teachings of the Church*, Freiburg, 2006, Nos.466-487, this is the first papal document containing a detailed chapter of its own on issues concerning the responsibility for the creation, Chapter 10.

23 Cf. Scientific Advisory Board of the Federal Government *Global Change of the Environment (WBGU): World in Change. Environment and Ethics. Special experts' opinion*, Marburg, 1999, pp.14ff

24 WBGU: *World in Change*, p. 38, on the following, op. cit. pp.38-42 as well as pp.47-80

25 op. cit. pp.129-133

26 Haber/Brückmann: *Sustainable Land Management*, pp. 210-273