



SERIES SOCIO-ECONOMY OF SOLIDARITY

# How Can Companies Exercise Their Responsibilities?

PROPOSAL PAPERS FOR THE XXI<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY - CHARLES LEOPOLD MAYER EDITIONS

# Proposal papers for the 21<sup>th</sup> century

*The proposal papers are a collection of short books on each decisive area of our future, which assemble those proposals that appear the most capable of bringing about the changes and transformations needed for the construction of a more just and sustainable 20<sup>th</sup> century. They aim to inspire debate over these issues at both local and global levels.*

The term 'globalisation' corresponds to major transformations that represent both opportunities for progress and risks of aggravating social disparities and ecological imbalances. It is important that those with political and economic power do not alone have control over these transformations as, trapped within their own short-term logic, they can only lead us to a permanent global crisis, all too apparent since the September 11<sup>th</sup> attacks on the United States.

This is why the Alliance for a Responsible, Plural and United World (see appendix) initiated, in 2000-2001, a process of assembling and pinpointing proposals from different movements and organisations, different actors in society and regions around the world. This process began with electronic forums, followed by a series of international workshops and meetings, and resulted in some sixty proposal texts, presented at the World Citizen Assembly held in Lille (France) in December 2001.

These texts, some of which have been completed and updated, are now in the process of being published by a network of associative and institutional publishers in 6 languages (English, Spanish, Portuguese, French, Arabic and Chinese) in 7 countries (Peru, Brazil, Zimbabwe, France, Lebanon, India, China). These publishers work together in order to adapt the texts to their different cultural and geopolitical contexts. The aim is that the proposal papers stimulate the largest possible debate in each of these regions of the world and that they reach their target publics whether they be decision-makers, journalists, young people or social movements.

# **Presentation of the Paper « How Can Companies Exercise Their Responsibilities? »**

## **I - A COMPANY CREATES WEALTH ...**

One of the purposes of a company is to create wealth, through the goods it produces, the services it provides, or the jobs it generates. Its first responsibility is to fulfill that mission.

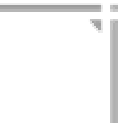
But the social legitimacy of a company is also based upon its capacity to share the wealth it creates with its partners, in particular with its customers, its employees, its share-holders, its suppliers, other local businesses, its professional partners, and its local environment.

## **II - ...WHILE RESPECTING THE INDIVIDUAL ...**

Beyond its economic role, a company fulfills a positive and essential social mission: It creates a community, it provides jobs, and it enables individuals to develop personally. It also contributes, through its economic, scientific, and technical developments, to the development of civil liberties. The responsibilities of a company in terms of respecting human rights and human development involves all of its partners: citizens, employees, shareholders, customers, suppliers, and competitors.

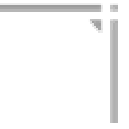
## **III - ...AND PRESERVING THE ENVIRONMENT**

The legitimacy of a company that produces goods and services is all the greater as its activities do not jeopardize the environment and do not use up natural resources. The challenge for a company consists in finding new economic opportunities in environmental protection and in developing environmental activities.



# **How Can Companies Exercise Their Responsibilities?**

Paper coordinated by Yves de Bretagne



# Summary

FOR A SUSTAINABLE PROSPERITY .....	9
Major Actors in Economic and Social Prosperity .....	9
The Disparities of Globalization .....	9
Meet the Expectations of Civil Society .....	9
Prepare for the Arrival of New Standards .....	10
Harmonize Ethics and Economic Development .....	10
Presentation of This Document .....	11
Each Company Should Have Its Own Code of Conduct .....	12
I - A COMPANY CREATES WEALTH ... ..	13
A COMPANY ENSURES ITS OWN DEVELOPMENT .....	13
A COMPANY SHOULD DISTRIBUTE THE WEALTH IT CREATES TO ITS PARTNERS .....	16
II - ...WHILE RESPECTING THE INDIVIDUAL ... ..	22
CITIZENS .....	22
EMPLOYEES .....	23
SHAREHOLDERS .....	29
CUSTOMERS .....	29
SUPPLIERS .....	30
COMPETITORS .....	30
III - ... AND PRESERVING THE ENVIRONMENT .....	31
THE ALLIANCE FOR A RESPONSIBLE, PLURAL AND UNITED WORLD .....	35
THE PROPOSAL PAPERS ON THE INTERNET .....	37
PARTNER PUBLISHERS .....	39





# **For a Sustainable Prosperity**

## **Proposal for a Code of Conduct on How to Exercise Economic, Social and Environmental Responsibilities in Companies**

### **Major Actors in Economic and Social Prosperity**

Companies today are major actors in economic and social prosperity. They play an essential role in applying scientific knowledge to production processes, using and developing natural resources, adapting their products to a diversity of human needs and cultures, developing new goods and services, and creating and distributing individual and collective wealth. They are a key factor in social life because they engender collective entities, provide jobs, and enable individuals to develop personally; they also contribute to expanding liberties and civil rights thanks to the economic, scientific, and technical processes they develop. Their legitimacy, in the eyes of civil society, is based on all these aspects and not only on their economic function.

The influence of companies on the evolution of societies is all the more significant as traditional systems of political, economic, and social regulation are slow to adapt to changes in the present world. Businesses have to constantly adapt to market variations, meet new consumer demands, compete, tackle complex organizational problems, and combine their long-term vision with short-term adjustments. Quite logically, they have become the first operators on the world scene to reach the stage of globalization.

### **The Disparities of Globalization**

Companies, especially the largest ones, have taken a considerable lead over political and social systems. This situation has created a number of disparities and injustices affecting various realms: the distribution of wealth, the satisfaction of basic economic needs, the preservation of cultural diversity, the respect of civil and human rights and liberties, control over scientific and technical evolutions, energy consumption, and protection of the environment and of biodiversity.

Companies are not the only actors responsible for these disparities and injustices: The lack of sufficient regulation on a global level has indeed allowed them to develop unchecked, even if certain businesses have not hesitated to take advantage of such negative tendencies.

### **Meet the Expectations of Civil Society**

Defining the responsibilities of companies is a difficult theoretical task. Companies are not recognized as such at a legal level, and are therefore not held to any actual “responsibility.” They are a “web of contracts” linking a group of shareholders (whose responsibility is, by definition, limited), a number of individuals who relate to the firm through work contracts, and a

number of suppliers and customers whose connection takes the form of commercial contracts.

Nevertheless, if the responsibilities of companies are not defined legally, they are nonetheless acutely felt and experienced by civil society. When danger looms, citizens address the actors who obviously have at their disposal the greatest resources in terms of financial means, skills, and power. Via consumer groups, citizens associations, NGOs, the media, social rating agencies, and managers of ethical funds, the civil society does not only expect companies to sustain and develop their economic activity. It also demands that they take responsibility for the effects of their operations at the social and environmental levels and that they fully contribute to common welfare.

Since companies are not recognized as legal “collective entities,” and since there is still not enough global regulation, it is up to their members, individually and collectively, to invent ways and resources to assume these new responsibilities. Indeed, the reputation of a company is vulnerable: Negative perceptions can easily tarnish its public image. On the other hand, by assuming its economic, social, and environmental responsibilities, it can maintain a positive image as well as improve its internal operational mode and its performances.

True enough, the responsibility of a company is proportional to its size and to its impact on the economy, on society and on the environment; it would nonetheless be a mistake to believe that only multinational companies are concerned by this new trend in mentalities. The larger the company, the greater its responsibilities. However, even a small business can link up with other businesses or other partners in order to do its share for the general welfare.

## **Prepare for the Arrival of New Standards**

Currently, there is already an environmental management standard, called ISO 14000. It is applied by a considerable and growing number of companies; there is also a standard for the social quality of a company, SA 8000, but it still needs to be improved and is not recognized internationally. When a standard of this type succeeds in gaining widespread recognition, it will be in the interest of all companies to comply with its specifications; those who begin now to take initiatives at this level are acquiring a competitive advantage for the future. It might even be wise for a company to take part in drafting this type of “social quality” standard, since it will have to conform to it in the short or medium term.

Drafting a code of conduct on how to exercise economic, social, and environmental responsibilities in companies is a way of anticipating these changes.

## **Harmonize Ethics and Economic Development**

Many large companies have already published ethical charters and codes of this type. Certain approaches in this matter may however appear questionable or even hypocritical. Some companies proclaim self-righteous ethical principals but do not indicate how they can be compatible with the global development of

the firm. There is only one way for managers and executives to convince shareholders that ethical measures are relevant: They must prove that such measures will not be prejudicial to financial performances and that they may even improve them.

It is in this frame of mind that the Socioprofessional Network of Company Managers and Executives has drafted the present document. Throughout the text, they have sought to justify their proposals, both from an ethical point of view and with a “win-win” approach.

## **Presentation of This Document**

The following threefold formula defines the responsibilities of a company: “Implement your own development, respect humankind, and preserve the environment.” These three imperatives must be set on an equal footing. Neither one of them should be neglected if one wishes to ensure the company’s sustainability, which depends not only on its economic health but also on its validity and legitimacy from a social and environmental point of view. In addition, civil society is the ultimate judge.

The main purpose of this document is to demonstrate that by assuming its responsibilities, a company can really improve its public image as well as its performances. We have adopted the following presentation:

in normal type, an inventory of a company's responsibilities and the various forms they may take;  
*in italics*, the “win-win” effects that a company can expect if it assumes these responsibilities;  
in small type, concrete examples that illustrate how such responsibilities can be exercised.

The examples we quote are all drawn from real life. We have not mentioned the names of the companies involved: first, because we did not wish to advertise any particular brand, and also because some companies that do exercise their responsibilities in certain realms, are not necessarily good examples in other aspects.

The reader can obtain further and more specific information concerning most of these examples by contacting Yves de Bretagne, at the Charles Léopold Mayer Foundation, 38, rue Saint-Sabin, 75011 Paris. Other examples are drawn from documents published by l’Ecole de Paris du Management, 94, bd. du Montparnasse, 75014 Paris; as well as those published by Alliances pour la Citoyenneté des Organisations, La cité des Echanges, 40, rue Eugène Jacquet – S.P. n° 15 59708 Marcq-en-Baroeul Cedex – France; and from Antoine Riboud's book entitled: *Modernisation mode d'emploi*, Rapport au Premier ministre, coll. 10-18.

For more specific information on how our text was drafted, the reader may also consult the summaries of the six days of work and discussions we held on these topics. They are available at the Charles Léopold Mayer Foundation for the Progress of Humankind, under the title: “*Alliance for a Responsible, Plural and United World - Socioprofessional Network of Company Managers and Executives.*”

## **Each Company Should Have Its Own Code of Conduct**

This text is not designed to be distributed and used in its present form in companies, but seeks to provide suggestions to managers and executives, in particular within small and medium-sized businesses. It can be used as a memorandum and does not claim to be complete. Many things remain to be invented: In particular, we have not been able to gather enough examples to illustrate the full range of responsibilities a company has to assume.

Each company should establish its own code of conduct, together with all of its employees and executives. It should decide which proposals it wishes to implement, what its priorities are, its deadlines, and its overall methodology. On the other hand, it must plan to provide adequate resources (financial investment and training programs for executives and managers) for each proposal it has decided to implement and to ensure a continued assessment PROCESS in order to check that all the actions it undertakes are both legitimate and profitable.

# I - A COMPANY CREATES WEALTH ...

## A company ensures its own development

One of the purposes of a company is to create wealth, through the goods it produces, the services it provides, or the jobs it generates. Its first responsibility is to fulfill that mission, which requires adopting a proper form of management. The principles of good management are well known; here's a reminder of a few basic rules:

- 1) Constantly adapt to competition and to the market without threatening your sustainability: you must, in particular, keep control over your growth by setting up a farsighted, future-oriented management for medium- and long-term company development.
- 2) Achieve a sufficient profit-rate to ensure your own sustainable development.
- 3) Optimize your organization before launching into new investments.

A major Japanese group acquired a French company and discovered that the production lines were less efficient than those of its other subsidiaries were. The managers thought it was necessary to invest. The decision was, however, the opposite: All investments were frozen. The approach was to change the work organization: how to process breakdowns, maintenance, and training operators (Source: *Modernisation mode d'emploi*)

- 4) Adopt a responsible attitude when you make decisions regarding mergers and reorganization. Such processes often generate redundancies and do not always yield the profits you expect.

*When evaluating the financial costs of a welfare and retraining plan for its redundant employees, a company must take into account the impact of layoffs on its public image, as well as the probable conflicts that will arise and the extra expenses they will generate.*

An industrial group had decided to shut down one of its plants. At the time, it had planned to pay an average compensation of 200,000 FRF to its workers, but eventually, it had to grant them 300,000 FF. Now, if the company had carefully studied the possibility of paying this sum right from the start, that might have changed the decision. (CR4, page 22)

- 5) Encourage innovative ideas and invest in research and development.
- 6) Set up standardization procedures to improve the quality and safety of your products and to upgrade your organization.
- 7) Do not apply the same methods of management to all of your activities. Give up the idea that there is such a thing as a "one best way."

*Companies should be able to maintain an internal diversity that will enable them to adapt in order to continue to perform well the day the market changes radically.*

- 8) To enhance its performances a company can link up with other businesses, through trade associations, discussion clubs, professional organizations, and local partnerships.
- 9) Optimize human resources.
  - Laying off an employee is sometimes necessary for a company but always keep in mind that it is a trauma for the person who is laid off. It is therefore necessary when applying predictive management to such issues, to distinguish between mere cyclical crises and deep structural crises.
  - A certain degree of flexibility is necessary but a company must ensure that the people they hire on temporary contracts gain something from their experience (skills, training and vocational programs, access to the company's network). What they acquire must be proportional to what the company required from them.
  - Implement a diversified and personalized management of human resources. Career prospects and development should be planned for each type of population segment.

*With a targeted and personalized management of human resources, a company can use the differences and "hidden talents" of its employees.*

- 10) Give absolute priority to training, at every level.

- Improve the skills and know-how of all those who work in the company.
- Organize and train the personnel to prevent technological breakdowns.
- Preserve and transmit empirical and previous professional knowledge.

At a confectionery plant, the automation of a simple work task—handling a hot mass of caramel—produced disappointing effects. Management realized afterward that the actual function of the operator was to regulate and to control temperature. To avoid costly and complex trials and errors, management should have relied, from the very beginning of its surveys, on the pragmatic and time-tested know-how of the operator. (Source: *Modernisation mode d'emploi*)

At a brewery, the architecture and the ergonomics design of the brewing unit was modified in order to bring the men closer to the product and to the equipment. When the operators were trained to monitor the automatic process, their old technical experience was respected and considered as still valid. (Source: *Modernisation mode d'emploi*)

- 11) Stimulate delegation and participation at all levels.

*Increasing employee participation is sometimes considered as implying considerable extra costs for a company, but if it is not encumbered by heavy administrative processes, it may on the contrary help save money and enhance performance. Indeed, depending on the company's approach, the same quality objective can take the form of a list of*

*instructions on a single data-sheet or of a 200-page manual of procedures.*

When this yogurt plant was built, some commentators went as far as to say that the operators had “invented their factory.” They were constantly consulted during construction operations and were able to supervise the suppliers' work, thereby contributing to define the organization and even the architecture of their future plant. (Source: *Modernisation mode d'emploi*)

In a computer-equipment plant, staff members defined their workstations themselves, and came up with a solution that was totally different from the one suggested by suppliers. Their experience of the production process enabled them to design the ergonomics best adapted to their working conditions and most productive for the company. (Source: *Modernisation mode d'emploi*)

In 1981, a glassmaker signed an agreement providing for a cut in working hours (from 38 to 33 hours) for shift workers, by creating a fifth team. The problem was then how to reorganize the process and ensure a decent quality of life for the shift workers. All the experts thought that this redeployment program was impossible and would increase labor costs by 20 %. Nonetheless, by compelling each plant, each production line, each work unit to find ways of enhancing productivity in order to “afford” this cut in working hours, the agreement became possible and was signed by the five trade unions in the company. People's quality of life at the workplace was improved without jeopardizing the company's profitability. (Source: *Modernisation mode d'emploi*)

- 12) Create working conditions that simultaneously stimulate productivity and help all employees to attain self-fulfillment.

*Teams in which human values are a priority are extremely efficient and contribute to improve a company's performances.*

*Interesting and meaningful jobs with a high degree of "social quality" attract competent people. Thus, they represent an asset for recruiting that is just as important as high wages.*

- 13) Any planning process (launching a product, investing in new technology, dis-investing, and breaking into new markets) should combine economic, social, and environmental aspects.

# A company should distribute the wealth it creates to its partners

The social legitimacy of a company is based upon its capacity to share the wealth it generates with its partners, in particular with its customers, its employees, its shareholders, its suppliers, other local businesses, professional partners and with its local environment.

1) Share the wealth you create with your customers.

- Only offer quality goods and services.
- Practice competitive prices.
- Meet customer expectations in terms of goods and services.

2) Share the wealth you create with your employees.

- Create jobs.
- Set up vocational-training programs leading to qualification.
- Offer fair wages.
- Give employees a share in the profits: This concerns both the profits generated by their individual efforts and those produced collectively.

*A company maintains a high degree of motivation among its employees by establishing transparent internal relations and by ensuring a proper balance between the return on capital, it offers its shareholders and the remuneration of labor.*

3) Share the wealth you create with your shareholders

*A fair distribution of dividends can prevent excessive speculation on the share. It contributes to build shareholder loyalty and thereby to ensure the sustainability of a company.*

4) Share the wealth you create with your suppliers.

- Set the right price.
- Fair trade with developing countries.
- The criteria you use to select suppliers must be transparent and explicit.
- Contracts should be clear and sustainable.
- Diversify your range of suppliers as much as logistics constraints allow you to do so.

*With a diversity of suppliers conforming to the same specifications, you avoid the danger of over-intensive production. Both your company and the smaller suppliers are protected.*



5) Share the wealth you generate with local businesses.

- Help local small- and medium-sized companies overcome their difficulties and develop.

*Become involved in your industrial environment and build mutually fruitful partnerships with other businesses.*

“While I was visiting a gingerbread plant in Besançon, I discovered that the eggs used in the production process were delivered in containers and were already broken and ready to use. They were imported all the way from Holland: local egg producers did not have the proper equipment to break the eggs in the sanitary conditions required by agribusiness standards. It appeared to me quite astonishing that they had to import their eggs from such a great distance. So we sent in two of our experts to help local producers design a machine to break their eggs; now, the gingerbread sold by this plant is made with eggs from the nearby Jura region, a solution that seems, in all respects, more satisfactory.” (CR2 page 12)

A similar case occurred at a plant near Avignon with the vegetables required to produce a soup: The carrots, leaks and potatoes, which had to be peeled and cut into pieces, came all the way from Belgium and Holland. We lent money to the local cooperative to enable it to buy the necessary machines and dispatched two engineers, who stayed three weeks at the plant to set off the new process. (CR2, page 12)

A company manufactures packaging cardboard designed for famous producers of luxury goods and makes 50 % of its turnover at Christmas and New Years holidays. For many years, this company has heavily relied on temporary workers. Weekly missions represented, from October to January, 20 % of all its paid hours. Furthermore, every year, new temporary workers had to be trained and only half of these women performed well; so, the company had to recruit other people. In the same region, an automobile-parts manufacturer encountered the same difficulties, with a comparable number of temporary workers and level of professional qualification, but its production peaks were concentrated from March to July. Thanks to the local employers' organization, the two companies were able to strike a mutually beneficial agreement: they combined their respective flexibility programs, and now the concerned workers have permanent contracts (CR5, page 9).

6) Share the wealth you create with your professional partners.

- Strive to elaborate common norms and standards, to develop and improve a product along with other companies operating in your sector, even if they are direct competitors.

Before Internet developed, several systems competed on the market (IBM, Bull, or Unisys) and had their own communication protocol, incompatible with other ones. Today, when you connect to the Internet and you hear your modem emit strange sounds like "bee...

doom...doom... shht", it is trying to speak the same language as the modem with which it has entered into communication. Considering how swiftly the Internet is covering the whole planet, it may be advisable for industry to adopt the same approach. (CR2, page 24)

7) Share the wealth you create with your local environment.

- Encourage and promote local entrepreneurial projects, for example through spin-offs.

The Regional Agency for Development in the Nord Pas de Calais region launched a program to help young people create small businesses. It involved pupils attending vocational "A-level" classes or higher technical schools, with the support of teachers and voluntary sponsors from companies. The students discover the concrete realities of the business world and learn how to carry out a project. They receive competent advice and training; they develop their ability to work in a team, to communicate, to meet challenges. This program is also a way of stimulating the creation of businesses in a region with a long-standing high level of unemployment. (CR2, page 5)

- Become involved in the situation of the labor pool of the region where your company is established.

*A company has a lot to win by enhancing the harmony and performances of its social and physical environment.*

"Local pacts" consist in implementing, throughout a given territory, a process that enables all social, economic, and political actors to meet and come up with solutions to new problems. In the French department of the Nord, companies have taken the initiative to organize "company platforms." These platforms have adopted the same approach as "local pacts": they usually cover an industrial zone, and include companies, local councilors, elected representatives, associations, groups of trade-unionists, of unemployed people, of young people. There are currently seven such platforms in the Nord Pas de Calais region. This very positive approach allows various actors who have quite different perceptions of their respective missions to meet and discuss. It also enables companies to establish profitable contacts. (CR4, page 26)

A company, established in a rural area, follows very closely developments in the capital town of its province. It is aware of its dependence on this regional center and it needs to keep in touch with urban cultural developments to recruit competent executives.

- When a company decides to cease its current operation, it should look for a substitute activity in order to preserve the local economic and social fabric.

A major industrial group anticipated, ten years in advance, that it would eventually close its production sites established in a mountain region. It endeavored to support small local businesses, and even

helped set up new ones, so that its own employees would not have to leave the region when its plants would be shut down. This approach allowed the group to keep their trust and motivation.

- Combat social exclusion.

A venture-capital firm decided to offer financial and technical assistance to persons setting up new businesses, including quite a few unemployed people. They set as a condition that these new entrepreneurs should be committed to hiring other unemployed persons. They observed that, when a business has difficulties, people who once experienced social exclusion are often “pillars” of their company and are the best prepared to fight for its survival, because they have suffered a lot and are happy to see that their value and dignity are finally recognized. (CR1, page 11)

A mass retailer committed itself to try and help 500 young unemployed persons every year, for a period of five years: In each one of its supermarkets, ten underprivileged youths were offered a six-month work and study contract, with the support of tutors and sponsors. (CR2, page 6)

Public, semi-public and private companies got together to create “PSPs” (*Points Service aux Particuliers* –service centers for private individuals) in neighborhoods of Lille that had high delinquency rates. These structures fulfill three missions: to anticipate and solve the daily problems of local inhabitants by informing them about their duties and their rights; to help persons carry out their projects; and to re-establish neighborhood relations among businesses, public services, and local citizens. This initiative also enables all of its partners to meet people who are usually difficult to contact. (CR2, page 7)

A supermarket store in Le Havre was in a difficult situation and was about to close down. Gangs of young people stole goods from the shelves and left the premises, literally spitting in the faces of the cashiers; customers were deserting the store and two hundred jobs were threatened. A sociologist offered to carry out a survey, in order to identify problems in the district and the motivations of these young persons. Projects were set up with their participation: An abandoned sports hall was renovated, a basketball club and a French boxing club sponsored by a champion were created; leaders of these activities were detected and hired by the store. Three years later, the supermarket had obtained the leading position in terms of the “pilferage” rate (the rate of lost and stolen commodities, which often represents up to 1 % of a supermarket's turnover—as much as its profit). (CR2 page 8)

Young inhabitants of poor districts frequently looted stores selling household appliances. An association set up by a company created workshops, where they could repair second-hand appliances, for instance stoves or refrigerators discarded by people who bought new equipment. Premises were set at their disposal as well as a foreman who taught these youngsters the job. (CR2 page 13)

- Help education and schools, including those that train future managers and executives.

*By sending some its members to train future managers and executives in marketing or engineering schools, a company enhances its own level of competence, improves the quality of its future recruits, and develops relations with its partners in the world of training and education.*

About a hundred managers of chemical company who have followed a specific training course give classes to high-school pupils in the region of Dunkerque, in cooperation with the Ministry of Education and in partnership with physics and chemistry teachers. This approach helps develop a dialogue between companies and schools. It also upgrades the image of vocational education, making it more attractive for young people, and improves the quality of future recruitment (CR2, page 6)

- Contact various actors on the local scene.

*A company becomes more "reactive" when it becomes interested in other approaches than those submitted to economic rationality. It realizes that other actors on the scene have their own strategies, which may interfere with its own plans.*

Each time we appointed a manager for a plant (or for any kind of site, for that matter), he was sent for a week to a training unit where he could meet a series of typical actors on the public scene: a mayor, a priest, a regional councilor, a journalist, a fireman, a policeman. At the end of the training program, he was given two months to meet all the actors in his region where his plant was established. This method was very successful: it helped senior managers realize that, since they lived amidst all these people, they might as well establish relations with them. (CR2 page 12)

- Offer assistance to associations and NGOs: A company can help local associations financially, or put its competence and personnel at the disposal of local associations; it can also provide the same type of assistance to NGOs—a step that can be suggested and encouraged by people involved in such organizations.

*By supporting local associations or becoming involved with NGOs, a company participates in the development of both its original territory and the territory where it has established. Thereby its legitimacy is greatly strengthened.*

A company provides photocopies for a local choir. Another company puts an engineer at the disposal of an NGO for several months.

A consulting firm, with 300 consultants, has signed an agreement to cut working hours. In addition, it plans to devote two days of paid labor per employee to a cause of general interest, chosen every year by the firm's personnel as a whole. This approach, which consists in using the competence of staff members for general interest purposes, is

consistent with the culture of this company, which frequently deals with public services. (CR2, page 6)

A football club had around 100 young members, but they could not travel to play in different areas because their parents could not accompany them; the local employers association decided to lend the vocational unit's bus to the club, since it was not used during the weekend anyway. (CR2 page 13)

A company collects non-marketable food products, free of charge, in agribusiness plants: it stores and reprocesses dented or incorrectly labeled tin cans or end of range items. When a pallet of yogurt jars spills over, they have to be picked up and discarded somewhere, and this process costs money. Therefore, this company carries out emergency operations with its "fire brigades" and its refrigerated trucks. The goods are collected, sorted out, repackaged and sold at 10 % of their market price by French charity organizations such as "Restos du Cœur," or the "Petites Sœurs des Pauvres"—and the whole process generates jobs. (CR2 page 13)

*Delocalization to developing countries is sometimes necessary. But it will be more easily accepted by people in the company's "native" country, if the company is able show how it will contribute to the development of the new territories where it intends to operate (education, health, "spin-offs," etc.)*

## II – ...WHILE RESPECTING THE INDIVIDUAL ...

Beyond its economic role, a company fulfills a positive and essential social missions: It creates a community, it provides jobs, and it enables individuals to develop personally. It also contributes, through its economic, scientific, and technical developments, to the development of civil liberties. The responsibilities of a company in terms of respecting human rights and human development involves all of its partners: citizens, employees, shareholders, customers, suppliers, and competitors.

### Citizens

- 1) Respect the institutions and the law of the country of origin and those of the host countries; when the law is less coercive in the host country, apply that of the country of origin (labor law, collective agreements, company law)
- 2) Foster peace, particularly in politically unstable countries.
- 3) Abstain from spreading messages, especially advertising, contrary to ethical values.
- 4) Fight corruption and misuse of corporate property
  - Banish all forms of active or passive corruption.
  - Presents and personal benefits from suppliers are contrary to the principles of transparency and equity and jeopardize the capacity to make an unbiased choice; therefore, they must be excluded.
- 5) Respect the Stock Exchange code (insider trading)
- 6) Do not resort to tax havens.
- 7) Avoid misuse of lobbying and accept to take part in public debates on the direction to be followed in terms of the environment, scientific and technological development, and ethical choices, that is to say, admit that politics must prevail over economics.
- 8) Do not produce or distribute any products, especially in the realm of living beings, which raise unsolved ethical problems.
- 9) Do not hold back knowledge that has crucial public interest.

*If they take advantage of their dominant position to exploit their patents inappropriately, in particular when the latter hold major public interest, companies might well get such patents expropriated under the pressure of civil society.*

In South Africa, the triple-combination therapy against AIDS has turned out to be relatively effective, but the patents linked to it are so exorbitant that

they make the manufacturing cost of the medicinal product itself about one hundred times higher. Therefore, the government has decided to refuse to pay for these patents and to have generic medication manufactured at low prices. The English laboratories that hold the patents took legal action against the government, but they have had to give up due to the pressure of public opinion (CR6, page 34)

10) Include social- and environmental-performance elements in the assessment criteria of the company.

- Set goals that are previously discussed with managerial staff and employee representatives.

In the United States, all the activity of a company that makes and distributes ice cream is oriented towards social and environmental improvement: reintegration of socially excluded persons, manufacturing of organic products, fair trade, location in sensitive districts, support for the social and political expression of its customers ... all of this with the agreement and the participation of employees, management, and shareholders. This company has experienced outstanding development. (CR2, page 7)

- In the management charts of the executive committees of industrial sites, subsidiaries and groups, include criteria allowing to assess social and environmental performance.
- Attend to the social and environmental quality of suppliers: When the services provided are equivalent, choose the supplier that gives more guarantees in this respect.
- Determine whether the social and environmental objectives set by the company have been reached when assessing the performance of the managerial staff and before granting them a salary rise.
- Make sure that the social and environmental policy is implemented by carrying out independent audits
- In the letter to the shareholders and the annual report, give information not only on the company's economic and financial development but also on its social development and its respect for the environment.

11) Seek financing through ethical funds by giving them guarantees on the social and environmental quality of the company; the latter thus contributes to their development, and in return, it makes sure that its own financing is transparent.

## Employees

1) Respect Human Rights: employees keep the whole of their fundamental rights within the company.

- Freedom of thought (religious, of association, philosophical, political) and of judgment.
- Freedom of expression, direct or collective, in the appropriate forms.
- Independence and protection of privacy.
- Physical safety.

- Dignity of labor relations and of assigned tasks (absence of moral harassment, tacit or explicit threats, decent kind of work and working conditions, etc.)
- Non-discrimination: fostering unbiased recruitment, seeking multiculturalism, intermixing, and a balance in the population; offering the same opportunities to all employees.

A large-scale distributor favors subcontractors that respect the principle of non-discrimination (ethnic group, color, gender, political or religious beliefs, social class, country of origin, etc.) or that are moving toward respecting this principle.

## 2) Comply with conventions on working conditions.

- Implement and make suppliers implement ILO (International Labor Organization) conventions defining the minimum social standards from which all workers should benefit.

((here)) A large-scale distributor has committed itself to breaking off commercial dealings with any supplier that practices child or adult slavery or that accepts that its subcontractors practice it. As far child labor is concerned, a total and sudden ban on such a practice would have dramatic consequences (extreme poverty, prostitution, etc.). More pragmatically, gradual and incentive steps are to be taken (aid to education, improvement of working conditions, for instance), on pilot sites first, with a budget especially earmarked by the group to that use.

## 3) Respect the freedom of trade unions.

- Develop “conflictive cooperation” rather than stifling trade-union initiatives by all possible means.

*The company has enormous responsibilities: the existence of an internal opposition force acts as a safeguard.*

- Abandon prescriptive rhetoric of the “authoritarian parent to rebellious child” kind and adopt an adult-to adult dialogue.

“In the last years of my career, one week before the factory’s central committee meeting, I always made sure I’d get hold of all the documents that had circulated at the previous board-of-directors meeting; I took the documents that dealt with issues that were confidential because they dealt with strategy, then I sent the whole set of documents, with ‘Board-of-directors meeting of (date)’ written on it, to the company’s central committee. To trade unions, being able to go through the “real” documents, those that had been used at the board meetings, was priceless, whereas it stuck out a mile that the documents coming from the human resources department were not the real thing.” (CR2, page 10)

- Reinforce consultation and strengthen the presence of staff representatives in the decision-making bodies.
- Foster and broaden staff representation by restricting plurality of offices.



- Foster commitment in staff representation through equitable career-development measures.
- Ensure that everyone has access to the information on the company: direct expression must not be hidden or limited to the benefit of trade-union representatives.

An employer has equipped each of his two thousand employees with computers giving them access to all the information circulating in the company, even the information on labor negotiations; at any time they can express themselves through the discussions forums on each of the twenty company sites. (CR3, page 12).

- Whatever the progress of direct communication between employees and management may be thanks to the new communication technology, maintain staff representation in order to ensure the protection of the weakest, who do not necessarily have the possibility of defending their rights by themselves.

#### 4) Make human-resources management central.

- Foster skill assessments, interviews on an individual basis, and debriefing; offer the possibility of speaking with representatives other than immediate superiors.
- Acknowledge the right to a personal plan by seeking the best possible compromise between the needs and the interest of the company and those of the employees.

*By encouraging its employees' initiatives, a company will benefit from their dynamism and involvement. Moreover, it can take advantage of the skills developed by employees outside the company.*

One company grants one hundred paid hours to all volunteer employees who wish to take part in projects of public interest. The personal development of employees improves their "social perception," which is an asset for the company's basic activity (CR2 page 7)

- Acknowledge extraprofessional activities and roles.

*Many companies focusing on short-term profit do not benefit from their employees' intelligence as much as they could because they do not provide their workers with a "reason" that would induce them to get fully involved in their activity.*

"When I worked at Evian, I organized an "open day" and I decided to invite all the mayors and deputy mayors of the mountain villages our employees came from. On that occasion we found out that eighty employees out of the one thousand and four hundred people that made up our workforce were mayors or deputy mayors, which meant that they had responsibilities, voted budgets, held discussions with the county administrative board, etc. Three of them were supervisors and the others worked as workmen at the filling lines, the day shift or the night shift: What a waste of talent!" (CR2 page 11)

Corporate managers realized that by taking on responsibilities in the sports world, people became used to managing schedules, having business relations, organizing events, maintaining discipline, and that in some cases

this could be tantamount to having a vocational training certificate (CR2 page 13)

- 5) Acknowledge the right to vocational training; companies act as “learners” or “teachers”; the working environment is a learning environment.
- Foster the exchange of know-how and turn everyone into an instructor (mentoring, working in networks and in cross-sectoral systems, project groups, sponsorship, coaching, etc.)

“One day I had prepared a document on the training of top management executives and the chairman explained to me that there was a very effective way of training them: twice a month, all the executives met for half a day to talk about company-related business matters with the best specialists from the different departments (financial manager, marketing manager, etc.); the only imperative was that these committees be organized in such a way that they taught people things, that they made it possible for everyone to develop their knowledge. After each talk, checking that everybody had understood everything, explaining things again if necessary, etc. became a habit.” (CR2, page 11)

- Stipulate in the work contract that the employability of the employee will be maintained (different kinds of training and work experience, qualification)

*Being concerned with the employability of employees is a useful investment for the company, in which functions change.*

*The acceptable degree of uncertainty for person concerning their career is largely dependent on the image that they have of their capacities and their ability to get the best out of them.*

A iron and steel industry company in Dunkirk, greatly accustomed to the cyclical effects that characterize this sector, has decided to “get ready to face” the cycles, mainly by developing, to a much larger extent than other companies, the employability of its workers: the company gives them a vocational degree that validates their experience in the company and has a great reputation on the labor market; with this degree people find it less difficult, if they are made redundant, to find a new job in the small local companies. (CR4, page 25)

- Develop the validation of occupational achievements

On the verge of a takeover by another group, a company set up a policy of capitalization on the best internal practices, baptized “skills strategy.” The aim of such a policy was to spot the most strategic skills of the company trades and to find out which company units applied the most efficient and original methods. A skilled worker was appointed in each case and was in charge of making the other units involved follow suit. This approach made it possible to capitalize on the best practices but also to encourage the development of each unit and foster personal development in the general interest.

- Choose as a priority training courses leading to qualification.
- Specify in the certificate of employment the employee's recognized skills that were used.
- Include in the managers' standards of performance and objectives the ability to manage employee development.

6) Protect employment.

- Anticipate the decline of one's activity and foster innovation to discover replacement activities.

In Israel, the mechanization of agricultural activities led collective organizations such as the kibbutz to reorient part of their employees: Ten years later, every collective organization had set up one, two, or three factories to absorb this manpower. (CR4, page 26)

- In cases of economic difficulty, study every possibility for maintaining employment,

*Severance pay and other forms of financial assistance are not enough to compensate the humiliation felt by the employees who are made to understand that they have become useless; this humiliation is also felt by the employees who are not dismissed and can adversely affect their motivation.*

An airport conducted a salary-employment arbitration: part of the salary raises was postponed to avoid layoffs, all of this being stipulated in a long-term collective agreement. (CR4, page 25)

On one site, which was threatened by the progressive disappearance of the original trade, diversification movements were undertaken in time. On others, requalifications of staff made it possible to avoid resorting to massive and risky recruitment of personnel.

A company was successful in maintaining the workforce in spite of a of 9% reduction in turnover. (CR4, page 25)

Companies that decide to avoid layoffs at any cost can take their inspiration from the methods used by public corporations, in which any layoff is impossible.

For example, to develop the voluntary mobility that was more adapted to its new needs, one public corporation brought fifty "Mobility Advisers" into the whole network to help agents, through a series of interviews, to consider new career paths, with the possibility of exploring a path through a "discovery" internship: agents could spend two weeks, without any commitment on their part, in another service, in order to become familiar with an activity and a different working ambiance. The idea of an "acceptable position" was developed: taking into account their situation and the administrative rules, agents were offered a number of positions; if one of them was satisfactory to them, the corporation was committed to obtain it for them. Mobility Advisers also helped the agents to settle the material problems related to accommodation, spouse's work, and children's schooling.

To limit geographical moves, agreements were made with other public corporations: agents who had worked in automobile mechanics all their life could hardly see themselves behind a ticket window; on the other hand, their skill could be of interest to the administrator of a bus fleet.(Source: Ecole de Paris du Management).

- Offer, under normal operations, possibilities of mobility, retraining, and spin-offs, so that in case of crisis, the corresponding organization and culture is already there and immediately operational.

A retraining firm supported the retraining of more than one thousand employees in a five-year period—which covered the implementation of the recovery, then development plans of an airline—whether it was to help them to find new employment or to start their own business. At the end of this experience, employee retraining proved to be an excellent means for improving recruitment: reinforcing the spin-off system contributes to attracting to the company persons who hold entrepreneurship as a strong value. So much the better if after that, they develop their plans within the company, but even if they eventually leave the company, they will have made enormous contributions to it while they were there. To improve recruitment in a company, it is therefore necessary to treat with great care the employees who are leaving it. (Source: Ecole de Paris du Management).

- Minimize the negative consequences of staffing cuts: in case of layoffs, help employees build a new career path, to progress in terms of autonomy and responsibility, and to reclassify themselves.

*The attention given to employees, including when the company is forced to dismiss them, is likely to reinforce staff confidence and motivation.*

A public corporation developed, in the framework of nuclear construction sites, some extremely interesting “post construction site” or “build-down management” procedures, in particular vis-à-vis the subcontractors. (CR4, page 25)

- In the case of a place of business being sold, be concerned, during negotiations, with what will become of the employees in their new company.

*The attention given to employees, including when the company parts with the place of business in which they work, is likely to reinforce staff confidence and motivation.*

## 7) Respect cultural differences from one country to the other.

*A “universalist” ideology first is bad for staff, then goes on to be bad for business.*

When an American group established an amusement park in the vicinity of Paris, incredible things began to occur: employees went on strike because they were not allowed to grow a beard; young women because they were forced to wear stockings in the middle of the summer because that is what Americans do. The management had come with “portable models” for staff

behavior and for judging and assessing such behavior. After a few crises, the management changed its way of seeing things and the conflicts have been more or less solved. (CR3, page 16)

An international group has set up a cell that answers to the human-resources department and is in charge, during acquisitions, to go on the field, in China for instance, to take the measure of the cultural differences and be able to train the executives who will be sent there. (CR3, page 17)

#### 8) Acknowledge minority groups.

*A company that acknowledges minority groups, whether during internships or during recruitment, instead of encouraging natural racism, will benefit from cultural enhancement and a better image, and will meet its employee's need for meaning.*

A sportswear distribution group decided, when it opened its shop in Lille, to hire exclusively persons in difficult situations, mainly immigrants (80% of those hired), with the help of the city's Local Mission and of the PLIE (*Plan Lillois d'Insertion Economique* - Lille Plan for Economic Integration). This operation turned out to be a great success from the social point of view (integration through work), as well as from the marketing point of view (customers are very sensitive to ethnic openness). (CR2 page 5)

## Shareholders

- 1) Apply principles of company governance (executive's pay, transparency in information, transparency in decisions, a body to offset the power of the board of directors).
- 2) Respect small shareholders in decision making.
- 3) Use board meetings and general meetings as fora for true reflection and debate.

## Customers

- 1) Refuse to resort to false or misleading advertising.
- 2) Tend to greater transparency and truth in matters of information, prices, quality, and best offer in quality.
- 3) Comply with commitments made to the customer as to the prices, delivery time, maintenance, and warranty.
- 4) Ensure the customer's physical safety by scrupulously complying with and enforcing regulations; do not sell anything but products or services that will not endanger the physical or moral health of the different categories of customers; inform customers of any risks connected with the purchase of a product or a service.

- 5) Treat customers as persons of good faith who should be welcomed, find the information they need, and provide a quick and constructive answer to any complaint or objection.
- 6) Be open to customers' expectations in terms of social and environmental quality.

*A company should not be content to provide its customers with the best products, the best prices, a better service, or a better reception: to obtain their loyalty, it needs to develop their pride in being the company's customers; they should find meaning in it, fare better from it, and get a better image of themselves from it.*

*Developing greater reactivity to social and environmental issues constitutes a pledge of greater efficiency, greater flexibility, greater adjustment to environmental demands: a company that listens to the expectations of its customers is in a better position to feel the evolution of its market and be closer to its consumers and potential shareholders.*

## Suppliers

- 1) Do not take advantage of a dominant position in selecting suppliers, show them respect, courtesy, and good faith, whatever their size (waiting time at reception, being on time for appointments, an objective consideration of the offers).
- 2) Place suppliers in fair competition: use comparison rather than manipulation or destabilization, and respect confidentiality commitments.
- 3) Comply with commitments, orders, and closed deals, as long as the supplier keeps his own commitments, even when the person in charge has changed: the company's word must be kept.
- 4) Balance the sources of supplies, taking care not to exceed the thresholds of mutual dependence likely to warp relations and put the supplier's activity in danger.

## Competitors

- 1) Practice fair competition, free of slander and the manipulation of opinion.

*Practicing unfair competition harms the management's authority and credibility.*

- 2) Resist the temptation of monopoly and accept political regulation in this realm.

*Competition is necessary: If the company is in a situation of monopoly, it could be tempted to "let itself go." The subsistence of the capitalist system depends on a systematic practice of competition.*

# III – ... AND PRESERVING THE ENVIRONMENT

The legitimacy of a company that produces goods and services is all the greater as its activities do not jeopardize the environment and do not use up natural resources. The challenge for a company consists in finding new economic opportunities in environmental protection and in developing environmental activities.

## 1) Control scientific and technical evolutions

- Do not produce and do not distribute any product, in particular in the realm of the living, for which it is not known how to measure its environmental impact.
- Conduct or commission research to ascertain the innocuousness of the products that the company is thinking of manufacturing and marketing.

## 2) Practice sustainable exploitation of primary resources and energy sources

*Sustainable exploitation of primary resources and energy sources is one of the major challenges of the development of companies in the years to come; if they wish to ensure their long-term profit, and even, in some cases, their survival, companies must anticipate and seek, among others through innovation, to moderate their recourse to primary resources and to nonrenewable energy sources, in favor of those that are.*

- Privilege renewable resources.
- Limit the use of nonrenewable resources (saving of matter and energy).
- Recycle products and packages.

In Germany, facing the abundance of the domestic waste resulting from packages, the government instituted a tax to finance the processing of this waste. In France, concerned industrialists have decided to set up on their own a jointly managed company, Eco Emballages, which is in charge of collecting the tax and redistributing it to the territorial authorities to finance the investment needed to process this waste (incineration factories, supplementary waste bins, equipped vans, etc.). By taking this initiative, these companies have protected themselves from the criticism that could have harmed their brand image and from government intervention in the form of a new tax.

## 3) Protect the environment and biodiversity.

- Process company waste.

*Improving the company's environmental balance is likely to reinforce employee pride and motivation.*

Working in partnership with the organization *Association pour le Développement des Cultures Énergétiques* (ACDE - Association for the Development of Energy Crops), DRIRE, the water agency, the FAIR program, and a neighboring irrigation company, a company that produces chicory set up a system for the purification of its waste water, which is based on its land

application in a willow plantation with very short rotations. This makes it possible to put back into the food chain the organic pollution produced by the manufacturing of chicory; the fuel wood is used by an organization that manages a center for handicapped persons and, in exchange, is in charge of running the plantation. (Source: *Alliance pour la Citoyenneté des Organisations*).

*Companies can gain competitive advantage if they are leaders, in their sector, in environmental protection.*

A company that manufactures industrial yeast, with factories in an urban environment, had to make considerable efforts, much greater ones than those made by its competitors, in environmental protection; short-term, it was of high cost to the company, but in the end, it got such a lead in the environmental field that it has now started selling “clean” turn-key factories: it changed a constraint into a competitive advantage. (CR5, page 12)

*Companies can benefit from a “willingness to pay” on the part of their customers if they set up environmental-protection measures.*

In Norway, the price of a new car includes an amount of about 2,000 FRF that will make it possible to dismantle the vehicle and recycle it when it reaches the end of its life cycle. (CR5, page 9)

- Promote the creation and development of industrial ecosystems, in view, among others, of a better exploitation of waste.

*The processing of pollution does not necessarily need to be placed in the cost category; very often, it generates significant savings for the company, because it makes it possible to detect energy leakage, but also to exploit the company’s waste.*

The first level of construction of an industrial ecosystem consists in managing waste collectively, which immediately makes it possible to achieve savings. The second level consists in managing investments collectively: for instance, not every factory has to have its own water basin for fire fighting. The third level concerns shared management of the flows of energy and matter, from several angles: in some cases, it is possible to modify the manufacturing process slightly; in others, it is possible to identify what industrial activity will complete the existing puzzle and make it possible to achieve energy and matter savings. The last level is to integrate the four main components of the industrial-ecology approach: exploit waste systematically (close cycles), minimize leakage-related losses (seal), dematerialize the economy (intensify/lighten), decarbonize. (CR5, page 6)

The principle of industrial ecology consists in creating closed cycles of matter flows and energy flows among several production units, according to the now famous model of Kalundborg, a small Danish industrial city, which has developed around a powerhouse and an oil refinery. Over the years, the main companies of Kalundborg began to exchange different forms of “waste”: steam, water (at different temperatures and different degrees of purity), as well as various by-products: mud, ashes, sulfur, gypsum, gas, etc. “The industrial ecosystem” of Kalundborg gathers, around the two initial



facilities, a sulfuric acid factory, a company that manufactures construction panels, greenhouses, a heat network for the township, an aquaculture farm, and a factory of industrial enzymes. In a model of this type, “waste” is no longer designated as such, but as “by-products”: every year, 3 million cubic meters of water, which were previously rejected into the neighboring lake, are re-exploited, as well as 200,000 tons of gypsum, 20,000 tons of oil, and 100,000 tons of ashes. The total financial gain since 1975 amounts to 60 million FRF. (CR5, page 5)

The executive team of a tire-manufacturing factory has observed that energy represents its highest cost after wages: Tires need to be heated, then to be cooled, which necessarily entails energy loss; insulation of the machinery can be reinforced but one way or another the heat has to be evacuated at some point to evacuate. A survey is in progress to find in the neighborhood a factory that might be interested in recovering part of this energy. Even if it only reduces costs by 10 or 15%, this would be considerable. (CR5, page 6)

- Protect biodiversity.

*The absence of pollutant waste is no longer the only criterion of satisfactory environmental protection; respect of biodiversity and actions in its favor are also perceived very favorably.*

A cosmetics-manufacturing company uses, for its perfumes, plants that reproduce easily; for the use of rare plants, it has developed aroma sensors that do not destroy the plant.

- Promote the rehabilitation and re-exploitation of abandoned industrial sites.



# The Alliance for a Responsible, Plural and United World

Working together towards the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century

Ever since the late eighties of the 20th century, numerous initiatives have been put forward from different regions of the world and extremely diverse contexts. Different social actors were thus put in motion with the aim of organising a vast worldwide process seeking to explore values, proposals and regulations capable of overcoming the modern challenges humanity is faced with.

A large number of thematic, collegial and continental meetings were organised in the early nineties, a process which led, in 1993, to the drafting of the *Platform for a Responsible and United World*.

Regional groups were set up, international professional networks and thematic networks on the fundamental issues of our era were developed: the Alliance was created. It is financially and technically supported by the Charles Léopold Mayer Foundation for the progress of Humankind (FPH), among others.

The Alliance is focussed on inventing new forms of collective action on both a local and global scale, with the aim of shaping together the future of an increasingly complex and interdependent world.

The challenge of the Alliance is to actively support unity in diversity by asserting our societies' capability to understand and appreciate the complexity of situations, the interdependence of problems and the diversity and legitimacy of geo-cultural, social and professional perspectives.

**The Alliance, as a space of discussion, reflection and proposals, is built around three main orientations:**

Local groups aiming to bring people of a community, a region, a country or a continent together by looking at the realities and issues of their own societies. This is the **geo-cultural approach**. It reflects the diversity of places and cultures.

Groups of socio-professional actors wishing to provoke dialogue and mobilisation within a given social sector or profession (youth, peasants, scientists, local representatives, etc.). This is the **collegial approach**. It reflects the diversity of social and professional milieus, their concerns and responsibilities towards society and the challenges of today's world.

Thematic workshops seeking to create reflection groups centred around the major issues of our common future (sustainable water management, regional integration and globalisation, financial markets, art and society, etc.). This is the **thematic approach**. It reflects the diverse challenges humanity is faced with in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Thematic workshops are organised into four areas: Values and Culture, Economy and Society, Governance and Citizenship, Humanity and the Biosphere.

Seeking both to draw on the richness of materials and experiences gathered by these reflection groups whilst networking with other citizen dynamics with a similar

focus, the Alliance fixed itself the objective of obtaining collectively developed, concrete proposals. The following meetings were thus organised:

- **international meetings**, for each thematic workshop and each college,
- **synchronized continental assemblies** (Africa, Americas, Asia, Europe) and a regional meeting in the Arab world (Lebanon) in June 2001.
- a **Citizen World Assembly**, held in December 2001 in Lille, France, bringing 400 participants together from around the world.

These meetings together contributed to the drafting of some sixty *Proposal Papers for the 20<sup>th</sup> century* and a *Charter of Human Responsibilities*, published in several languages in different countries.

The Alliance has been involved in a process of disseminating and developing these outcomes since the beginning of 2002. Networks are expanding, branching out and their work themes are becoming increasingly transversal. They also strengthen links with other approaches aiming to create an alternative globalisation.

For further information, please visit the **alliance website** at [www.alliance21.org](http://www.alliance21.org), where the history of the Alliance, the challenges it is engaged in and the workshops and discussion forums being held can be viewed in three languages (French, English and Spanish).

E-mail: [info@alliance21.org](mailto:info@alliance21.org)

# The proposal papers on the internet

Whether in their provisional or definitive form, all the proposal papers and their corresponding translations can be accessed on the website of the Alliance for a Responsible, Plural and United World, at:

<http://www.alliance21.org/fr/proposals>

## Themes available:

### **Values, education, cultures, art and the sciences**

Teachers and education – Education to an active and responsible citizenship – The alliance and the media – Art and cultural identity in building a united world – Women – Youth action and proposals for social change – An intercultural cultural diversity in the era of globalisation – Proposals of the inter-religious college – War, genocide, ...restoring humanity in human beings faced by extreme situations – Thinking through university reform – Social control of the scientific production system – Information society, knowledge society: benefiting from change – time and sustainable development

### **Economy and society**

Transformations in the field of work – The trade-union movement at the dawn of the 21st century – Exclusion and Precariousness – Companies and solidarity – How can enterprises exercise their responsibility – Corporate responsibility – Production, technology and investment – Ethical consumption – Fiscal policy, tax, distribution of national income and social welfare – Social finance – Escaping the financial maze: Finance for the common good – Social money as a lever for the new economic paradigm – Debt and adjustment – Fair trade – From the WTO's setback at Seattle ... to the conditions for global governance – Food security and international trade negotiations – Completely sustainable development: an alternative to neo-liberal globalisation – Economic policies, ideologies and geo-cultural dimension – Women and economy – Economy of solidarity – Health and its challenges in the 21st century – The challenges of Artisan fishery in the 21st century – agriculture and sustainable development – People's right to feed themselves and achieve food sovereignty – Food security

### **Governance and citizenship**

Principles of governance in the 21st century – Territories, places for creating relationships: for communities of shared relations – Thinking the city of tomorrow: the words of their inhabitants – Urban violence – Peasant farmers confronting the challenges of the 21st century – Social leaders in the 21st century: challenges and proposals – Local authorities or local co-ordination – State and development – Food, nutrition and public policies – From the conversion of arm industries to the search for security – The military and the construction of peace – Re-modelling global governance to the meet the challenges of the 21st century

## **Relations between humanity and the biosphere**

Environmental education: 6 proposals for citizens' action – Proposals relating to the question of water supply – Save our soils to sustain our societies – Forests of the world – Energy efficiency – Industrial ecology: agenda for the long-term evolution of the industrial system – Civil society and GMO's: what international strategies? – Refusing the privatisation of life and proposing alternatives

# Partner publishers

## **Spanish edition (Peru):**

Centro Bartolomé de las Casas (Cusco)

Renaud BUREAU du COLOMBIER and Camilo TORRES  
E-mail: [ccamp@apu.cbc.org.pe](mailto:ccamp@apu.cbc.org.pe)

Centro Bartolomé de las Casas  
Pampa de la Alianza 465  
Cusco - Peru

Tel +51 84 236494  
+51 84 232544  
Fax +51 84 238255

## **Portuguese edition (Brazil):**

Instituto Pólis (São Paulo)

Hamilton FARIA  
E-mail: [hfaria@polis.org.br](mailto:hfaria@polis.org.br)  
<http://www.polis.org.br>

Instituto Pólis  
Rua Araújo, 124 - Centro  
São Paulo - Sp - Brazil  
CEP 01220-020

Tel: + 55 11 3258-6121  
Fax: +55 11 3258-3260

## **Arabic edition (Lebanon):**

South Lebanon Cultural Centre (Beirut)

Ziad MAJED  
E-mail: [zmajed@hotmail.com](mailto:zmajed@hotmail.com)

Tel: + 961 1 815 519  
Fax: + 961 1 703 630

**English edition (India):**

Pipal Tree (Bangalore)

E-mail: [pipaltree@vsnl.com](mailto:pipaltree@vsnl.com)

<http://www.allasiapac.org>

Pipal Tree

139/7 Domlur Layout,

Bangalore 560071 - India

Tel: +91 80 556 44 36

Fax: +91 80 555 10 86

**Chinese edition:**

Yanjing group (Beijing)

GE Oliver (Haibin)

E-mail: [ollie@mail.263.net.cn](mailto:ollie@mail.263.net.cn)

Room 521, Goldenland Bldg.

#32 Liangmahe Road, Chaoyang District

Beijing, P.R. China

Postal Code 100016

Fax: +86 10 64643417