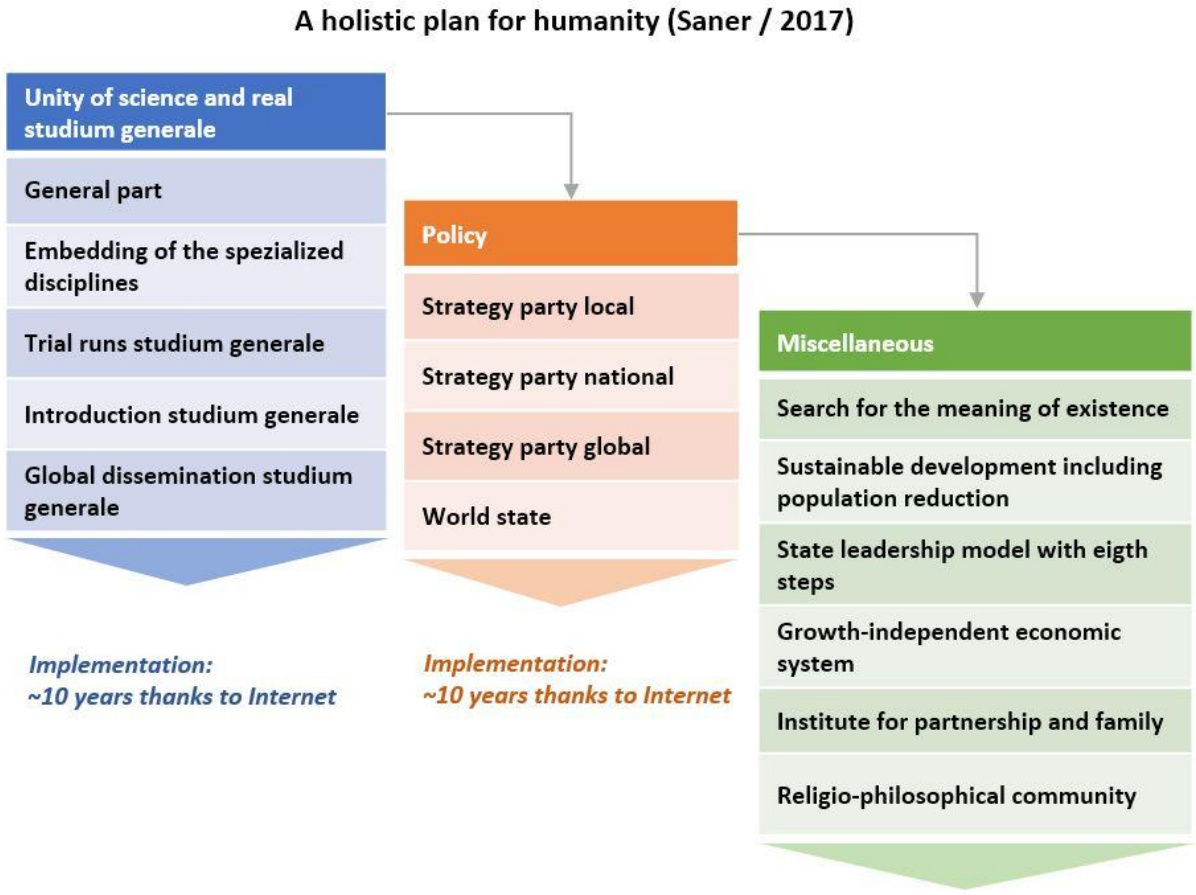
Basler Gesellschaft Au Bon Sens

The Plan



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Politics by wish list, list of shortcomings and ready-made solutions

At a board meeting of the Grossbasel-Ost neighbourhood association of the Basel FDP (Freisinnig-Demokratische Partei, today: FDPDie Liberalen), the president, Werner Bopp, listed a long series of topics that he wanted to discuss with the board. However, during the discussion, it became apparent that these topics were merely a list of current shortcomings and wishes for the future, prompting Bernhard Gelzer to declare: 'I don't want to discuss anything right now, I want to hear a ready-made solution that I can simply say yes or no to!'

Deliver instead of talk, that must be the motto!

Politicians, in collaboration with scientists, must deliver such ready-made solutions for complex global problems such as migration, climate change and national debt. Unfortunately, cooperation and politics are not looking good, as the following publication shows (Horizonte):

The figure

80 %

of research policy experts believe that politicians do not have a sufficient understanding of how science actually works. This was the finding of a global survey conducted by Nature. However, 73 per cent of participants also felt that researchers do not understand how politics works.

'This results in constant tension between those who are scientifically illiterate and those who are politically naive,' said Paul Dufour, a political scientist at the University of Ottawa, Canada, in one of the qualitative interviews that accompanied the survey. *jho*

Ready-made solutions are also hindered by the organisation of politics and science. Politics is fragmented into nation states and, within those nation states, into a wide variety of parties and numerous interest groups. International political organisations are tending to become weaker. As globalisation, with its manifold dependencies, has accelerated massively in recent decades, this organisation of politics is unsuitable for

ready-made solutions, as coordination between all these actors is impossible. In an interview with the Neue Zürcher Zeitung, British politician Jeremy Hunt points out that there is a huge market gap for a party that offers viable solutions to the major problems of our time (Hunt). And science is fragmented into numerous disciplines. Proposed solutions from the narrow perspective of individual disciplines are often unsuitable, even dangerous – like a blind person driving a car.

As a result, we need a plan for how we humans can get out of this situation. Endless discussions and the ensuing disputes, even wars, are not ready-made solutions, but merely the unfortunate result of a lack of planning. What Rebecca Costa observed in her book ‘Kollaps oder Evolution’ is looming: when the complex problems of a civilisation exceed its cognitive threshold, that civilisation collapses (Costa).

This analysis will now be explored in greater depth, combined with selected proposed solutions. The analysis covers selected topics that are considered particularly important globally. However, this analysis does not claim to be exhaustive.

I. Analysis and selected proposed solutions

1. First comes food, then comes morality

In his ‘Dreigroschenoper’, Bertold Brecht wrote the well-known saying: ‘First comes food, then comes morality.’ Humans are also biological beings. That is why satisfying our needs is more important than morality, beyond good and evil (Nietzsche / Jenseits). And that is why material needs tend to be more important than idealistic needs.

Today, in developed countries, where people often eat too much anyway, countless political debates are held about the right morality, also known as debates about values. Topics include democracy, freedom, equality and justice, or the avoidance of racism, sexism and discrimination. Since we humans orient ourselves towards our social environment, our more or less large small group, it takes courage to oppose the views of the respective small group: it is dangerous to be wise all by yourself. That is why the moral cudgel is effective.

In doing so, we often lose sight of the goals and strategies that these debates on values actually serve, especially in the context of human rights. Often, simple economic goals are at the forefront. Depending on the situation, freedom is more important than equality. If soldiers are needed, equality becomes more important; if they are no longer needed, there are calls for more freedom. In a communist state, the right to work applies; in a capitalist state, the right to work, also known as economic freedom, applies.

That is why the respective strategy of the state leadership determines the values that serve this strategy. And that is why these values are also used as instruments of propaganda, discipline and thus power. This can lead to re-education measures under the motto: now they had the right theory, but they still lacked the right people to go with it. It is therefore not unusual for the moderate wings of certain parties to be called ‘Realos’.

As a result, politicians must learn and also communicate what is really at stake. This will simplify our coexistence. However, this requires a holistic model of state leadership.

2. Everyone for themselves and God against all

Even if universities try to offer a wide range of academic disciplines, the necessary connection between these disciplines is missing. These institutions merely unite the organisational units, which are structured according to subject-specific criteria, under one administrative management: bottom-up dominates top-down. Professional egoism triumphs over altruism. Although exchange between these organisational units is certainly possible, this exchange cannot meet holistic requirements because it is too unsystematic. In addition, many scientists ultimately see themselves as lone warriors. For these reasons, without generalists, it is not possible to find holistic solutions to complex global problems with this organisation, which is increasingly expected of these institutions.

However, many scientists still believe that politics is primarily responsible for complex global problems. This overlooks the fact that leading political figures are often educated at universities and that politicians regularly seek advice from scientists. This is not

surprising, as the sciences tend to deal with the most complex problems. As a result, specialists in politics who were trained but not educated at universities discuss issues with specialists in science who were trained but not educated at universities and believe that an ‘invisible hand’ will bring everything together. In addition, scientists often do not understand politics and vice versa. The confusion, for which universities in particular are responsible, is complete and causes disputes everywhere. And that is why complex global problems are increasingly exceeding the cognitive threshold of Homo sapiens. This is not surprising, because we humans are not biologically selected for complex problems. That is why we are also susceptible to simplistic ideologies, where you have to memorise a few sentences and think you can explain the world with them.

This can be seen in climate policy, and indeed in sustainability policy in general. Global temperature targets are set by climate scientists, which politicians are then supposed to achieve. However, they themselves do not know how this is to be done in view of the real political and economic circumstances. While global consensus on the threat of climate change has been growing for decades and lofty goals for limiting global warming have been published, the concentration of temperature-raising gases such as carbon dioxide and methane is increasing in absolute terms.

Due to the organisation of nation states, a global game of buck-passing logically begins. Lawyers, at least those specialising in constitutional and international law, should realise that without a global, capable and sovereign organisation, a world state, no global climate policy is possible. However, since it is not sufficiently clear to lawyers that jurisprudence is a management tool, because jurisprudence deals with the rules for us humans, very few come up with this idea. The majority of economists believe that climate change can be curbed with a ‘green’ growth economy and are pinning their hopes on price mechanisms and innovations, which is a dangerous game. Excessively high prices or a lack of innovation in essential goods can trigger massive social unrest and even wars. When it comes to giving up prosperity, the rule is: signal left and turn right. The fact that economic growth and, in particular, the pursuit of profit are themselves the problem of unsustainable development is suppressed and denied.

Lurking in the background of all these circumstances is a fundamental problem for Homo sapiens: the aforementioned repression and denial, even to the point of actively spreading lies on a grand scale, the lies we live by. As my brother Marc Saner pointed out to me, you have to be able to afford the truth. But universities are businesses, companies, with opportunities for advancement, but also for decline. The corresponding economic and social dependencies mean that their members know more than it seems. Nolens volens, however, many bow to Albert Einstein's saying: ‘To be an impeccable member of a flock of sheep, one must above all be a sheep.’ (Einstein / Aphorismen) When lecturers are also examiners, their respective subject areas become immune to students' divergent ideas. This is why fan clubs with a grossly incomplete and fragmented world view are formed in the sciences. The members of these fan clubs are not educated, but rather misinformed. For example, it is astonishing how little the standard model of quantum physics, which is fundamental to today's understanding of the world, is known in the sciences. And that is why there are few really good scientists who want to tackle and solve fundamental problems. People prefer to lose themselves in the well-trodden paths that are becoming increasingly trampled, and occupy themselves like the court of Versailles before the French Revolution: There is no holistic

agenda. Instead of reading what one does not know, one reads what is already known, true to the motto: ‘One only hears the questions to which one is able to find an answer,’ as Friedrich Nietzsche laments in his work ‘Die fröhliche Wissenschaft’ in the third book, section 196 (Nietzsche / Wissenschaft).

Given this situation, it is not surprising that highly commendable grades such as cum laude, magna cum laude and even summa cum laude are often awarded, as these grades also elevate the lecturers and their university. However, those who receive such honours may be misled. It becomes unclear how uncertain and contradictory scientific findings can be and how difficult it is to come up with new, fundamental ideas. The same applies to the designation as a university of excellence. In practice, disillusionment often sets in, which in turn can lead to a retreat into the ivory tower of universities. Believing in this excellence, they want to support all ‘disadvantaged’ people as much as possible, but fail to realise that they themselves are the problem. Perhaps they don't want to realise it. This is especially true of many humanities and social science scholars who divide the world into good poor and evil rich. In global development aid, too, many scholars in the West assume: ‘Where we are is at the top.’ But from the perspective of biological evolution, which is more important than cultural evolution, Africa does not need help: Africa's population is growing much faster than the rest of the world due to its higher birth rate. In addition, Africa has the highest genetic diversity of any population in the world. And since modern medicine is less widespread in Africa than in developed countries, biological selection has a stronger effect in Africa than in developed countries, which in turn is genetically advantageous.

In addition to these fundamental problems of politics and science, selected analyses will be presented, starting with an overview of Western culture.

3. Multiculturalism? Best of culture!

Humanity today lives in a complex and global world, especially a global economy. The roots of this development can be found in the Western culture of Europe and North America, especially in the corresponding scientific and technological evolution. In order to better understand today's world, we will attempt to briefly describe and comment on the characteristics of Western culture. This slightly revised text is taken from pages 163 ff. of my essay ‘Einheit der Wissenschaft und echtes Studium generale’ (Saner / Einheit). This essay can also be found on the homepage of the Basler Gesellschaft Au Bon Sens (www.aubonsens.ch) under the heading ‘Studium generale’, with the present, slightly revised text on pages 17 ff. of the essay on the aforementioned homepage.

The discovery of cosmic and biological *evolution* is mainly attributable to Western scientists, above all Charles Darwin's discovery of biological evolution. Today's natural sciences are based largely on these discoveries and their further research. They shape large parts of the world view of Western culture and, in turn, its cultural evolution. However, religious circles in particular, namely the so-called creationists, reject the idea of biological evolution.

Truth is based primarily on experience and mathematics, not on ‘holy books’. This goes hand in hand with a fundamental admission of ignorance. However, there is a tendency in the sciences to assign theology its own sphere. At the same time, there is too little

awareness of the plausibility that religious founders and prophets often suffered from mental disorders, such as paranoid schizophrenia. Anyone who were to proclaim their revelations today would be treated with drugs such as neuroleptics, which, although they sometimes have serious side effects, can eliminate or at least alleviate symptoms such as delusions and hallucinations. In earlier times, these illnesses were neither diagnosed nor treated. It is tragic that such revelations have played such a prominent role in human history, although many of these revelations have been handed down differently from how they were proclaimed by the founders of religions and prophets. However, ignorance about these illnesses is not surprising, because the secrecy of information is of great importance to us humans. This applies to both true and false information, the latter in particular with regard to its falsity.

In general, *lying* is widespread, even among us humans. One can speak of a mixed evolutionary stable strategy, an evolutionarily stable mixture of truth and lies.

Changes are explained causally, but often with abbreviated causal chains, like in a game of chess with one or two moves ahead. It would be better to ask at least five more times 'why' after the first answer to the question of the causality of changes in order to get to the bottom of the matter. The difference between determinism and causality is often unknown. The ideas of free will and fault are prevalent, a misinterpretation of changes, especially in our central nervous system. Free will and fault are incompatible with the natural laws of all phenomena in the universe, including our central nervous system. Obviously, our brain successfully pretends free will and thus also fault.

Goals are linked to the idea of central control. Evolution as a whole is thus denied a goal, wrongly so, since even decentralised structures can develop towards a goal, understood as a determinable and thus describable future state that will occur with a certain probability. Sustainable development and economic growth are increasingly colliding as goals. In general, the discussion about goals is insufficient because it is too anthropocentric and not sufficiently impact-oriented.

The organisation is shaped by nation states. Individual *states* are regarded as sovereign, which however is the case to a highly varying degree. Since the organisation must follow the task, state leadership fluctuates between centralised and decentralised control. Moreover, it is less important who formally has the say – what is more important is who actually has the say. The rule of law and the separation of powers are considered modern achievements. However, the role of private global politics, supported by capital, is not well known. In the wake of globalisation, private global politics increasingly dominates world politics and, through international organisations and corporations, ultimately the states, which are also in debt. Asian states, led by China, are gaining influence. The media play an important role in shaping public opinion.

The military, secret services and arms industry are on a high level, especially in the USA. These resources are also used unrestrainedly, particularly to secure oil and gas supplies. Electronics and space travel enable comprehensive global surveillance. The arms industry, supported by the relevant sciences, is an important economic factor with corresponding political influence.

Partnership and family are at the core of society and have a strong influence on how we live together. Legally, heterosexual monogamy is preferred, with tolerance towards same-sex partnerships. In reality, there is moderate polygamy, including in the form of

serial monogamy. Birth rates are low by global standards, and life expectancy has risen sharply. The emancipation of women is not fundamentally disputed, but in view of the tension between partnership and family on the one hand and gainful employment on the other, it is increasingly criticised when radical ideas of equality are to be enforced.

Among the *religions*, Christianity is the most widespread, although its rituals and symbols have lost much of their significance. In contrast, sport and its followers exhibit religious traits; the corresponding events are highly ritualised. The Roman Catholic Church has strong leadership in the Vatican and, in Pope Francis, had a personality who identified the problems of unbridled growth in his second encyclical, 'Laudato si', dated 24 May 2015 (Papst Franziskus). Fundamental Islam is perceived as a threat, but too little recognition has been given to the fact that the conflicts over oil and gas reserves in the countries concerned are creating a breeding ground for extreme religious movements. The state is tolerant of religions, but claims primacy. The sciences assign theology its own sphere, but have not yet sufficiently recognised that religious questions can be better answered scientifically today than by the religions themselves, although the so-called revelations of the religions must also be taken into account, supported by religious studies.

Philosophies are of little importance. Too many philosophers today concern themselves with the texts of long-dead giants of their field and act as their epigones with countless interpretations of these texts. Although these texts are of great value, it should not be forgotten that they would probably have been formulated differently if their authors had been familiar with today's world view. It is therefore advisable for philosophers to first inform themselves about today's world view, which is based in particular on cosmic, biological and cultural evolution. Subsequently, the texts of the former greats of philosophy can be used more profitably than the other way around. In addition, this approach increases the understanding and acceptance of philosophers by other sciences. Didactic problems belong in this context. The time available for learning is limited. Studying the texts of the historical greats of philosophy quickly takes up time that is then lacking for studying today's world view. In addition, these texts regularly do not correspond to the current world view. If one learns the content of these texts before learning the current world view, it is more difficult to learn the current world view than if one does it the other way around, because the historical ideas are present in the brain and have to be laboriously overwritten. It is a bitter lesson to learn a language inaccurately at first, also known as 'language immersion', and then have to laboriously correct many mistakes. Last but not least, however, this approach would first require overcoming the escapist tendencies of some philosophers.

The *economy* has developed from an agricultural to an industrial economy and increasingly to a service economy with a strong financial sector. The supply- and growth-oriented market economy is considered to be without alternative. Product advertising is omnipresent. Recently, this position has been crumbling. Lack of growth, lack of returns and the increasingly obvious contradiction between growth and sustainability are leading to a search for alternatives. Central banks feel compelled to pursue experimental monetary policies, caught between the conflicting priorities of government debt and inflation. The economy is in a crisis of theory, as demonstrated by the global financial crisis of 2007 to 2008.

Art and literature are characterised by great diversity and provide important impetus. However, certain branches of art, such as painting, are highly commercialised, even to the point of money laundering.

Science and technology are at a high level. However, due to a lack of generalists, they are unable to exploit their potential sufficiently and cannot provide the overview that is urgently needed today: given the complexity of today's world, science and technology should in fact play a leading role. Technology has made enormous progress with the construction of machines. At the same time, it is dependent on cheap energy. The threat to jobs in particular from machines, especially robots, the foreseeable shortage of oil and the pressure on fossil fuel consumption due to global warming require new holistic solutions. Furthermore, new holistic solutions are generally needed to improve the balance between population growth, environmental pollution and resource consumption.

The individual is well educated and prosperous in global terms. However, due to biological evolution, they are not adapted to today's complex, global world and tend to be overwhelmed by it. If economic pressure continues to increase, this will promote radical ideas which, if not based on a holistic approach, could lead to massive conflicts. In general, large sections of the population are not enlightened. For example, the fundamentals of today's world view, such as quantum physics, general relativity theory and protein synthesis based on DNA and RNA, are virtually unknown to them. Accordingly, we are dependent on a small number of scientists who understand these fundamentals and are able to develop them further.

Despite the criticism outlined above, the situation of Western culture, but also *of humanity as a whole*, is better than ever before in many areas thanks to scientific and technological evolution (see www.ourworldindata.org). Humans are characterised by a high degree of innovation and adaptability. On the other hand, complex structures are under high selection pressure. It is not the strongest that survive, but the most stable. This also applies to us humans. We are the only surviving species or subspecies of our genus. And our current civilisation is highly sensitive, with the risk of chain reactions. Like nature, we humans are not in equilibrium. Rather, we humans find ourselves on the brink of chaos – typical for complex structures.

It would now be interesting to examine other cultures according to the same criteria and then evaluate the corresponding characteristics of the individual cultures. The *current meaning* should serve as the benchmark for this evaluation. According to the opinion expressed here, in the absence of a known meaning of existence, the current meaning is the preservation, further development and dissemination of complex structures. To this end, the role of humans in evolution in the past, present and future should be highlighted, particularly in the context of cosmic, biological and cultural evolution. In doing so, consideration should be given to the extent to which evolution has a goal, whether this goal is known, what goal could be derived from evolution and what role the idea of a supreme being, a god, could play in this.

Due to its importance, the economy requires a more detailed analysis.

4. The economy in the growth trap

Today's economy is subject to a drive for growth, even a compulsion for growth, which is increasingly at odds with the imperative of sustainable development. Regular investment is necessary in order to be able to deliver economic performance. However, investors want a return on their investment, namely a risk premium for foregoing liquidity and ownership, and a margin. If the risk premium is calculated correctly so that the risks of loss and profit balance each other out, the money supply must grow in order to finance the remaining share of the profit, as this share of the profit cannot be financed if the money merely circulates in a circle. For social reasons, it is also not possible for money to always flow to investors in the long term. However, if the money supply has to grow, economic output must also grow, otherwise there is a risk of inflation. Inflationary pressure is sometimes made dependent on whether profits are saved, invested or consumed.

The most prominent warning about the consequences of growth in general, and therefore also about the consequences of economic growth, comes from the Club of Rome. In 1972, the Club of Rome published a generally understandable report on the state of humanity, which reflects the results of research conducted at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and funded by the Stiftung Volkswagenwerk. This report was published in a book entitled ‘Die Grenzen des Wachstums’, which has since been published in two further revised editions. Dennis Meadows, Donatella Meadows, Erich Zahn and Peter Milling from MIT were listed as the authors. The book was based on simulations of the future of humanity, supported by a computer programme called World 3, which in turn was based on the World 2 programme developed by Jay W. Forrester at MIT. The book has sold millions of copies in numerous languages. The back cover of the 1974 German edition of the book, published by the Buchclub Ex Libris Zürich, reads as follows:

‘Uncontrolled growth has led humanity into a crisis. It has reached the limits of its earthly existence. There is a lack of a global economic policy providing new opportunities for shaping the economic, political and social spheres. Humanity still has the chance to maintain its quality of life and create a globally balanced society that will last for generations through joint action by all nations focused on the future.’ (Meadows et al.)

Particular attention was drawn to the dangers of exponential growth, a long-known phenomenon described, for example, in the legend of the grain of wheat. Place one grain of wheat on the first square of a chessboard, two grains on the second square, four grains on the third square, and so on, doubling the number of grains until you reach the 64th square. The result would be $2^{64} – 1$ grains of wheat on all squares of the chessboard, which is roughly equivalent to a thousand times the current global wheat harvest per year.

Despite these and numerous other warnings about the limits of growth, humanity has most likely made a serious strategic error and failed to take these limits sufficiently into account, even accelerating growth in absolute terms. This applies not only to population growth, but also to economic growth for the reasons described above. Towards the end of the Second World War, Germany declared total war, with the result that the war economy was given priority over all other sectors of the economy. This meant that

women had to be involved in the war economy. Something similar has happened globally in recent decades. In order to ensure economic growth, women have been lured into gainful employment in recent decades, under the guise of emancipation. Since the idea of emancipation corresponds to the idea of equality, left-wing parties also support this cause in the hope of gaining power. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the growth-oriented economic system was also able to spread globally. As a result, capital income grew much faster than earned income, as the supply of workers increased significantly. Nowadays, two earned incomes are often necessary to maintain the desired standard of living in a couple's household, especially one with children. Raising children is increasingly becoming a task for the state. This has allowed profits to be privatised on a large scale and losses to be socialised. However, it is questionable whether global economic growth can be sustained for much longer, as the limits to growth are drawing ever closer.

If today's economy is subject to growth constraints, we are trapped.

Mainstream economics believes that economic growth and sustainable development can be reconciled despite everything. Mainstream economics points to the price mechanism and innovation. However, the price mechanism has its limits, as demonstrated by the price of bread in connection with the French Revolution, especially in the case of essential goods such as oil today. And innovations are hopes that may or may not be fulfilled. At the operational level and, to a certain extent, at the macroeconomic level, it makes perfect sense to rely on the price mechanism and the hope for innovation. Those who are no longer competitive due to their prices and lack of innovation go under, and other economic actors take their place. This is creative destruction, as described by Joseph Schumpeter in the introduction to Chapter 7 of his work Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy:

‘The opening of new foreign or domestic markets and the organisational development from craftsman’s businesses and factories to corporate conglomerates such as U.S. Steel illustrate the same process of industrial mutation – if I may use this biological term – which incessantly revolutionises the economic structure *from within*, incessantly of capitalism, and it is the essence of every capitalist entity.’ (Schumpeter)

There is now a high risk that creative destruction will affect the global economy as a whole due to unsustainable development, because the hoped-for innovations, such as the groundbreaking fusion power plants for energy supply, cannot be developed or their energy becomes too expensive. The new structure would probably be based on the military, mainly at the level of nation states.

If mainstream economics wants to mitigate this strategic risk, it must move away from the mantra of a profit- and thus growth-oriented economy. In doing so, it must be shown that this departure from today's economic model improves quality of life, as the need for growth and thus the satisfaction of ever more extensive needs is widespread, and ultimately knows no bounds and leads to ever more stress. In the fairy tale published by the Brothers Grimm ‘The Fisherman and His Wife’ by Philipp Otto Runge, the fisherman's wife, Ilsebill, is described as becoming increasingly greedy, starting with a small house instead of a fisherman's hut and ending with her enthronement as pope, all because of the flounder, which was actually an enchanted prince that her husband had caught and then released. When she also wanted to become God and her husband, willy-

nilly, also submitted this wish to the flounder, she found herself sitting with her husband in the fisherman's hut again. (Runge) When we look at the development of our needs throughout human history, much of it reminds us of the fisherman's wife. Today, we can therefore speak of ‘too much civilisation’.

The story of Ilsebill now leads to another topic that is worth analysing.

5. Fantasies of power and rank, superheroes and gods

Since, like other individualised animal societies in which individuals can distinguish themselves from one another, we develop power and rank relationships, the pursuit of power and rank can be postulated as an important need, even to the point of saying: I'm the boss, you're nothing!

This attitude is reinforced by the fact that in our universe, every human being embodies their own universe. At the same time, nature, of which humans are a part, can be merciless towards us, leaving us feeling completely at the mercy of blind fate. So, it is not surprising that we indulge in fantasies of power and rank in order to rise above our fate. Such fantasies can lead us to want to control nature through our technology, which has been partially successful, but can also lead to sorcerer's apprentice effects. Power and rank can undoubtedly also bring advantages. The proverb ‘When power comes, the law falls into disregard’ illustrates a circumstance that in jurisprudence is also called the normative power of the factual. The nobility, now largely extinct, based its power and rank on raids and protection rackets. And thanks to the money thus acquired, the nobility was able to further expand its power and rank under the motto ‘A golden hammer breaks an iron gate’. Even today, crime among the powerful is widespread, as Chul Lee described in detail in his 1994 essay of the same title, which is available on the internet (Lee).

It is particularly appealing for us humans to imagine superheroes or even gods. It is a kind of science fiction, with more fiction than science. While superheroes possess supernatural powers, gods regularly have immortality as well. With the idea of immortality, the individual triumphs over death, at least in his imagination.

But when an individual's life does not live up to his claims to power and status, he may reflexively declare the whole world to be bad and everyone to be stupid. It is also popular to devalue those who are economically successful, for example, old white men or, as in Nazi Germany, Jews. When, as in Germany before the Second World War, the state was threatened with bankruptcy, economically successful Jews were even expropriated.

While we can understand such fantasies, we humans should adapt our need for power and status to reality. Even if our entire galaxy, the Milky Way, were to perish, it would hardly be noticed in the rest of the universe. But even on our Earth, which is tiny in comparison to the Milky Way, our need for power and status comes up against many limits that can be analysed in detail. Each of us is far from the top of the hierarchy in a wide variety of areas, such as education, intelligence, career, artistic and craft skills, sports, income and wealth, lack of membership in a privileged group, physical attractiveness, health or family life. Constant comparisons can therefore lead to a massive feeling of discrimination. It is advisable to refrain from these comparisons as

far as possible, and indeed to become resilient to them. Those who pay too much attention to these comparisons risk a depressed life: being ‘woke’ makes you unhappy.

Last but not least, the pursuit of power and status can hinder progress. Since people are reluctant to give up advantages based on power and status, fundamental changes often take a generation or even longer. Max Planck noted this in his ‘Scientific Autobiography’ on page 22: ‘A new scientific truth does not triumph by convincing its opponents and making them acknowledge its merit, but rather by the fact that its opponents eventually die out, and a new generation grows up that is familiar with it from the beginning.’ (Planck) Unfortunately, distinguishing between true and false is not so easy.

6. Where you have left your faith, there you can seek it

Truth is the most accurate and complete correspondence between information and reality. But how does the individual obtain such information? It should be noted that our ability as humans to receive, store, process and pass on information is generally limited and varies from person to person.

These abilities depend, among other things, on what information the individual can receive. This is not to mention the information we perceive unconsciously through all our senses. Rather, it is about how we consciously perceive information through seeing and hearing in media such as the internet, television and radio, in libraries, magazines and books, and how we should select this information.

Basically, there are two methodological options. Either you start to inform yourself more or less randomly in this huge reservoir, or you search for information in a targeted manner. We regularly use both options. This illustrates that the paths of thought are important in determining what information we obtain. Which paths we take depends on many factors. Our bodies, including our brains, origins, language, society, education, family and friends, politics, leisure and work, religion, media and more determine the paths of our thoughts and thus also our information.

In order to obtain the best possible information, we must also decide which sources we want to use.

If you want to obtain information from sources that are accessible to the general public, such as social media, newspapers, television and radio, this can only serve as a rough guide. The information is often incomplete and just as often contains gross errors. Many authors of the information lack an overview and knowledge of the context; the complexity is too high. In addition, the authors regularly lack methodological knowledge, for example on the theory of truth. Constant time pressure is common. For this reason, mainly individual, concrete stories are told; general, abstract treatises are rare. Edwin Mundwiler, a former member of parliament of the Swiss canton of Basel-Stadt, referred to this phenomenon as ‘Karl Knöpfels schönstes Sonntagserlebnis’ (Karl Knöpfels nicest Sunday experience). Economic dependencies, which encourage manipulation, should not be underestimated. This also applies to media owners. In order to reach the largest possible audience and thus achieve the greatest possible economic success, information must be kept simple, which in turn does not do justice to its complexity.

Due to time constraints, it is often impossible for individuals to obtain information from different media with different orientations and internationally, even though this would be useful. As a criminal defence lawyer, I know that criminal proceedings cannot be assessed without personal knowledge of the files, and even then, a lot of information may be missing. The differences in quality between these sources are considerable. In Switzerland, the best daily newspaper, the Neue Zürcher Zeitung, often provides excellent information, while the widely distributed free newspaper, 20 Minuten, is of rather modest quality due to its concept. These sources are valuable in that they allow readers to become familiar with different levels of information and thus also different opinions. In addition, these media can serve as a starting point for research, whereby the original sources on which the media information is based should be consulted whenever possible.

However, if you want to obtain the best possible information, the best way is through scientific research. Instructions for this can be found on the internet under the keyword 'literature research'. Original sources should therefore be consulted whenever possible. However, correct research requires appropriate training and time.

But even this time-consuming research is limited in terms of the truthfulness of the information. Even science cannot provide absolute truth in the sense of complete knowledge of the world. Isaac Newton and Albert Einstein were aware that even so-called 'hard' physics cannot provide this. In his 1932 statement of faith, Einstein wrote: 'The most beautiful and profound thing we can experience is the sense of the mysterious. ... It is enough for me to sense these mysteries with awe and to try to capture in humility a faint image of the sublime structure of being.' (Einstein / Glaubensbekenntnis) That is why good qualifications such as good grades should not lead to the illusion of 'knowing and being able to do'. In addition, schools and even universities often only teach simplifications, or even falsehoods. And that is why it is important to teach what one does not know.

Incidentally, the same difficulties that have been described in connection with sources accessible to the general public can also arise in scientific research.

Given these uncertainties about the truth, it is not surprising that René Descartes, in his 'Discourse' published anonymously in Leiden in 1637, a treatise on the method of correct use of reason, states on page 23: 'Having begun to consider my own opinions as worthless, because I wanted to subject them all to examination, I was sure that it was best to follow the opinions of the *most intelligent*.' (Descartes) This shifts the problem to the selection of the 'most intelligent', which greatly increases the subjective side of the search for truth.

Science is not a democracy, and following the mainstream of science is convenient. But it is easy to get caught up in such a fan club: where you have left your beliefs, there you can find them. If these beliefs are threatened with being shaken, repression and denial, even primitive reactions, are not uncommon, whether in the form of aggression or escape into silence.

All these analyses raise the question of whether we could have acted differently, and thus the question of free will.

7. I am so free

In the debate about whether we humans have free will, there is regular discussion about whether we make decisions consciously or unconsciously. Our brain is largely controlled by parts of the brain that are not accessible to our consciousness. This postulate by Sigmund Freud has been confirmed by recent experiments. Apparently, the so-called limbic system, which controls our emotions, has control over our decisions, but not the cerebral cortex, which controls our mind and reason. And we only become aware of the emotions that arise in the limbic system when they reach the cerebral cortex. As a result, we make decisions that optimise our unconsciously generated emotional state, but not those that our intellect and reason would dictate. What is true is therefore dependent on our emotions. Incidentally, numerous processes are also taking place in our cerebral cortex at any given time that do not penetrate our consciousness. However, our thinking can in turn influence our emotions.

Nevertheless, we have the impression that we have free will. Gerhard Roth explains why we have this impression in the book I edited on 'Studium generale – Auf dem Weg zu einem allgemeinen Teil der Wissenschaften', pages 165 ff. (Saner / Studium generale).

However, whether we make conscious or unconscious decisions is not decisive for the question of free will.

We humans and our brains are subject to natural constants and laws that we cannot influence. Our brain is largely controlled by electromagnetic interaction. According to Richard Feynman, QED – The Strange Theory of Light and Matter, page 101, electromagnetic interaction is based on three fundamental processes:

'Process 1: A photon moves from place to place.

Process 2: An electron moves from place to place.

Process 3: An electron emits or absorbs a photon.' (Feynman)

Whether these laws of nature, in conjunction with the natural constants, are deterministic or, as in the case of quantum physics, indeterministic, is irrelevant to the question of free will, since quantum physics is also subject to these laws and constants.

As a result, the natural constants and laws of nature leave us and our brains no choice but to freely determine our will. And so, in life, one is either lucky or unlucky; one's own contribution to one's success or failure in life cannot be justified by free will. The lack of free will and thus the lack of fault must be taken into account, particularly in the legal system.

Despite all the injustices that life can bring, there is one great justice, death, which affects everyone: 'Happiness and misfortune, bear both with equanimity! Everything passes, and so will you!' (old proverb)

8. Life and death

Species extinction is a principle of evolution, whereby a distinction must be made between species extinction, species splitting and species transformation. Climate change plays an important role in this. Billions of years ago, there was a mass extinction because photosynthesis enriched the atmosphere with large amounts of oxygen. Climate change

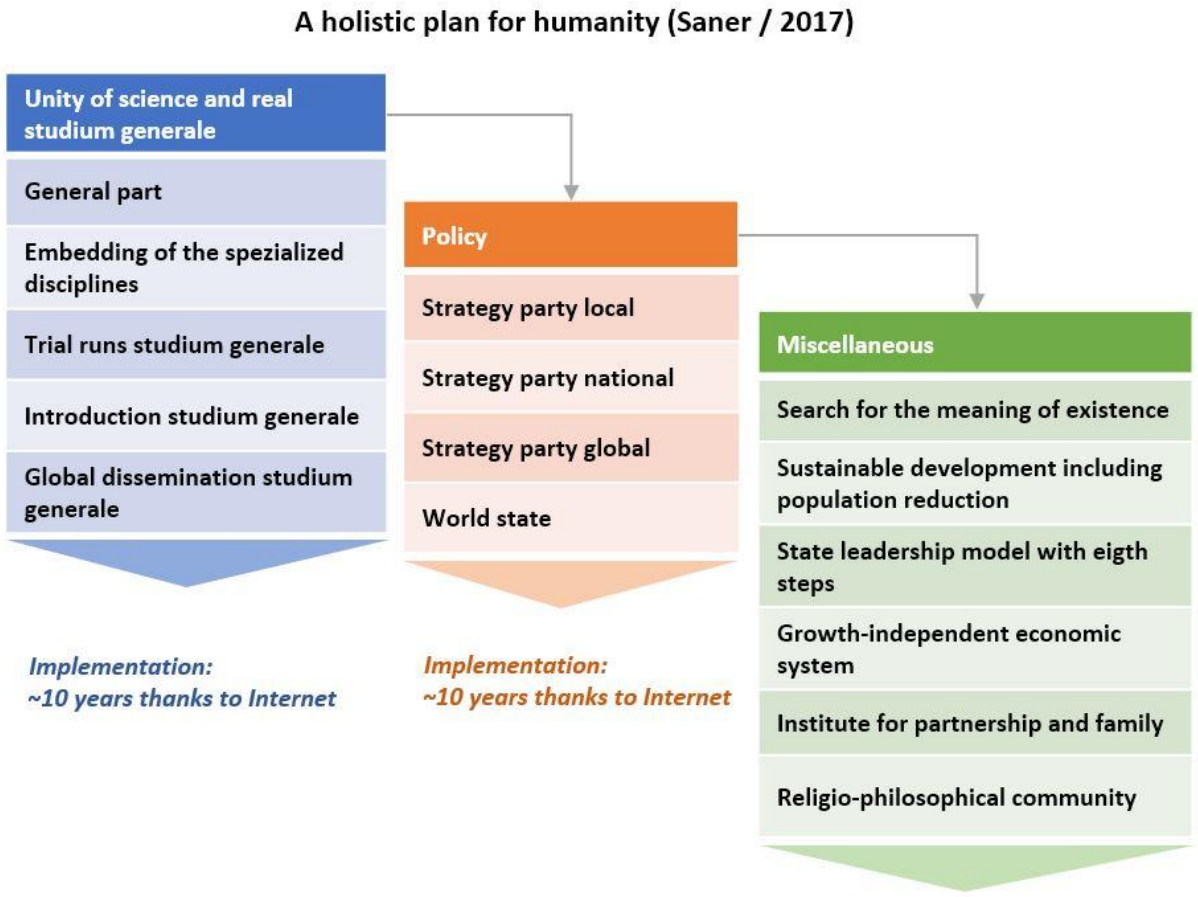
is also blamed for our evolution into Homo sapiens, with selection pressure leading to the survival of the most intelligent. The climate change that threatens us today is therefore nothing new and is not necessarily harmful to biological evolution.

However, the complex civilisation of us humans could suffer great damage from the threat of climate change due to our sedentary lifestyle, our valuable infrastructure and, in some cases, high population density. Geographical location plays a decisive role in this. The trend is that the impending climate change will tend to benefit countries in the north, such as Canada and Russia, and disadvantage countries in the south, such as those in Africa.

II. Proposed solutions based on the plan

1. The plan

The plan is based on the project 'Einheit der Wissenschaft und echtes Studium generale': www.einheit.science. Under the heading 'Allgemeiner Teil der Wissenschaften' on the aforementioned homepage, you will find my book on 'Allgemeiner Teil der Wissenschaften', which is available electronically on the homepage of the Swiss Academies of Arts and Sciences and in print on Amazon.de (Saner / Allgemeiner Teil). On page 384 of this book, you will find the following plan with explanations, with one editorial change:



Ten years for the global dissemination of a real studium generale and another ten years until the founding of a world state are the shortest periods of time that are technically possible. These short periods of time can only be achieved if a rapid and majority consensus is reached. In terms of the history of ideas, this requires a convergence of the humanities and natural sciences, the unity of science, which is tantamount to a second Enlightenment. How long it will take to achieve the necessary consensus, or indeed whether this is even possible, cannot be predicted.

Other parts of this plan, such as reducing the population of our planet to a sustainable level, will generally take much longer, probably in the order of 100 years.

The individual steps of this plan will now be described in the necessary brevity. The individual steps of this plan do not correspond entirely to individual sections of the analysis. Rather, there are numerous connections between the individual steps of this plan and the individual sections of the analysis.

2. Unity of science and real studium generale

The geological age in which we humans live is officially designated as the ‘Holocene’ by the International Union of Geological Sciences and its subgroup, the International Commission on Stratigraphy. The Holocene, the post-glacial period, began about 11,700 years ago with the warming of the Earth. However, various proposals have been made to introduce a new geological epoch called the ‘Anthropocene’, a new age of humankind. This new epoch is justified by the influence of humans on the biological, geological and climatic conditions on Earth.

Whether and since when we have been in the Anthropocene is, however, controversial and has not yet been officially decided. In any case, globalisation has accelerated since the Second World War and again since the end of the Cold War. The global population and economy have been growing rapidly for some time, with corresponding consequences for resources and the environment, especially for the Earth's climate. There is a growing opinion that this development could have serious consequences, even leading to our own extinction.

It is obvious that we humans have a global responsibility, also in our own interest. In this situation, however, we have neither a holistic strategy, nor an organisation capable of acting globally, nor the generalists who have the necessary overview, who can see through the relevant connections and who, thanks to holistic methods, can propose and implement holistic solutions. Without this strategy, without this organisation and without these generalists, our future will increasingly become an odyssey in thick fog with a high probability of crashing.

My book ‘Allgemeiner Teil der Wissenschaften’ now has the ambitious aspiration of providing the foundations for the aforementioned strategy and organisation, but above all for the urgently needed generalists.

Firstly, we must realise that our world today is increasingly dependent on the sciences, if only because of its growing complexity. Secondly, our fundamental problems, such as resources, the environment, population and economic growth, are transdisciplinary problems from a scientific point of view. These problems are beyond the reach of individual scientific disciplines, even when combined, i.e. interdisciplinarity. Instead, transdisciplinary approaches are needed that can unite the scientific disciplines under overarching perspectives and thus also change them: it is a matter of bringing together the natural sciences and the humanities, which is tantamount to a second Enlightenment. Thirdly, today's sciences cannot guarantee this transdisciplinarity because they are led by specialists without the necessary generalists. In order to guarantee this transdisciplinarity, we need a foundation in the general sciences in which the individual scientific disciplines can be embedded. This leads to the unity of science. And on this

basis, the unity of science, a real studium generale lasting two terms should be institutionalised at our universities. This is a real studium generale because, unlike existing courses of studium generale, it is holistic. It could also be described as a fundamental course of study. The graduates of this studium generale are then the generalists we so urgently need. The duration of two semesters enables these generalists to complete a specialist course of study so that they can also get to know the depths of a discipline. Ultimately, these generalists should be able to work with all of us to fulfil our responsibilities in the Anthropocene, particularly in strategic and organisational terms. However, not all students need to complete a real studium generale. Just as in the military, where only a few officers are trained as general staff officers after a rigorous selection process, it is sufficient for a small number of suitable students to complete a real studium generale.

This text is taken from my book on ‘Allgemeiner Teil der Wissenschaften’, pages 19 ff., with editorial changes. For further information, please refer to this book and www.einheit.science.

3. Politics

The strategy party has already been founded. Due to a lack of personnel, it is not yet operational. It is essential that the programme includes both a strategic, global and a national part, with the national part concerning Switzerland. For details, please refer to www.strategiepartei.ch. However, parts of the homepage have not been updated for some time.

Detailed considerations on the world state can be found in the book on ‘Allgemeiner Teil der Wissenschaften’ on pages 387 ff., where a relevant essay I have written is referred to. Further considerations on the world state can be found using the search function in this book.

Although a world state can also entail many dangers, the advantages of a world state should be mentioned, as listed in my book on ‘Allgemeiner Teil der Wissenschaften’ on pages 388 ff. The system is based on the eight-step model of state leadership developed by me (Saner / Staatsleitung).

• The holistic analysis of needs is promoted by the cultural diversity of a world state. The greater cultural diversity of a world state compared to the system of nation states is based on the dismantling of nationalist prejudices against other cultures. The tendency of a world state towards uniformity must be countered by a federalist system and appropriate checks and balances.

• In the synthesis, our needs are evaluated on the basis of the preliminary results of the search for meaning. However, the search for meaning often relies on globally active sciences such as cosmology, space travel, quantum physics, computer technology, genetic engineering and brain research. A world state is optimal for promoting these sciences, both organisationally and in terms of its resources.

• The state's objectives must be set in such a way that our synthesised needs can be satisfied. However, such state objectives often concern global areas, such as the aforementioned search for meaning, sustainability, population policy and the economy. These state objectives can be optimally pursued with a world state.

• Instead of a growing number of international treaties, the state's objectives can be implemented through ordinary legislation and New Public Management. The formal system of the world state is therefore simpler and more transparent overall than that of nation states, and in particular than that of international organisations.

• Due to the harmonisation of laws and the larger units in both the public and private sectors, the actual realisation of state objectives is more efficient and effective in a world state than in other state systems. Today's transport and communication options are helpful in this regard.

The removal of language barriers will also support all of this.

• The world state would eliminate most of today's defence spending; the risk of the use of weapons of mass destruction would be massively reduced. Secret services could be massively reduced.

• Due to the elimination of state barriers, control of global goals would be easier and more comprehensive than in the system of nation states.

• The holistic analysis of levels of satisfaction is promoted by the cultural diversity of a world state. The cultural diversity of a world state provides more opportunities for comparison in evaluation than in the system of nation states.

• The increased cultural diversity of a world state makes global reforms easier than in the system of nation states.

4. Search for the meaning of existence

In my book on ‘Allgemeiner Teil der Wissenschaften’, there are many references to the meaning of existence, which can be found using the search function. The Basler Gesellschaft Au Bon Sens published my book on ‘Der Sinn des Daseins’ back in 2000. This book is available in electronic form on the homepage of the Basler Gesellschaft Au Bon Sens (www.aubonsens.ch) under the heading ‘Schriften / Grundlagen’, but can also be ordered from me in printed form (Saner / Sinn). At this point, I will only quote the remarks on pages 340 ff. from the book on ‘Allgemeiner Teil der Wissenschaften’.

Given the current state of knowledge, the search for the meaning of existence means that the meaningful goal must be sought in particular with regard to cosmic, biological and cultural evolution.

This is an interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary scientific task. The aim is to find out what the fundamental structures and their properties are and how these structures relate to each other. On this basis, an attempt can be made to deduce the future state of the structures and their goals.

The search for meaning requires corresponding basic research, such as that carried out by CERN in Geneva or the European Observatory in Chile. In addition, the search for meaning requires systems that are capable of receiving, storing, processing and transmitting large amounts of information.

Currently, the search for meaning is based on the human brain. It would therefore be advantageous if its relevant capabilities could be enhanced, although at this point we are only concerned with its technical capabilities. Brain research and genetic engineering

are of particular importance in this context. Computer technology should also be promoted to support our brain. Such research requires enormous financial and human resources, making international cooperation essential.

This is not only a disadvantage, as the joint search for the meaning of existence can unite us humans. States and communities of states must take the lead in terms of organisation and financing. On the other hand, given the possibility that this leadership position could be abused, there is widespread scepticism about this solution. It remains to be seen how far private initiative can go in this area. In any case, the relevant sciences receive massive financial support from the state and would probably be condemned to a shadowy existence without this support.

Perhaps parts of the defense industry and religions can be won over to the search for meaning.

A world state would render the defense industry superfluous, while a religious-philosophical community could replace large parts of religious organisations by answering religious questions and developing appropriate rituals and symbols based on evolutionary theories. These measures would free up human and financial resources for the search for meaning.

5. Sustainable development including population reduction

Global sustainable development can be achieved by reducing the world's population. This means that population size, resource consumption and environmental impact must be brought into a stable equilibrium. This equilibrium is stable over time if it remains unchanged for all future generations. However, we must be aware that such an equilibrium can always be disrupted given the dynamics of nature. As complex structures, we humans live on the edge of chaos.

In terms of content, four different levels of stability can be distinguished:

• The first level of stability is achieved when our species survives as a whole. However, it must be assumed that, from a biological point of view, the extinction of species is a feature of evolution and that the long-term survival of Homo sapiens is unlikely.

• The second level of stability is achieved when an unplanned reduction in the total population is prevented. In 1992, Donella Meadows, Dennis Meadows and Jørgen Randers published ‘The New Limits to Growth’ as Scenario 1, a so-called standard cycle for global development, according to whose calculations a significant, involuntary population decline can be expected around 2030. On pages 166 ff., the authors state that ‘Scenario 1 reflects the most likely basic behaviour pattern of the system, provided that similar political decisions continue to influence population and economic growth in the future, that technologies and values continue to evolve in a similar manner to what we are accustomed to, and that the uncertain parameters included in the model are estimated reasonably correctly’. In this respect, this scenario is subject to clear reservations. (Meadows / Randers / Neue Grenzen)

In 2004, Meadows' group published an updated version of their world model, with several subsequent editions. The ‘standard cycle’ scenario is still the same in its updated form. However, the scenario is currently called ‘Scenario 1’. It is merely a reference

point and not a forecast. According to this scenario, an unplanned reduction in the total population will begin in about ten years. (Meadows / Randers / 30-Jahre Update, pages 171 ff.)

• The third level of stability is reached when an unplanned reduction in the regional population is prevented. This is not guaranteed today. Thousands of people still die of starvation every day, and relevant regional disasters regularly lead to mass deaths.

• The fourth level of stability is finally reached when our synthesised needs are more or less completely satisfied. Reaching this level and ensuring it in the long term would be the maximum strategic goal. This does not appear to be possible globally at present; even regionally, it seems possible only to a limited extent and for a limited period of time. It is important to note that economically developed countries can only satisfy their needs at the expense of other countries.

What can be done to ensure at least the first level of stability in the long term, and ideally to achieve the fourth level?

According to the opinion expressed here, the most sensible, safest and most logical way forward in this situation is to reduce the population to a level that is in line with the principles of sustainability in terms of resource consumption and environmental impact, and, wherever possible, to achieve the fourth level of stability. Based on various calculations, the world population would have to be reduced to less than one billion people for this purpose.

When reducing the population, regional reductions must be measured according to the principles of sustainability. At the same time, it is essential to limit resource consumption and environmental impact, in particular through technical measures, so that the population may need to be reduced less drastically. Such a solution should be introduced in good time so that it can be implemented solely through incentive systems and persuasion. Coercion has no place in population policy. However, it must be recognised that population policy is pursued in numerous policy areas, whether we like it or not. Measures in the areas of taxation, family policy, social security, spatial planning, education policy, foreign policy and migration often have an impact on population numbers. However, immediate action is imperative. Fortunately, birth rates in economically developed countries are already so low that they will lead to a long-term decline in the population. However, immigration is resulting in a growing population in these countries.

Such a reduction in population has a number of other advantages, for example in terms of immigration and labour market policy. It can be assumed that with a world population of less than one billion people, significantly fewer migration movements would be necessary and, moreover, easier to cope with than today. It is also to be expected that a decline in the labour force would reduce unemployment rather than the current global population growth of around 80 million people per year. Finally, the reduction in population would lead to a significant improvement in quality of life, as the stress of today's overcrowding would be eliminated.

This text is an abridged version of pages 373 ff. from my book on ‘Allgemeiner Teil der Wissenschaften’. Again, the search function in this book can be used to find many more explanations on the subject of population.

6. State leadership model with eight steps

I described the eight-step model of state leadership in a book back in 2000. This book is available in electronic form on the website of the Basler Gesellschaft Au Bon Sens (www.aubonsens.ch) under the heading ‘Schriften / Staatsleitung’, but can also be ordered from me in printed form (Saner / Staatsleitung). On pages 70 ff. of this book, I have worked out a possible application of this model for the Swiss canton of Basel-Stadt. This model has also been applied in various contexts in my book on ‘Allgemeiner Teil der Wissenschaften’, for example in the above descriptions of the advantages of a world state. The model is presented in detail on pages 350 ff. of this book. The following overview can be found on pages 386 f. of this book:

• The state must determine the needs of its entire population through regular analyses, for example through surveys. In doing so, the needs of citizens can be distinguished from those of other residents and those of foreigners with more or less close ties to the state. The needs of organisations are also important, whether they are based in the state or connected to it, such as economic organisations or other states or communities of states. However, these needs of organisations should ultimately be seen in the light of the needs of us humans.

• The synthesis of the needs and with the current meaning is the most demanding step for state leadership, especially if there is to be a deviation from fundamental needs such as the need for growth. That is why state leadership needs a constant flow of information from the sciences and is also well served if it consists also of graduates of a real studium generale.

• The state's primary goal must be to optimally satisfy the synthesised needs of the population, but in particular to create the conditions for these needs to be optimally satisfied by the population itself. State objectives must therefore encompass not only the satisfaction of state needs, but also private needs. The higher goals must be defined through legislation, the lower goals through New Public Management instruments such as products and service mandates. The greatest possible clarity must always be ensured.

• The state implements its goals through measures such as legislation and New Public Management instruments.

• To satisfy needs, legislation must be applied and enforced, products must be manufactured and service mandates must be fulfilled.

• The state must check whether its system is functioning as planned. Each level is responsible for the level below it. In a democratic system, the parliament has supreme oversight, subject to the rights of the people, with the judiciary playing a special role. Any errors identified must be corrected.

• Falsification consists, on the one hand, of an analysis of whether the synthesised needs have been satisfied and, on the other hand, of a case-related evaluation of the state management system, for example by examining its effectiveness and efficiency. This must be carried out by all state organs. In a democratic system, parliament has primary responsibility.

• Known deficiencies in the system must be remedied at all levels through appropriate reforms.

This eight-step approach can be followed with any form of government except anarchy.

Further reflections on this model can be found using the search function in my book on ‘Allgemeiner Teil der Wissenschaften’.

7. Growth-independent economic system

In 2017, I proposed a growth-independent economic system in a book. This book is available electronically on the homepage of the Basler Gesellschaft Au Bon Sens (www.aubonsens.ch) under the heading ‘Schriften / Wirtschaft’, but can also be ordered from me in printed form (Saner / Wirtschaft). This idea is also discussed in my book on ‘Allgemeiner Teil der Wissenschaften’ and justified as follows on pages 196 ff.

Today's economy is subject to a drive for growth, even a necessity for growth, which is increasingly at odds with the imperative of sustainable development. This means that regular investments are necessary in order to be able to deliver economic performance. However, investors want a return on their investment, namely a risk premium for foregoing liquidity and ownership and for their margin. If the risk premium is calculated correctly so that the risks of loss and profit are balanced, the money supply must grow in order to finance the remaining share of the profit, as this share of the profit cannot be financed if the money merely moves around in a circle.

For social reasons, it is also not possible for money to flow only to investors in the long term. However, if the money supply has to grow, economic output must also grow, otherwise there is a risk of inflation.

When designing a growth-independent economic system, the greatest attention must in particular be paid to the motivation of investors. If profit-oriented forms of society have to be dispensed with in this system in order to eliminate the growth imperative of today's economic system, investors must have a motivation other than profit. For more on this, please refer to pages 187 ff. in my aforementioned book on economics. Once again, the search function in my book on ‘Allgemeiner Teil der Wissenschaften’ can be used to find numerous further considerations on economics.

8. Institute for partnership and family

In 2006, I wrote a book on ‘Partnerschaft und Familie’. This book can be found in electronic form on the homepage of the Basler Gesellschaft Au Bon Sens (www.aubonsens.ch) under the heading ‘Schriften / Partnerschaft und Familie’ but can also be ordered from me in printed form (Saner / Partnerschaft). Numerous parts of my book on ‘Allgemeiner Teil der Wissenschaften’ are based on this book on ‘Partnerschaft und Familie’, such as pages 205 ff. and on biological evolution.

Partnership and family are central themes in our lives. An institute for ‘Partnership and Family’ should conduct research in this area and advise us on all relevant issues. In particular, various models for partnership should be made available, such as the family model, the loving couple model and the provider model, but also models outside the Western cultural sphere.

In my book on ‘Partnerschaft und Familie’, pages 103 ff., the institute is described as follows, with a few editorial changes. The Institute for Partnership and Family must cover the topic in all its breadth and depth. Interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary work is therefore essential. The institute must be guided by scientific standards. The focus is on empirical scientific methodology. Its activities should include research, education, advising organisations and private individuals, and public relations work.

Research should focus on the topic of partnership and family. However, in order to take a comprehensive approach, it is necessary to link this to general considerations, as outlined in my book on ‘Allgemeiner Teil der Wissenschaften’. For this reason, an organisational link to a real studium generale is also advantageous.

As part of the training, courses on all aspects of partnership and family should be offered. These courses can be offered at schools and universities, but also outside these institutions. Practical courses are also useful, e.g. on learning about sexuality and raising children.

When advising organisations, both private and state organisations must be taken into account. Of particular importance here is advising state organisations with regard to legislation. Private organisations must be advised on the establishment, duration and dissolution of partnerships and families.

Public relations work must cover all aspects of the institute's activities.

The institute can be state-run by a public entity, especially a university. However, a private sponsorship or institution is also possible. The orientation of the institute must enable both national and international activities.

Financing should primarily be secured through the sale of the institute's services. In the initial phase, however, financing through private donations and state subsidies will be unavoidable.

Again, the search function in my book on ‘Allgemeiner Teil der Wissenschaften’ can be used to find numerous further considerations on partnership and family.

9. Religio-philosophical community

In 2002, I wrote a book on ‘Religionen, Rituale und Symbole’. This book is available in electronic form on the homepage of the Basler Gesellschaft Au Bon Sens (www.aubonsens.ch) under the heading ‘Schreiben / Religionen’, but can also be ordered from me in printed form (Saner / Religionen). An overview of religions can be found on pages 211 ff. in my book on ‘Allgemeiner Teil der Wissenschaften’.

As postulated in this book on ‘Allgemeiner Teil der Wissenschaften’, page 289, an enlightened global society needs a corresponding religion. Today's religions are most likely not of divine but of human origin. This is all the truer as their contents consistently correspond to the ideas of the time in which their proclaimers lived. From this perspective, the strengths of these religions lie less in their answers than in their questions. Thus, religious questions must be answered on a scientific basis. Religious questions are questions about God and creation, the end of worldly existence, the idea of rebirth and death, rules of conduct and our role models. Rituals should be developed

for the changing seasons and different stages of life. An important symbol would be that Year 1 begins with the founding of the world state.

In the book I wrote on ‘Religionen, Rituale und Symbole’, I attempted to answer the religious questions mentioned above, primarily on the basis of scientific ideas about evolution. This worldview is preferred over religious worldviews because it is constantly evolving. In contrast to religious worldviews, it is systematically subject to criticism because it starts from a position of ignorance and requires empirical confirmation. This worldview is therefore closer to reality than religious worldviews, which are based too strongly on immutable truths and pay too little attention to empiricism. However, the evolutionary worldview also leads to speculation when answering certain fundamental questions. Finally, the so-called revelations, supported by religious studies, should also be taken into account, as these revelations also offer valuable insights.

A globally active community of religious philosophers should address all these answers based on the evolutionary worldview.

Once again, the search function in my book on ‘Allgemeiner Teil der Wissenschaften’ can be used to find numerous further considerations on religions.

III. Obstacles

1. Honouring of those not involved

‘Every good practice is based on a good theory.’ (Gerhard Vollmer). However, putting a theory into practice requires much more effort than developing a theory. I am now looking for chefs who will cook my ready-made solutions and thus put them into practice. However, those who shy away from the heat should not stand in the kitchen. And even my ready-made solutions are only better non-solutions. That's just the way it is...

Criticism of the proposed solutions is only useful if better non-solutions are proposed. We have enough lists of shortcomings and wish lists.

Unfortunately, my experience in recent years has shown that finding these chefs is rather difficult. Nor have I discovered any proposed solutions that could replace the plan I have suggested. Very few people are interested enough in such a topic to get involved. The vast majority are not involved. Humorous, but not entirely inaccurate, the six phases of planning are as follows:

1. Enthusiasm
2. Confusion
3. Disillusionment
4. Search for the guilty
5. Punishment of the innocent
6. Honouring of those not involved

Those who are not involved have their reasons why they cannot and do not want to support holistic plans for humanity. The reasons for this lack of participation are serious obstacles to such plans and, above all, to their implementation. Selected obstacles will be analysed in more detail, whereby reference can also be made to the section ‘Analysis’ on pages 6 ff.

2. Complexity

Our world today is characterised by a high degree of complexity, which is also increasing at a rapid pace. Technology and science have developed enormously, especially since industrialisation, with recent examples including electronics and countless scientific publications. In addition, we live in a globalised world and are confronted with countless influences.

However, we humans are not selected for complex conditions such as those we have created through our cultural evolution. For most of our history, we humans lived as hunters and gatherers. That is why problems that are too complex can quickly overwhelm us and lead to the downfall of civilisations – which happens regularly (cf. Costa).

However, in complex situations, planning is important in order to get the situation under control. It is not without reason that Dietrich Dörner devotes a large part of his book ‘Die Logik des Misslingens – Strategisches Denken in komplexen Situationen’ to the difficulties of planning (Dörner). But it is precisely this planning that can fail due to complexity. It's a vicious circle.

And since it is difficult or impossible to predict the future in complex situations, the necessity of holistic plans for humanity is disputed. Things will turn out fine even without such plans...

3. Us against the others

In his essay ‘Together against the others: evolutionary biology of cultural differentiation’, Josef H. Reichholf quotes Herodotus, the ‘father of historiography’. Herodotus made the following observation a good 2,400 years ago:

‘The Thracians are the most numerous people in the world after the Indians, and if they were ruled by one man or could communicate better among themselves, they would be invincible and by far the most powerful of all peoples... But they are incapable of agreeing, and it seems impossible that they will ever be able to do so, and for this reason they are weak.’ (Reichholf)

Reichholf suspects that the reasons for our strategy of ‘together against the others’ lie in our evolutionary history. Due to the long period of dependency and socialisation of children, it was important for our ancestors to maintain a stable group over a long period of time. This was particularly challenging during the Pleistocene due to the strong fluctuations in climate between cold and warm periods. The Pleistocene began about 2.5 million years ago and ended only about 11,700 years ago, with the Holocene, a warm period. Exclusion was important in order to maintain a stable group over a longer period of time. The upper limit for such a group was about 150 individuals (Reichholf and Dunbar).

According to Reichholf, language and dialects play a decisive role, especially in larger groups such as today's nations. Language and dialects enable clear identification of group members and thus also serve to exclude others. Language and dialects also lead to pronounced cultural differentiation, which can result in members of other cultures being perceived as ‘different’. For example, members of other cultures may be referred to as ‘creatures’. As a result, members of different cultures may compete with each other as if they were members of different species. (Reichholf)

In the Holocene era, sedentary lifestyles developed, resulting in surpluses of agricultural production. This led to corresponding raids. In the course of our civilisational development, the contest for increasing resources escalated into the constant wars that characterise our recent history.

As a result, the different dominates the holistic. Holistic plans for humanity therefore have a difficult time.

4. A single, short life

Apart from certain speculative religious ideas, we humans have only one short life. And this single, short life is inextricably linked to our bodies. We ‘live’ in our bodies, but we cannot leave them. We are also aware of this. At around the age of two, children are capable of self-awareness. This can be proven as soon as the child recognises itself in the mirror: That's me! Incidentally, this can also be proven in some animals. Self-awareness accompanies us humans throughout our entire lives, apart from rare cases in which self-awareness is disturbed.

All of this has decisive consequences for our behaviour, which apply to almost all people.

Thus, the individual is primarily concerned with self-preservation and, therefore, with the satisfaction of his or her needs. And in our ‘excessive civilisation’, all of this takes up a great deal of time and energy, not least earning and managing money. Quite a few people may even perceive holistic plans for humanity as a threat, as the changes associated with these plans may jeopardise the satisfaction of their needs. For all these reasons, such plans are of little concern to most people.

In addition, such plans, and especially their implementation, require a great deal of time. The short duration of our lives will regularly lead to other priorities being chosen for the remainder of our lives, as we do not expect to live to see these plans implemented. And since the necessary time is not invested in these plans, individuals do not feel competent to deal with such plans and their implementation.

5. The lie

We humans pursue an evolutionarily stable strategy (Barth) that is a mixture of truth and lies. The transition between truth and lies can be fluid. In all three of the above-mentioned obstacles to holistic plans for humanity, lies play an important role and can further hinder such plans.

Since predictions are difficult or impossible in complex situations, even predictions that are highly likely to be accurate are fundamentally disputed if these predictions are taken seriously by (political) competitors. This is the case, for example, with predictions about climate change. Conversely, measures to combat climate change ignore the fact that this is a global problem and that local measures have little to no effect. Another popular tactic is greenwashing, i.e. deception about sustainable behaviour, a classic case of signalling left and turning right.

As a member of a group, one is regularly subject to peer pressure. Even if one has opinions that differ from the group opinion, one often does not express these opinions: it is dangerous to be wise all by oneself! Membership in the group is more important than the truth. One must also be able to afford the truth, as my brother Marc Saner pointed out to me. This is illustrated in Hans Christian Andersen's 1837 fairy tale ‘The Emperor's New Clothes’, based on a fairy tale from 1335. Swindlers pretended to tailor new clothes for the emperor. The clothes were supposed to have the wonderful property of being invisible to anyone who was unfit for office or unforgivably stupid. In reality, however, the swindlers did not make any clothes at all, but praised the non-existent clothes effusively. The court and the emperor himself alike praised the new clothes,

which they could not see, so as not to appear incompetent or stupid. Supported by his court, the emperor paraded his supposedly new clothes in front of his people, who had heard about the miraculous properties of the clothes. And so the people were also enthusiastic about the clothes – no one wanted to appear incompetent or stupid. But a small child cried out in surprise that the emperor was not wearing anything at all. Gradually, the people became convinced that the emperor was naked. Now the emperor noticed this too but steadfastly continued his procession. And the chamberlains pretended to carry the train that was not there. (Andersen) Indeed, claqueurs are everywhere.

And if the truth stands in the way of individuals pursuing their needs, many are willing to use lies to satisfy their needs.

6. Fragmented and leaderless sciences

The aforementioned obstacles to holistic plans for humanity also stand in the way of the sciences. However, since the sciences play an important role in my plan, namely for the project 'Einheit der Wissenschaft und echtes Studium generale', the particular obstacles facing the sciences in the realisation of this project must be analysed.

Above all, the fragmentation and lack of leadership in the sciences stand in the way of the plans mentioned, since such plans require a holistic view and leadership. Earlier, on pages 6 ff., I have already commented in detail on the fragmentation and lack of leadership in the sciences under the heading 'Everyone for themselves and God against all'. To supplement and concretise this, let us analyse in more detail why fragmentation and lack of leadership are so persistent in the sciences.

In his review of my book 'Studium generale – Auf dem Weg zu einem allgemeinen Teil der Wissenschaften' (Saner / Studium generale), the late Gottfried Schatz, one of the best scientists Switzerland has ever had, writes the following about fragmentation:

"Anyone who has completed a university degree knows that things cannot continue this way. Genuine education has given way to vocational training, which all too often results in well-trained but uneducated scientists. Despite all its undisputed advantages, the Bologna reform has further reinforced this trend. Although some universities offer 'general lectures' during lunchtime or in the evenings, these cannot solve the problem of rapidly advancing specialisation. Just as a hundred years ago there was a divide between the 'two cultures' (humanities and natural sciences), today countless divides are opening up even between the individual scientific disciplines, threatening to destroy their unity." (Schatz)

Fragmentation and lack of leadership are interdependent, especially since bottom-up dominates top-down.

Unsurprisingly, and understandably from a human perspective, many scientists, especially those in the humanities and social sciences, defend their discipline against outside influences, no matter how small their discipline may be. The fan club wants to remain among themselves, nobly referred to as 'peers'. And the fan club develops its own language, by which its fans can be recognised. Although the need for transdisciplinarity is often invoked, transdisciplinarity, which can change individual disciplines, is insufficiently practised. The recently increased demand for cooperation

between science and society, i.e. with people outside the scientific community, is also insufficient in practice. The more ‘sparring partners’ outside the sciences threaten one's own position, the more undesirable they become. If these scientists are presented with dissenting opinions from outside their peer group that they do not agree with, the famous academic silence ensues: emails are not answered, they cannot be reached by telephone, which, by the way, is extremely rude. Often, however, there is all the more communication ‘behind closed doors’ about how to deal with these ‘heretics’. Above all, however, this academic silence is unscientific, as it gives the impression that one already knows everything. Many scientists also do not seem particularly interested in the practical impact their research has or could have, as this might suddenly require holistic considerations. Accordingly, they structure their CVs like travelogues from institute to institute and describe performance targets rather than impact targets: this publication was written, this presentation was given, this event was attended, and this position was held. And there is often no brief summary of what was actually achieved with these activities. Many scientists, especially those in the humanities and social sciences, are likely to be aware of all this, and therefore do not expect their research to have the quality suggested to the outside world. As long as they are paid their salary and the peer group supports them, everything is fine...

Mass universities and the burden of teaching and administration may also contribute to the behaviour of lecturers described above. Lecturers' own research is neglected. This problem must be solved by the universities themselves. Ten years ago, in a letter to selected personalities, I proposed concentrating the organisational units of our universities according to subject-specific criteria at one or, for linguistic reasons among others, several locations. This would mean, for example, that theology would be located in Lucerne, economics and law in St. Gallen and Geneva, natural sciences in Basel, Zurich and Lausanne, linguistics in Bern, Fribourg and Lugano, etc. If this model of universities is combined with a real studium generale and a corresponding institute, I believe that optimal depth and breadth can be achieved. This simplifies the management of universities and eliminates duplication. It also improves exchange among scientists. Students have a wider range of options. Lecturers face increased competition. Finally, the management of the university is closer to the members of the university in terms of subject matter. Overall, quality will improve. However, reform and management are not among the strengths of universities.

The sciences regularly invoke academic freedom as an argument against management claims. In Switzerland, academic freedom was only incorporated into the Federal Constitution of the Swiss Confederation as an independent fundamental right in 1999, namely as Article 20 under the title ‘Academic Freedom’:

‘Freedom of academic teaching and research is guaranteed.’

It is a typical mistake for a legal layman to try to assess the legal situation and, above all, the corresponding practice on the basis of a single legal norm. This requires knowledge of all the relevant substantive and formal law. And in the background, the normative power of the factual always lurks. Ultimately, fundamental rights such as academic freedom are not to be understood as absolute, but merely as means to higher goals, to which their scope of application must be aligned. Please refer to the comments on page 6 above on the topic of ‘First comes food, then comes morality’.

This also applies to academic freedom, which is subject to numerous restrictions. These include many laws and, in general, the politicisation and economisation of the sciences. Given their importance for politics and the economy, law and economics in particular are under special scrutiny by the relevant circles.

And the sciences themselves restrict academic freedom, for example with cancel culture. Since the sciences are largely a profession with corresponding opportunities for advancement and decline, many scientists have ‘scissors in their heads’. They are wary of expressing opinions that are not in line with their peer group and could thus harm their careers. Christian Kreiß has described this in detail for the economic sciences (Kreiß).

Anyone interested in scientific freedom in more detail is recommended to read Raffaela Kunz's commentary on Article 20 of the Federal Constitution of the Swiss Confederation, which is available online and free of charge (Kunz).

Finally, under the title ‘Academia: All the Lies: What Went Wrong in the University Model and What Will Come in its Place’, Tamar and Oz Almog offer a fundamental critique of today's higher education system, taking into account the global situation (Almog).

As a result, it is impossible for the fragmented and leaderless sciences to develop a plan such as the one I propose, let alone proposals for its implementation. This requires generalists who have completed a real studium generale, as I explained earlier on pages 21 ff. under the heading ‘Unity of science and real studium generale’.

IV. Every beginning is difficult

1. Priorities

The plan comprises various sub-plans that have different priorities with regard to possible implementation. For example, one could attempt to make the already established strategy party operational or to found a religious-philosophical community. However, the optimal implementation of the sub-plans requires a sufficient number of graduates of a real studium generale, personalities who think and act holistically. There is justified hope that these generalists will be able to overcome the obstacles described to a sufficient extent to ultimately realise the plan. Without these real generalists, however, the implementation of the sub-plans is threatened by failure, misunderstandings and undesirable developments. In addition, every beginning is difficult, even endangered, because despite considerable support, too much depends on me, an old man who will turn 70 next year. A sufficient number of real generalists would also solve this ‘problem’. The plan is very ambitious anyway, even with real generalists.

As a result, priorities should be set when implementing the plan. A real studium generale should therefore be introduced as quickly as possible, if possible on a global scale, in order to train the urgently needed true generalists. Ideally, however, a real studium generale requires the unity of science.

After all, my book on ‘Allgemeiner Teil der Wissenschaften’ (Saner / Allgemeiner Teil) already provides what I consider to be a useful basis for the unity of science, as can be seen from several reviews on the book's page on Amazon.de and by Werner Ebeling (Ebeling). In addition, AI Gemini summarised the following in its review of my book:

“In summary, Luc Saner's book presents a highly relevant and forward-looking vision for the unity of science. It is in line with contemporary trends in the philosophy of science, which strive for a more nuanced, pragmatic and pluralistic form of unity, driven by the urgent need for interdisciplinary solutions to global problems. Its proposal for a ‘real studium generale’ and a ‘general part of the sciences’ offers a concrete and potentially very ‘useful basis’ for promoting a more integrated and effective scientific landscape.” (Gemini)

Since my book on ‘Allgemeiner Teil der Wissenschaften’ is freely available electronically on the homepage of the ‘Schweizerische Akademien der Wissenschaften’, it is easy to have reviews written using the AI tools that exist today.

However, in order to achieve unity in science, the relevant scientific disciplines would now have to be embedded in the general part of the sciences. This is now a priority. (See www.einheit.science)

2. Embedding the relevant scientific disciplines in the general part

In order to find individuals who are able and willing to embed their scientific discipline in the general part of the sciences, my book on ‘Allgemeiner Teil der Wissenschaften’ (ATW) must first be made sufficiently known among the relevant circles. The following options are available for this purpose:

• Colloquium with lecturers on the ATW

• Seminars on the ATW

• Lectures on the ATW

• CAS on the ATW

In my opinion, a suitable form of embedding is a habilitation.

As I have already described in a flyer for my book on ‘Allgemeiner Teil der Wissenschaften’, this embedding of the relevant scientific disciplines could proceed as follows if there is sufficient interest:

The embedding of the scientific disciplines in the form of a book of around 400 pages per scientific discipline should answer the following questions for the respective scientific discipline:

• What is important from the general part for the respective scientific discipline?

• What are the consequences of the general part for the respective scientific discipline?

• In what respects is the general section inaccurate from the perspective of the respective scientific discipline?

For this purpose, a main author must be found for each scientific discipline. This person should be able to gain a global overview of the respective discipline. Specialists in the discipline should be consulted.

The main author and the specialists consulted should read the entire book on ‘Allgemeiner Teil der Wissenschaften’. In addition, they should read the special parts I and II of the book on economics that I have written (Saner / Wirtschaft) in their entirety so that they can see from an example how this can be embedded in the general section. Also of interest in this context are the book I have edited, ‘Studium generale – Auf dem Weg zu einem allgemeinen Teil der Wissenschaften’ (Saner / Studium generale) and my essay ‘Einheit der Wissenschaft und echtes Studium generale – Ein Konzept für die Zukunft der Wissenschaften und der Menschheit’ (Saner / Einheit).

All of these individuals should then take part in a seminar lasting around one week to clarify any open questions.

This should take around one year.

The main author should then write a first draft. This first draft should be discussed again at a seminar lasting around one week.

This phase should also take around another year to complete.

Finally, the main author should write a second draft, which should be submitted to the specialists for their comments. The main author should then write the final version, which answers the three questions mentioned above. This final version should be published at least electronically and in open access.

This phase should also take about a year, so that the embedding process takes a total of three years.

The following 24 scientific disciplines should be embedded in the general section, resulting in 24 books of approximately 400 pages each:

• Mathematics
• Physics
• Chemistry
• Biology
• Geology
• Environmental sciences
• Engineering
• Computer science
• Medicine and pharmacy
• Agricultural sciences
• Psychology
• Economics
• Education
• Sociology
• Law
• Political science
• Geography
• Communication science
• History and archaeology
• Military and secret services
• Linguistics and literary studies
• Philosophy and scientific theory
• Religious studies
• Art

As managing director of the ‘Komitee für die Einheit der Wissenschaft und ein echtes Studium generale’, I am happy to organise this integration together with other interested parties.

3. A matter for the boss

The project ‘Einheit der Wissenschaft und echtes Studium generale’ is a matter for top management.

It is not impossible that lecturers will decide on their own to take on the integration of their discipline. However, the idea behind the plan to achieve unity in science is completely new and therefore unfamiliar and is often misunderstood. The book on ‘Allgemeiner Teil der Wissenschaften’ also contains some fundamentally new ideas. Therefore, embedding could harm one's career, as it may change the discipline so much

that the peer group refuses to support it. In the current situation of fragmented sciences, specialisation is more in demand. In addition, the effort required for embedding is considerable and often cannot be achieved without money. Furthermore, it is not appropriate to embed only individual disciplines in the general section. Finally, no one has yet agreed to take on this embedding, even though the project ‘Einheit der Wissenschaft und echtes Studium generale’ has been known to many scientists for years.

As a result, the initiative should come from the leadership of scientific institutions, despite their institutional leadership weaknesses. The leaders of scientific institutions should be in the best position to recognise the necessity of the project ‘Einheit der Wissenschaft und echtes Studium generale’ based on their activities. After all, they have a certain overview of the scientific disciplines and their advantages and disadvantages. They are also likely to be aware of the problematic leadership of scientific institutions and thus the advantage of being true generalists themselves and having true generalists working in their institutions. In addition, they are in contact with politics, business and society and are therefore aware of the difficulties of this cooperation and see the advantages of dealing with real generalists in politics, business and society in this cooperation. They will also be aware that, due to their fragmentation, the sciences are not sufficiently prepared for the challenges of today's global world, especially when it comes to ready-made, holistic solutions. However, the population increasingly expects the ‘elite’ to deliver in this regard. In this respect, leaders have a responsibility to do everything in their power to at least avert impending dystopias, such as those described by Wikipedia under the heading ‘Zivilisationskollaps’ (societal collapse). Leaders should also be motivated by the opportunities opened up by the project ‘Einheit der Wissenschaft und echtes Studium generale’. The implementation of this project has the potential to propel the relevant scientific institution to the forefront worldwide in terms of the project's impact.

It would be ideal if we could now search worldwide for leaders who would advocate the integration of the relevant scientific disciplines into the general part. This far exceeds my capabilities. Anyone who takes on this search within the scope of their capabilities is, of course, very welcome.

At this point, I can only provide a list of leaders from Switzerland and, in some cases, Germany who, in my opinion, could take the initiative for integration. Additions to this list are welcome, as I am not an insider in the scientific community.

swissuniversities: Members of the Chamber of Universities

University of Basel, represented by its Rector, Prof. Dr. Dr. h.c. mult. Andrea Schenker-Wicki, President of the Chamber of Universities, Vice-President of swissuniversities

Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Zurich, ETH Zurich, represented by its President, Prof. Dr. Joël Mesot, Vice-President of the Chamber of Universities

Université de Lausanne, UNIL, represented by its Rector, Prof. Dr. Frédéric Herman, Vice-President of the Chamber of Universities

University of St. Gallen, HSG, represented by its Rector, Prof. Dr. Manuel Ammann

Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Lausanne, EPFL, represented by its President, Prof. Dr. Anna Fontcuberta i Morral

University of Fribourg, Unifr, represented by its Rector, Prof. Dr. Katharina Fromm

University of Southern Switzerland, USI University, represented by its Rector, Prof. Dr. Luisa Lambertini

University of Geneva, UNIGE, represented by its Rector, Prof. Dr. Audrey Leuba

University of Bern, UniBE, represented by its Rector, Prof. Dr. Virginia Richter

University of Zurich, UZH, represented by its Rector, Prof. Dr. Michael Schaepman

University of Lucerne, Unilu, represented by its Rector, Prof. Dr. Martin Hartmann

University of Neuchâtel, UniNE, represented by its Rector, Prof. Dr. Kilian Stoffel

Swiss Academies of Arts and Sciences

Prof. Dr. Yves Flückiger, President

Swiss Science Council

Prof. Dr. Sabine Süsstrunk, President

State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation

Martina Hirayama, State Secretary

Max Planck Society

Prof. Dr. Patrick Cramer, President

Leopoldina

Prof. Dr. Gerald Haug, President

In order to motivate these individuals to participate in the project ‘Einheit der Wissenschaft und echtes Studium generale’, they should ideally study the book on ‘Allgemeiner Teil der Wissenschaften’. Alternatively, they could entrust this task to a person they trust and then seek their advice. It would also be advantageous if these individuals were to attend one or more of the events mentioned, which should raise sufficient awareness of the general section among the relevant circles.

4. Financing

Money can remove many obstacles.

This also applies to the project ‘Einheit der Wissenschaft und echtes Studium genereale’ and its current aim of embedding the relevant scientific disciplines in the general part of the sciences. In some circumstances, the offer of financing may be the only thing that motivates this embedding. Depending on the circumstances, it may therefore be appropriate to give priority to the search for funding over the search for motivational leaders. However, those responsible for financing would also need to be motivated in the same way as described for the leaders of scientific institutions.

There are numerous possible sources of funding for embedding. It would be ideal if the total costs for embedding the 24 scientific disciplines were available at once. This would allow the synergy effects of the individual embeddings to be exploited to the full and also enable the general part to be reviewed optimally. The embedding should be completed within approximately three years so that the process described on page 38 f. can be adhered to.

If this embedding were to take place by means of habilitations in Switzerland, the money would have to be available for three years of work for 24 habilitation candidates. Depending on the circumstances, money would also have to be available for the specialists to be brought in. The costs of a habilitation vary from discipline to discipline and depending on the university. Without being an expert on the subject and simply to give an order of magnitude of the total costs, I assume that a habilitation costs around CHF 100,000 per year, i.e. CHF 300,000 for the total duration of three years for the embedding. Added to this are the estimated total costs for the specialists to be consulted and publication of CHF 200,000. As a result, one embedding costs CHF 500,000, the total costs of all 24 embeddings 24 x CHF 500,000, so that the total costs amount to CHF 12 million. This amount should be justifiable for the unity of science and thus also for the basis of a real studium generale and the urgently needed real generalists.

The proposed sources of funding are limited to Switzerland and should in principle be considered for financing the embedding. To my knowledge, these sources of funding include the Swiss National Science Foundation and foundations. I would be happy to seek advice on financing.

According to its website, the ‘Schweizerische Nationalfonds’ (SNF) offers the following options.

The ‘Nationale Forschungsprogramme’ (NFP) contribute to solving contemporary problems of national importance. The Federal Council selects the research topics and transfers responsibility for implementing the programmes to the SNF. The usual financial framework for such a research programme would allow for a budget of CHF 12 million.

The NFPs have an interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary orientation. The individual research projects are coordinated with regard to the respective programme objective. Researchers work together with practitioners and engage in lively exchange. The communication of scientific findings to experts and the general public is a high priority in the NFPs.

I consider this programme to be the most suitable for embedding. As Federal Councillor Beat Jans is a member of the ‘Komitee für die Einheit der Wissenschaft und ein echtes

Studium generale', he could be approached to clarify the chances of obtaining this funding.

Project funding is by far the SNF's largest funding instrument. Every year, the SNF invests more than half a billion Swiss francs in new projects. Here, scientists conduct independent research on topics they have chosen themselves. This makes the research topical, creative and diverse – the best conditions for gaining insights or solving practical problems.

Project funding is also an option. However, separate applications would have to be submitted for each discipline to be included, which is not ideal.

The Swiss National Science foundation (SNSF) Starting Grants 2025 are the highest level of career funding offered by the SNF. They enable researchers to lead their project and a team of researchers in Switzerland.

The same applies here as for project funding.

Ambizione grants are aimed at early-stage researchers who wish to carry out, manage and lead an independently planned project at a Swiss university. The instrument aims to support researchers from Switzerland and abroad. Researchers in mid-level positions are also eligible to apply.

The same applies here as for project funding, with the restriction that no more than four years may have passed since the doctoral degree was obtained.

Foundations as a source of funding have the advantage that they are outside the scientific community and can therefore be more independent. On the other hand, they can 'only' provide financial support without being integrated into the scientific community like the Swiss National Science Foundation.

As I lack an overview of the foundations in Switzerland that are eligible for funding, a specialist should be consulted. For example, is the 'Geneva Science and Diplomacy Anticipator (GESDA) Foundation' suitable? In order to answer this question within a reasonable time frame, relevant background knowledge is required. Georg von Schnurbein, Professor of Foundation Management and Director of the Centre for Philanthropy Studies (CEPS) at the University of Basel, could provide helpful advice.

Furthermore, it can be assumed that leaders from scientific institutions are well versed in financing issues.

5. Advice and assistance

I need advice and assistance on how to proceed.

In addition to the members of the Basler Gesellschaft Au Bon Sens, the members of the 'Komitee für die Einheit der Wissenschaft und ein echtes Studium generale' are particularly well suited for this purpose, although the members are not obliged to cooperate.

Members Antonio Loprieno, Peter Berlepsch, Marcel Tanner and Jakob Zinsstag have rendered outstanding services to date with their advice and support. With the exception of Peter Berlepsch, they are very knowledgeable about the academic world and have the

relevant connections. As is so often the case, great things can depend on just a few people.

In any case, anyone who is willing and able to contribute to the success of the plan is very welcome. Please get in touch with me. You will find my contact details in the imprint on page 48.

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