

### **The Planet Earth: where is it headed?**

The countdown to human existence on this planet has started with the extinction of the first creature that lived on it, because the absence of any creature whether big or small disrupts a series of balances that the environment needs to remain intact and stable.

That way, the countdown to human existence on Earth must've reached its end or it may have even been exceeded, one researcher may even surprise us one day by saying that one reason behind the extinction of American Indians is the fact that they excessively hunted addaxes, as they used to drive their herds off mountain peaks as an easy way to hunt them, which disrupted the balance of nature.

Ever since, the threat has extended to elephants which have become endangered because of their tusks, whereas the mammoth, which gave rise to elephants, has become extinct not for reasons related to its tusk, though definitely because of human practices. Nevertheless, death is death regardless of the reasons.

If we went back to the stage of human creation, the day our mother Eve handed us over to Mother Nature to take care of us, we would find out that nature had been such a splendid mother; for the human being is so fragile that a newborn human being can't live all alone as he/she needs to depend on others for years to live; or else would die.

On the contrary, all other creatures, whether they are animals, fish, or insects, can depend on themselves only a few hours after they are brought to existence.

The disasters that the human being has brought about; such as the extermination of other creatures, deforestation, contamination of water sources, the emergence of the mad cow disease (bovine spongiform encephalopathy) and avian influenza (bird flu) as a result of tampering with nature, and the extermination of living creatures in rivers, stand witness of his ungratefulness to Mother Nature.

Not only that, food has become contaminated and the air polluted, even the upper atmospheric layers have complained about what they have seen and suffered.

Egypt is the gate to the African Continent located at the end of the course of the great Nile River; that course which extends to thousands of miles and flows through tens of countries and so the Nile River reaches us feeling drained because of the journey and the practices of human beings on its way.

Egypt which has remained the gift of the Nile over the centuries, as Herodotus described it in the past, has invariably sought to address any problems with this great river using what capabilities it had. So it put up the Aswan Dam followed by the High Dam to create the largest artificial lake in the world to avoid wasting away the river's water.

Moreover, Egypt is adopting a multi-stage project to clean the length of the river's course that runs through its land.

However, is this sufficient to fix what both the human being and the passage of time have ruined?

If we can excuse Egypt and Third World countries which have limited financial resources, what excuse does the European society have for

contaminating its rivers, that even a river as great as the Reine has become so polluted that not one fish has lived in it for ten years!!

If finding a place for Third World countries in the future involves making the transformation to become states with effective contributions to the international economic and industrial movement, this simply means that they have to become producers rather than consumers of energy, technology and means of production.

The transformation of Third World countries into producers rather than consumers is a process that serves international interests before local ones, and thus that process, which has to take environmental conservation into consideration, is a costly solution as any transformation process that would take place in a haphazard fashion could lead to environmental disasters that would be hard to contain later on.

Hence, advanced industrial countries must contribute to those transformation processes as it has become crystal clear that industrial countries need Third World countries as partners in the international industrial movement, especially labor intensive countries that are no longer seen as consumers to which only products are exported.

Back to Egypt, we find that the industry has responded well to the trends of adopting comprehensive quality, and encouraging it to qualify for and meet the specifications of the ISO 9000/14000, and this an increasingly growing trend.

Environmental conservation activities that have started since the sixties resulted in the setting up of the Environmental Affairs Agency affiliated to the Council of Ministers, and were crowned by the establishment of the Ministry of State for Environmental Affairs.

The effective outcome of this over the last ten years was the spread of civil society organizations concerned with environmental conservation in the different industrial, agricultural and vocational sectors as well as in relation to navigational waterways, rivers, seas and nature reserves.

However branched and far-reaching those entities might be, they don't, given their current status, have the essential conditions to protect the environment and direct efforts towards a clean environment within a specific timeframe while simultaneously providing the requisite tools to curb pollution, due to the absence of an enforcing mechanism and capabilities.

It's no secret that one of the priorities of the production process is reducing the cost of production and maintaining markets, and disrupting this equation by raising the cost of production or as a result of the shrinking of the size of the market threatens the basis of the industry, broadening the scale of the problem from a regional to an international one requiring an international solution, and by that we move back to square one.

**Finally,**

- **We are all responsible for the quality of life on Earth, for all gains that can be made won't find a purchaser if the quality of life on Earth is ruined.**
- **We all need nature whereas nature doesn't need us.**