Quick Growth, Sustainable Growth - European and Chinese Developments

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ABSTRACT

China is the second biggest trading nation in the world – number one as trade exporter and number two as trade importer. Behind the USA, China has the second strongest economy with a gross domestic product (GDP) of almost 5 Trillion USD (2009).
Despite the global finance crisis Chinese economy was and is still drastically growing with three main focus areas in the field of labor as their most important sector for economy growth:

1. Global raise in labor costs
2. Demand of qualified labor is very high
3. Claim for qualified labor is enormous because of high grade of technology

Linked to the future 12th five-year-plan, China is going to spent 1.5 Billion Dollars in key-technologies like nuclear power, high speed railway systems, aerospace, energy efficiency, environmental friendly technologies, biotechnologies and IT.

China is trying to change their status from distributor to a leading high-tech provider with high potential. This implicit a higher consumption of natural resources and more high qualified employees.

By contrast a global discussion about the availability of natural resources comes consistently into focus since the 1970's. The shortage of available and usable resources has been seen as the 'limit to growth' [1]. Since then, the regenerative-ability of the environment – its ability to absorb harmful substances and waste products, has achieved a similar standing. Critical ecological examination must take the beginning, but also the end, of the production chain into consideration, and thereby give equal weight to the exhaustion of important production materials (energy, raw materials) as well as to the over-stretching of the ecological reproduction capacity of the Earth.

To successfully close the gap between "Low-tech Discounter" and the "High-tech Paradise" - as expected from Europe - a global economical growth must be decoupled from resource consumption.

To cover the global natural resource consumption of humankind word wide a productivity of about 1.5 earths is necessary. Prognoses say that we need 2 earths to cover our steadily raising resource consumption in 2030 [2]. To antagonize this process the total economy has to work more efficient and regarding climate and resource protection even a total change is necessary.

For this global defiance Europe's and China's future will be a common economic and ecologic strategy to fulfill international requirements of sustainable growth within balanced natural circumstances.

KEYWORDS

Sustainable growth, resource management, future technologies