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## READINGS

BOOKS / MAGAZINES

### **Le développement durable, l'intelligence du XXIe siècle (Dominique Bidou<sup>1</sup>)**

*Review of Massimo Angrilli*

Dominique Bidou has a positive and attractive vision of sustainability. Far from that we encounter frequently, where the humanity is seen as moving toward a future of redemption and penitence. The vision expressed by Bidou in "Le développement durable, intelligence XXIe siècle" is built step by step as a new way of thinking, required to address the next stage in the life of humanity, the stabilization of population growth and the decrease of use of resources. A new model of development opposite to the quantitative growth, made by unconventional forms of progress, more diversified and mainly based on an inexhaustible resource: the human talent. In this book, sustainable development, or *durable* development, using the french term, is seen as an opportunity to be seized, an added value or, in the words of the author, an "extras" content. Far from the catastrophism that characterizes some of the actual thinkers, the book offers an attractive prospect, to be welcomed joyfully, that of a new world builded upon renewed principles and not on the repetition of past patterns. Humanity faces the stage of maturity, after an adolescence spent "wasting" resources of the planet: "A new era in which the future is built, decided, is forged on beliefs, values and desires, but also on the strict analysis of the situation, in a constant search for a form of permanent progress of our state...".

The design of a new society raises in Bidou an interesting comparison with the eighteenth century: a new Enlightenment, which involves everyone in search of new ideas, escaping from old ones. In this adventure we are however, warns Bidou, all apprentices in front of our more challenging task of ever: to draw the roadmap for the future of the planet. To make advancement of our society towards a new model of development are not enough general principles and communication campaigns, we need a global effort to mobilize a collective intelligence, the one which is evoked in the title of the book. An intelligence that applies to different areas of life that are listed by chapter and affecting many sectors of social life, from economics to politics, from the energy to environment, of course passing also through urbanism and cities.

The volume concludes by proposing 11 "recipes" that deal with all issues that are considered central to reprogram the business model of planet earth: the impact studies, waste management, the importance of the use, quality research, the ability to adapt, the search for consensus, the monitoring of consumption, the

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<sup>1</sup> Engineer training and demographer, Dominique Bidou has been Director at the Ministry of Environment. Honorary President of the HQE and president of the Center for Information and Documentation on noise, is a consultant for sustainable development.

importance of prevention (tout en amont), the need to increase production capacity and intensity of use (faire le plein sans moderation); the usefulness of communication, and finally the importance of having a few clear references to navigate the path to the new development model.

Built in part on the basis of texts written on his blog, taken from 2006 and later became a site, the volume takes a direct language, journalism, which has the great merit of explaining complex issues simply, consistently taking up the thread the new model of society, given the collective intelligence, sensitivity and talent of men, only resources on which, exhausted oil, found the prospects for the future.

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