

# From Biodiversity to Diversity of Life

An epistemological disconnect - the human-nature-relation & Diversity. A transdisciplinary approach

J. Daniel Dahm

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*Recently diversity is mostly understood as a measurement of the variety of biological life forms. Under the common scientific approaches on diversity, research does mostly work on the systematisation and taxonomy of these "Biodiversity". It's the art of collecting, describing, defining and arranging the divers specimen of our world in a historical, chronological, evolutionary row. Its arrangement has to be in line with the recent scientific ideas of progress and development – if it doesn't fit we infer a lack of informations. From a transdisciplinary perspective the reaction on this kind of research is a „So what?“.*

*Because under an ecological scope of view diversity reaches far beyond "bio"diversity up to a more general macroscopic approach: to the science and lore of "diversity" as the 'Diversity of Life'. That includes the whole pluralism of life forms, reaching from single specimen up to whole bio-ecological and further on cultural-ecological complexes, both combining and merging as ecological-complexes, or simpler life-complexes.*

## I. Going beyond Ourselves

At this stage of analysis we are facing a serious scientific conflict – the confrontation of the hermeneutic and naturalistic idea of the world. If we want to going beyond this, we need to accept that on the one hand we are defining the world as it fronts us – thus such as we perceive it and as we learned to be percipient. The symbols we use to describe the world in ourself and around us don't mirror the reality. But they represent a substantiveness we produce culturally and overlay on what exists and affects. Our perceptive faculty is filtered and intellectual limited through our own socialised concepts. As well science and scientific theory, it's methods and instruments of description and argumentation are properties of that cultural complex of ideas. If we allow ourself and science to go beyond that border, to get a glimpse of what is behind our socialised construct, we realise that also our scientific perception is a cultural product, and it is utilised to uphold the fixed image of objectivity and rationality. At this stage of analysis we are learning that our relatedness to the world is a dynamic one. So as we name it, we take it, and it becomes rational, real. Some reality.

On the other hand we are confronted with a world what reacts on us as we react on it. We can see and experience the resonances of our actions and reactions, even if we can't truly identify their complex causes.

Following this train of thoughts consequently means firstly to accept that there is a world where we take part in, and secondly to understand, that the role we play in it and our character is defined by our cultururation. That includes the way how we interact with material flows, energetic ressources and our living surrounding via our socioeconomical systems, as well as how we describe nature to be secuded of ourselves, and how to describe and – maybe – divide it from ourselves by counting, collecting and naming its parts.

## II. The Imperative to Innovate the Comprehension of Diversity

Why are these cogitations important? Because they explain that there is consequently no way to clearly separate between the currently so-called cultural and so-called natural expressions of our world the planet earth. From this deduces that, if we speak about diversity, we have to speak about the diversity of life reconnecting cultural- and bio-ecological diversity. The artificial division of both guides us in an intellectual dead-end road. This wouldn't

affect us at all, if we would understand science just as an artform, as the art of collecting, describing and naming aspects of our choice, of what we find in this world. As long as we do that, manifest e.g. in the ethnography, in the taxonomy, pathology, but disguised also in the wide range of natural, social and cultural sciences, it is worthwhile to show a selected range of richness of our living world and keep it conserved for the future. Some exhibition. But if we comprehend science as a mindful way of understanding the world so that we can better recognise ourselves as part of it, in our role, leading to a different way of interacting within it, than that isn't enough. Or to even pointen it: alone, the old scientific mindsets become contra-productive, cause they produce and legitimise images of life what largely excludes the copiousness of dynamic, interactive and permanently transforming aspects of planet earth. And this brings us to defficient erroneous strategies within our living world.

The wide range of life-threatening conflicts are reaching from destructive climate impacts by glasshouse-relevant emissions as CO<sub>2</sub>, Methan and others and the atmospheric enrichment with particulate matter, via the extensive degradation and desertification of soils and landscapes worldwide, the far-reaching pollution and exhaustion of water ressources as well as the wastage of fossile ressources up to the systematic destruction of marine and land ecosystems and the rapid extinction of the high variety of lifeforms. These are the obvious physical effects of our misapprehension. We are rarely able to clearly understand the complex causes-and effects-chains, but we know, that humans are playing a decisive role. What is much easier to relate straightly to human behaviour and our world of ideas is the broad spectrum of drastic destructive and far-reaching conflicts we are facing daily.

Our incapability to handle the high variety of lifestyles and cultural ideas, economic strategies and spiritual identifications, traditions and believes worldwide leads us to various cultural conflicts, social and economical segragations and polarisations. An increasing imbalance between immense richness and deep poverty and last but not least a dramatic disturbance in the interrelation between humanity and nature are obvious effects. These conflicts do escalate in violent economic and military clashes and are culminating in an unmanageable ecologic breakdown of our living conditions.

Many of the recent conflicts confronting humankind are caused by our disability to behave and to act in an animated and complex world. We still don't have the competence yet to handle the dynamically changing and transforming diversity of life, neither inbetween cultures and civilisations, individuals and civil society nor in the relation between humans and nature, between production and reproduction. The diverse processes and relations between individuals, cultures, "civilisations", organisms and ecologic complexes are demanding different patterns of action and creations of strategies (within open systems), than it is feasible within the old mechanistic constructions, theorems and predefinitions of the scientific description of reality.

As long as we don't realise that many of our recent embarrassments are actually challenges in order to understand ourselves as integral part of the living diversity of planet Earth, the ability to react in an adequate way is freezed. The insight, that the wide range of our quarrels and troubles are framed by the inability to handle complex and transformative diversity, can open a new awareness for our boundaries as well as our potentials.

The bio-ecological as well as the cultural evolution provides us a huge fund of successfully well-proved strategies how to interact and to integrate within our planetaria highly divers lifecomplex. If we are willing to learn from that fallow potential, we should leave our narrow monocultural perspective behind, open up science transdisciplinary and cross-cultural, and seriously start to work on the understanding of the dynamic stabilisation of life and the co-operative integration of the diversity of life forms and strategies.