



## **We Need to Build our Green Economy within this Decade**

**Author:** Jan Michael Hess, Organiser of Green Venture Summit & CEO of Mobile Economy GmbH

“Going green is the largest economic opportunity of the 21st century,” summarises the famous American VC John Doerr of KPCB. I agree but I believe that it is not only a business opportunity but rather an economic responsibility - a corporate and consumer responsibility that everybody on this planet should internalise and put into practice, corporations as well as consumers.

Wikipedia defines Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) like this: "CSR is the deliberate inclusion of public interest into corporate decision-making and the honouring of a triple bottom line: People, Planet, Profit." I would like to put the planet first from now on. Without a planet, there are no people and definitely no profit.

By now we know that there are limits to our growth. We know that our planet is in bad shape and that the climate goes wild. To survive we have to reinvent how we live. We have to reinvent how we produce our goods and services. We even have to reconsider if we really need what we produce. There is too much useless stuff out there. And we have to reconsider how we consume.

We need to reinvent with a green mind. We need green minds to manage our companies in a sustainable way - celebrating green management. We need green minds to decide what to buy and what to leave in the shelf - mastering green consumer lifestyle. And we need all politicians, independent of their party affiliation and ideological mindset, to go green - developing green policies that support green managers and green consumers while punishing eco-harmful behaviour.

We need green consumers telling the companies what to produce. The Internet revolution empowers consumers. In fact, the Internet revolution is the consumer revolution. Social media is green media. The consumer 2.0 is a green consumer. Now is the time to unite consumer demand and help consumers go green - think green, demand green and buy green.

To respond to the green consumer demand, we need green leaders, visionaries able to articulate the right goals that motivate everybody to try harder to accomplish them. I like Al Gore's goal to repower America within this decade with 100% renewable energy. Though hard to reach, it is not impossible. I want to repower Germany. I want to repower Europe. I want to repower this planet Earth.

The energy business is a \$6 trillion economy. Energy efficiency is the low-hanging fruit. If we save 20% energy, we can save 1.200 billion dollars - every year. Of course, we need to invest a lot of money first to develop, produce and market clean technologies that score high on energy efficiency. But it can be done and VCs love energy efficiency startups.

Angela Merkel, Germany's chancellor, invites the CEOs of all German car makers, utilities and other Electric Vehicle (EV) stakeholders to the Emobility Summit in Berlin on 3 May 2010. She is aware that electric cars are the future and that Germany is not yet part of that future. However, setting the goal of 1 million electric cars on German streets by 2020 is not enough. We should multiply this by a factor of 10 and aim for 10 million electric cars within this decade. We have to be more ambitious.

Many people - green consumers - want to buy electric cars today. But they are not yet available because most car makers started too late to develop them. This reality creates business opportunities for electric car startups that build EVs within a smart supplier network and use the

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Internet to (pre-)sell them to unsatisfied green consumers in the virtual waiting line.

The new Green Economy is not there yet. So we need to build it. Rather sooner than later. By 2020 - within this decade - should be our goal. Green companies powered by green consumers will build it. I believe there are many untapped business opportunities in our Green Economy for innovative Cleantech startups.

That's why we have organised the Green Venture Summit on 10 May 2010 in Berlin (<http://greenvsummit.com>) as a new international Cleantech conference for green startups and investors. We want to explore the new green business opportunities and we want to foster the Green Economy by bringing together green ideas and green venture capital. Entrepreneurs play the leading role in reinventing our economy. Green entrepreneurs with green minds enlightened by corporate green responsibility will build our Green Economy. And - that's for sure - we need many of them to make it happen.