

CURE Project Dilemma Stories for Courses

Civic education for sustainability

Authors: Sieglinde Weyringer, Jean-Luc Patry

Story

Dimitri / Ianna is a young winegrower holding several small vineyards, which have been the family property for several generations. The annual crop yield never has been very high, yet the family could effort a good living, because the quality of the wine was excellent. It was tradition that the whole family works together producing the food by themselves in the garden and on the fields. They also hold cattle, poultry, and pigs.

Also all the neighbours share the same way of living. The area they all live in is a beautiful valley with much sun and surrounded by mountains, yet far away from the centre of the country. Only one road passing a canyon and a mountain pass connects the valley with the other parts of the country. As this area has no other attraction but the agriculture of wine, the government doesn't take care for this road.

So the people in the valley organized themselves by founding a cooperative for the arrangement of the daily life, e.g. supply of water (because during summer the valley suffers water scarcity), producing electricity (because of sunny summer and rainy winter), fixing the road, helping with the harvest, and more. The generation of Dimitri's parents mainly had spent their whole life in the valley. Yet they all got to know that they had to improve their way of wine production, otherwise the quantity of sales would decline - this was the general feedback of the wine merchants.

Due to this challenge Dimitri and four other young winegrower were sent to a college for agriculture and tourism to get the needed information and knowledge. During their schooldays these five young men became very close friends, and they promised to share all ideas first within themselves. Bringing this new knowledge to the cooperative, they initiated a masterplan for the economic development of the valley. As Dimitri showed a special talent for negotiation, the cooperative elected him as their speaker.

Holding this position he is invited by the ministry of agriculture and tourism to a meeting with a foreign investment company called „House of Bacchus evolvment“ (HoBe), represented by Mr. Hong from China. This company is specialized in bringing industrial wine culture to underdeveloped and remote areas with low income, poor infrastructure, and without tourism. Beside their economic interest in high rates of return they advertize their ideas with the ethical concern to improve the quality of life of the people in the region: In modification of the company's name (HoBe) they want to give hope to a region.

Mr. Hong wants to buy a huge area of connected vineyards in the best locations. For the increase of the harvest the company will use special and innovative methods of crop growing as well as fertilizers and chemical spraying against weeds and insects. Also non-native grapevines will be brought in.

Beside the investment into the viniculture the HoBe company also wants to build a hotel resort for families with spa and swimming pool. The hotel will be an architectural jewel designed by a famous international architect. Artistically designed neon signs will light the whole resort during

day and night. A beautiful garden with lawn and tropical flowers will surround the buildings, and all rooms will have air conditioning.

The company promises reliable jobs for the people, good salary, development of the infrastructure (especially the construction of the access road and a chemical sewage treatment plant), reliable connection to telecommunication, radio and television, and supermarkets with all goods of desire.

Mr. Hong asks Dimitri to promote this project, and to influence the members of the cooperative, so that they vote in favor. The minister shows that the government has an interest in this developmental project as well.

What should Dimitri do?

Serial story (issues that can be added when appropriate)

Iannis, one of the best friends' group, has become a member of an NGO, who wants to establish a National park in this valley. He is in favor of alternative and fair tourism.

What should Dimitri do?

Every winter during the rainy days the rivers flood the meadows and also the vineyards. Especially those of Tomar, one of the best friends' group, are affected. The HoBe company promises to regulate the rivers. Yet this flood feeds the water reservoirs of the neighborhood country.

What should Dimitri do?

Piotr, one of the best friends' group, participated in a project of the University department of meteorology. He told Dimitri, for the region of the valley an increase of the average temperature is already measurable, and the water shortage during the summer period will increase.

What should Dimitri do?

Indval, one of the best friends' group, told Dimitri that his father would give the family property to his brother, if Indval votes against the HoBe project, because the whole family is tired of this life of hard work and lack of pleasure, sparetime and prosperity.

What should Dimitri do?

Dimension of dilemma

Serial story: increasing and widening the issues by bringing in different persons, different areas of problems,

Related to selected course content / topics

- Historical relationship
- Air pollution
- Water pollution
- Land resources and soil degradation

- Biodiversity / conservation
- Ecological footprint
- Food security and sustainable agriculture
- Trading
- Transportation and communication
- Local and global community
- Government: local and global regulation
- Safe and just environment
- Teaching about sustainability

Possible involved values

Educational Aims / Developmental objectives

according to the course:

- sensitivity concerning the challenges and need of technical development and change
- increase of the environmental knowledge including e.g. agriculture, industry, transportation, exploitation of natural resources, ecological damage of the environment and biodiversity, consumption habits
- acting in an environmental friendly way
- change of behavior and routines
- approaching a level of awareness and responsibility towards sustainability issues

according to European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning (https://ec.europa.eu/ploteus/sites/eac-efq/files/leaflet_en.pdf)

Knowledge

Skills

Competences

Involved disciplines

natural sciences

literature

history

culture

language

Interdisciplinarity

Transdisciplinarity