

# The Consensus of Penvern

At great distance from Washington, Penvern was the place where the wording of a new consensus started in Autumn 2000. Now it is clear that the nine following points form a general framework of reference which is adopted in any analyses of economic activities and in any economic actions by a great number of researchers and citizens who call for

*a convivial civilization where cooperation is more important than competition.*

## The Consensus of Penvern

1. To address the ends of activities which give them their meaning and their values as well as their motives, but to accept only those that honour the principles of dignity and responsibility.
2. To take into account the powers that structure free relationships within societies, and to design and implement regulating devices emerging from collective deliberation, based on the democratic principles of citizenship and loyalty.
3. To avoid relying on only one discipline and to encourage the intersection of various fields of knowledge and especially by drawing upon the resources of the many disciplines within the human and social sciences.
4. To analyse “objects” by empirical studies or to carry out theoretical analyses suggested by problems emerging on the ground, enlightened by history and not advocate anything exclusively on the basis of abstract and technical speculations.
5. To organize a dialogue with grassroots actors in order to benefit from their expertise as citizens; to encourage deliberation with citizens and civil society, and in so doing, to avoid making decisions that would be merely technical and top-down.
6. To produce scientific analyses not wedded to the wording of principles or slogans; to build sound arguments, mobilizing not only history and new surveys, but also the resources of classical works coherent with the terms of this consensus.
7. To acknowledge and to integrate the complexity of human behaviour into analyses: routinized and creative, selfish and altruistic, autonomous and dependent, cooperative and competitive, reasonable and impulsive.
8. To serve the public interest for present and future generations and to watch for individualistic excesses (limited inequalities) and collective excesses (balance, on the one hand between government and civil society and on the other hand, between power and countervailing power in the market).
9. To accept an ethics of scientific discussion for works to be justified within a community according to democratic procedures that respect interpretative pluralism.

## Why disseminate the Consensus of Penvern?

**Objective:** To broaden this international consensus about new terms of reference to produce knowledge on economic activities and to run these activities.

**Hope :** These new terms of reference will be common to various modes of production of knowledge that are seeking to contribute to the « common good » or to the « general interest » as it is expressed by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948 or by “superior” drafts by the UN: the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in 1966, the Rio declaration on Sustainable Development in 1992 or the Millennium Declaration in 2000.

The question is how to turn the Earth into a planet for humanity and solidarity, to promote *a convivial civilization where cooperation is more important than competition*.

**Object :** We must *part with the old framework of reference* that has, over time, been structured around a unique paradigm, with a discourse increasingly present within the social sciences today, in the analyses and comments by the media, in processes of individual and collective decision making, all of which have disqualified other ways of thinking as non-scientific and inefficient.

These other ways of thinking are numerous and are found in many places but they are scattered with no links, at times, they even compete. The purpose is not to unify these in another unique paradigm, in a new alternative orthodoxy, or around the lowest common denominator. On the contrary, all forms of different thinking, of “heterodoxies”, old ones and new ones, are compatible if they share the same objective, the same hopes, and a general idea of the humanity they aspire to build.

This alliance can be materialized by a consensus on **a set of general terms of reference** - *constituting a kind of Charter or the equivalent of the Hippocratic Oath for those who want to take care of society*. Such a general framework does not in any way preclude the plurality of methods and “*research programs*” to carry out work that will contribute to realizing our common hopes.

This alliance is necessary to put a stop to the generalization of the current dominant framework of thought that endangers mankind. The form which is proposed for this alliance is totally open: the text is to be disseminated as broadly as possible in all networks in the hope of generating a snowball effect. The object is not to seek and to count signatures or membership.