

# Application to APU Alumni Association Achievement Award

## General Information

Name: Philipp Rosenthal

Year of Graduation: 2009

College: APS – IMAT Program

## My Reason for this Application

In the summer of 2008, I was sitting in a train somewhere in Siberia and it began to dawn on me that my experiences at APU would have a much larger impact on my life than I could possibly imagine at that point of time. I had only spent one year in Beppu, yet the international environment and the spirit of collaboration became obvious to me even back then. Putting this very special environment into context however and realizing how unique it really has been, was only possible for me after some years. You might also say that only now, I truly understand the wisdom that is underlying the values at APU.

Today, I can see that my APU experience was a milestone in my development. Not only because I met my wife Ekaterina there but also because it taught me a very valuable lesson: Collaboration will always outperform competition if there is a mutual goal. This has become my credo in my work as an international consultant for tangible and financially feasible sustainable development projects. Being chosen for the Alumni Association Award and being recognized by an institution with such wise underlying principles would be a great honor and thus my reason for application.

## An introduction to some of my achievements

For me, working on Sustainable Development has become more than simply a job. As a recent father, I want to ensure a future where my children have the same opportunities than me. For this, I have taken the necessary steps to make a positive change, by enabling decision makers to take the right decisions and by promoting sustainability through tangible and financially feasible projects.

My academic education as well as my increasing interest in the field of sustainability have shown me the reality of today`s unsustainable society. The injustice and the reckless environmental destruction have made me very passionate, persistent and have given me the will to “walk the extra mile”. That way, whenever I saw the opportunity for an improvement, I have not stopped until I came up with a viable alternative. One example was to convince the German Government to finance a Low Carbon Development Strategy for a tourism island in Croatia, which I carried-out<sup>1</sup>. This strategy became very popular and was described by Mr. Ivo Josipovic (President of Croatia) during our meeting in his residence as “a best-practice example for a regional sustainable development in Croatia”.



Meeting with President Ivo Josipovic for the presentation of the Zero Emission Island Project

Also, I have shared my opinions on the necessary steps for a more sustainable future for Kuwait with Dr. Rajendra Pachauri (Nobel Prize Winner 2007 with the IPCC) during a meeting in the Indian Embassy this year. These consulting examples are, however, only one side. Apart from that I am heavily engaged in the development of a financially feasible alternative for a problem that has not been solved for thousands of years.

Since the cultivation of olive trees and the production of olive oil there has been a problem of what to do with the olive waste (olive pomace). Traditionally, olive oil production is rather a small-scale business so that the environmental burden used to be limited and would normally not cause any problems. Nowadays, olive oil is considered a commodity product that is consumed around the world. The main

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<sup>1</sup> See [http://www.igr.de/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=463%3Anull-emissions-strategie-fuer-die-insel-krk-in-kroatien&catid=69%3Aneueigkeiten&Itemid=98&lang=de](http://www.igr.de/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=463%3Anull-emissions-strategie-fuer-die-insel-krk-in-kroatien&catid=69%3Aneueigkeiten&Itemid=98&lang=de)

production (about 90%) is, however, still around the Mediterranean Sea, which, together with the sharp increase of production volume, has led to growing problems on what to do with the olive pomace. If it is legally disposed, olive mill owners have to pay an extra fee because it is considered a hazardous waste because it does not decompose as other organic matter. That way, the margin that anyway has gotten drastically reduced is becoming even smaller. The other alternative is to illegally dispose of the pomace either into the Mediterranean Sea or somewhere onshore. Both alternatives leave the regarded ecosystem in a devastated state since the olive pomace kills all bacteria.

Since 2010, I am researching ways to solve this issue. Along the way, I have started working with different specialists (e.g. of the University of Bonn, Germany) and investors. First laboratory tests have shown that my initial hypothesis was correct and currently we are waiting for the last test run before implementation. The goal will be to extract the material that prevents olive pomace from natural decomposition. These extracted compounds can be used as raw material for organic pesticides<sup>2</sup> and in the future even as a preventative medicine against Alzheimer and some types of cancer (much more research needed). Another positive aspect is that the olive pomace without these compounds can be utilized as nutritious animal fodder. A problem that has been there for thousands of years is then turned into an opportunity for a healthier nutrition and a healthier environment.



Pictures of an olive mill in Croatia showing reception point (top left), milling (top right) and olive pomace (bottom)

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<sup>2</sup> Some of the oldest trees on earth are olive trees, their way of protection are the Polyphenolic Compounds, which are perfected by evolution.

This is the start of my journey. Now, I am 30 years old and most people around me are getting settled with their every-day-lives. But when I look at my son, who is less than one year old, I know that I cannot stop. I will continue trying to make a positive impact wherever I will go, not for money but for the future of him and his family. This is my responsibility as a father.

## **Why should I be chosen?**

I would be very thankful if APU chooses me for the Alumni Achievement Award. In my view, the values, the international spirit and the deep understanding that we need to work together across geographies and cultures deserve greater attention around the globe. That`s why, I would use the honor of this title to promote the University and its values alongside my ongoing and future initiatives, promoting collaboration wherever competition has failed to create a more sustainable society.