

# **Global Spa Summit** JOINING TOGETHER. SHAPING THE FUTURE.

**Concurrent Breakout Session: Panel and Discussion**  
**Tuesday, May 20th, 2008**  
**11:45am – 1:00pm**  
**Herbert Hoover Room, 4th Floor**

## **Remarkable Ideas to Meet the Demand for Sustainability**

*Panel Leader:*

*Dr. Marc Cohen, Professor of Complementary Medicine, RMIT University and  
President, Australian Integrative Medicine Association, Australia*

*Panelists:*

*Ute Leube, Founder, Amala, Inc., and Managing Director, Primavera Life, Germany*

*Ted Ning, Director, LOHAS, Colorado*

*Sonu Shivdasani, Chairman & CEO, Six Senses, Thailand*

*Contributors:*

*Marci Zaroff, President, Under the Canopy, Florida*

*Mark Wuttke, Principal, the Wuttke Group and*

*Board Member, Green Spa Network, United States/Australia*

*Scribes:*

*Alexis Palmer-Strong (Cornell) and Kristen Rainey (Cornell)*

**Marc Cohen (Panel Leader):**

“Sustainability” often refers to the environment, but we should think about the term as far as sustainability of this industry as a whole. Our focus should be to create well-being on the planet for all people for all times. It’s not just about the carbon footprint. Let’s focus on practical ideas. We need industry-wide initiatives. Environment is just a part of it.



Models of sustainability-  
5 element model of capitalism:

- Natural
- Human
- Social
- Manufacturing
- Financial

### Introduction of panel:

Sonu Shivdasani: Sustainability is part of Six Senses' core vision and mission. This is unique for a company and should be recognized.

Ute Leube: Amala, has pushed the envelope in terms of disclosure (what/how products are produced.)

Ted Ning: LOHAS covers a \$3 billion segment of the market. LOHAS advocates that these are the same people who go to spas. They are value-driven consumers.

Marci Zaroff: Marci is a thought leader and entrepreneur. She started 'Under the Canopy', products that are made from organic fiber and cotton.

Mark Wuttke: Mark works with value-driven consumers through his company, the Wuttke Group.

### Discussion:

#### Marc Cohen (Panel Leader):

Question: "What is the most successful initiative in sustainability that you've done? What is your greatest challenge?"

#### Ute Leube:

Greatest success: We partnered with producers who do certified organic cultivation.

Greatest challenge: People we work with in developing countries are living hand to mouth and don't have a future perspective. We have a three-year period necessary to be considered organic; it is so hard to convince them to think in a different way.

#### Ted Ning:

Success: Raising awareness of the conscious consumer. LOHAS is a non-profit organization. Conscious consumers look to interact with products and services aligned with their values. We try to enhance the awareness of sustainable, innovative, and creative opportunities out there.

#### Sonu Shivdasani:

Success: In 2006, we said that the Soneva Fushi luxury resort in Maldives will be zero carbon by 2010. (Not carbon neutral.) We'll turn off the generators and use deep sea

cooling—using waste heat for hot water. These are solar opportunities.  
Challenge: Taking the whole company in that direction.

#### Marci Zaroff:

Challenges: Initially, my greatest challenge was working with farmers—to move both food and fiber together into the organic realm.

Challenge: Infusing style into sustainability.

Challenge: Developing and integrating standards for organic fibers. We wrote the standards for organic fiber and created standards for the fiber supply chain.

Challenge: Education. [There is challenge in] translating our mission to the consumer and partnering with stores to tell the story.

#### Mark Wuttke:

Challenge: Fair trade—how to be organic without harming anyone or anything.

Challenge: Pushing for biodynamic. Be regenerative. Move beyond organic.

Challenge: It is easy to speak to the converted. The greater challenge is speaking with and influencing the mainstream. You need to “get in bed with the devil” to have a bigger impact.



#### Marc Cohen (Panel Leader):

[I am] presenting the idea of “consumanism”. It’s about conscious, humane consumption. This is maximum enjoyment with minimum pain.

Disclosure, product life cycle, minimal energy consumption, minimal waste—health and wellness is about connection. Disclosure is very important for sustainability. Let people choose. The spa and wellness industry needs to lead the charge. Why aren’t they there? They need to show they can be sustainable and not give up anything. The spa industry can end up being even be more luxurious.

#### Sonu Shivdasani:

Yes, you can keep the luxury. This is why we used Soneva Fushi as our case study for carbon zero because it is our most luxurious resort. Our earth spa has no air conditioning because the walls are thick; it is built around a lotus pond to create a natural ventilation system.

#### Marc Cohen (Panel Leader):

It’s more luxurious to have natural air than AC.

**Sonu Shivdasani:**

But [this comes] not without risk. These buildings are better suited to drier climate. During our first monsoon in Thailand we had to close the spa and rebuild the roof with an oil-based sealant on the top.

We'll see June 4th with the start of our deep sea water cooling—you have to be willing to take risks.

**Marc Cohen (Panel Leader):**

Sustainability requires innovation. But innovation is not without risk. I want to know what Ted foresees as challenges.

**Ted Ning:**

Challenge: Does this [sustainability] matter to the customer? LOHAS is trying to ID that consumer who wants to make conscious choices. How do you market to them? How do you talk to them? Are they listening? The consumer has evolved. People demand a conversation- they want to be spoken with, not at. We have to intrigue them.

Challenge: Education. We have so many different levels of what is considered green/sustainable. What definition should we use?

**Audience Question:**

We need to find a better way to do business. Water and power are being wasted. How can we find a better/more efficient use of resources?

**Marc Cohen (Panel Leader):**

We have a water crisis on the planet. We are in the Spa industry — “Health through Water.” Use that as platform to stand up for a cause. The water bottle industry is \$100 billion industry; 22 billion bottles are sold [annually]. Fourteen percent of these bottles are recycled and most are shipped to China.

**Ted Ning:**

Challenge: That information is heavy for people. They don't feel that they have any power to change it. How can we empower them?

**Sonu Shivdasani:**

Six Senses agreed to ban bottled water by this November at all 12 hotels.

**Mark Wuttke:**

I live in Atlanta. 22,000 people lost jobs due to drought. But, it was not about true drought because Atlanta got more rainfall than parts of Australia. It was about the unsustainable use of water. Some companies, like hair salons, are now taxed for use of water. We should act now with our use of water rather than waiting to be pinned to the wall.

Marc Cohen (Panel Leader):

People are made to feel guilty in Australia for having a shower.

Audience Question – Dan Shackelton-Jones (President, Niki Bryan):

There's a shortage of practical technology. I'm struggling to find a practical, affordable solution. I am struggling to find enough space on the roof for solar panels. You have geographic limitations of technology (e.g. technologies that won't work in urban settings). Is there a gap in technology?

Marc Cohen (Panel Leader):

No. Water treatment, for instance, has many great technologies.

Sonu Shivdasani:

It is actually quite cheap, too.

Clodagh (Founder, Clodagh Design):

What about an industry-wide stainless steel bottle with a logo to send a message to people as an industry? Like a movement such as the pink ribbon campaign. I will design it!

Ute Leube:

Dr. Emoto's water studies work with the shapes of crystals to show the nutrition content of water. It's important to have high quality water in your products. Perhaps there should be a word on the bottle.

Mary Tabacchi:

A lot of bottled water is not mineral water; it's distilled. There is a serious risk of mineral depletion if distilled water is used often.

Marc Cohen (Panel Leader):

Question: What can we do with Corporate Social Responsibility in this field?

Sonu Shivdasani:

Sustainability is part of our DNA.

You need to give people the means for corporate social responsibility. At Six Senses, half of one percent (.5%) of revenues goes toward SERF- Social Environmental Responsibility Fund. The host of the property decides how to spend the money. Often there's a full-time employee as "Director of SERF." You can't trigger your team unless you add it to the budget. In other words, you can't have that impact unless you budget for it and give people means.

Marc Cohen (Panel Leader):

Couldn't we make giving half a percent of revenue to social responsibility initiatives an industry standard?

### Sonu Shivdasani:

We call our employees “hosts.” We want them to have a sense of ownership, and social responsibility helps to give them that. It empowers them. We hire locally as much as possible. People feel proud they are supporting the community. There is a different level of interaction with guests because they have pride.

### Marc Cohen (Panel Leader):

It also helps with retention and recruitment. Do “good” for the community and for the world.

### Ted Ning:

“People want to do well while doing good.” With Wal-Mart’s Personal Sustainability volunteer program each employee can take on one step in their lives to be more sustainable. Once they understand it on a small scale they are more likely to adopt it on a broader scale.



### Marc Cohen (Panel Leader):

What about the use of technology? Footprints – you can have consumers add an extra dollar to any transaction on e-commerce websites and donate it to a charity of their choosing. Anyone in this industry could do this. Again, should this be an industry standard?

### Mark Wuttke:

Petco asks for \$1 to go to a pet charity at point of sale. I’m a member of the Green Spa Network. They are working on “how to get the consumer to volunteer these funds at the point of sale?” When buying gift certificates, people could pay an extra dollar. SpaFinder can work on this because it has the breadth of reach.

### Marc Cohen (Panel Leader):

We should be embarrassed that the pet industry is leading us in such an initiative.

The website, [www.fund.org](http://www.fund.org), is a fund to teach massage and healing in underprivileged communities. It is based on a program in the Philippine slums. It creates jobs and educates people about wellness. It also helps curb the industry labor shortage. This is the kind of project we can get behind as an industry.

**Ute Leube:**

I think it is about education. It is better to give education than to give money. People want to understand.

**Mark Wuttke:**

Natural Bodies Spas in the Southeast is reaching out to local schools and getting students involved to learn about water.

**Marc Cohen (Panel Leader):**

This is about creating a wellness culture. Spas often exclude children—yet they're the future consumers. In Australia we work with the Scouts. The spa industry should work with Scouts because they are the largest and fastest growing organization in the world and have aligned values. We can use those organizations to create wellness structures.

Permaculture was developed by Australians—you can't have sustainable human life without sustainable agriculture. We need a way to filter these ideas down to all demographics and all levels of society.

**Ute Leube:**

It's hard to find good people, so we start with young people. About education, show them the benefits and values of taking care of yourself and others.

**Ted Ning:**

It's not what you know but knowing how to find it. It is not only training, but other education that is necessary. Bring in guest speakers.

**Marc Cohen (Panel Leader):**

Canyon Ranch pays for any course an employee takes and gets a B or higher in.

**Mary Tabacchi:**

E-Cornell should put some courses online in sustainability.

**Marc Cohen (Panel Leader):**

We just started a Masters and a graduate diploma that is offered online.

**Sonu Shivdasani:**

We need to find and train people locally. The company needs to try to prioritize locals. Also, no visa restrictions or work permits. We want to create a Six Senses college, the first in Asia. We plan to eventually have 12 different clusters. Our induction would be 2

weeks longer in order to teach employees not just about Six Senses but also about their own well-being so they can better care for others.

**Marc Cohen (Panel Leader):**

That is literally investing in them as human beings.

**Clodagh:**

The bigger the mix internationally, the more we can learn from each other. It enriches the culture of the studio. Locals also enrich the experience, but they also show that we want to spread the word of sustainability.

**Audience Comment:**

We must get ethics involved. We need long term standards so what we create can be replicated and sustained.

**Audience Comment:**

Training of Excellence at Healing Hotels of the World teaches holistic health and well being to all employees.

**Marc Cohen (Panel Leader):**

Looking at Financial Capital now, we need a research agenda. We need demonstrated results. We need interaction between this industry and the medical industry. For instance, can we demonstrate that jet lag treatments would make people think better? How much would that be worth to a company?

**Marci Zaroff:**

We could do an industry-wide fundraiser and use the money raised for research.

**Marc Cohen (Panel Leader):**

SRI research is econometric. Health and medical research should be the next step.

**Mark Wuttke:**

There are three board members in the room, but there is not a full house of delegates. The Global Spa Summit board members have a responsibility to positively influence the Summit to support sustainability.

**Clodagh:**

The Hospitality Design Conference had a pre-day on sustainability. Perhaps the Global Spa Summit could do something like this that is independent of the rest of the Summit, but still a part of it. Those who are serious about it can dedicate more time to it.



The Global Spa Summit is an international organization that brings together leaders and visionaries to positively impact and shape the future of the global spa and wellness industry.