

Bernhard Steinbeis

30 Years INGEDE

Welcome address to the INGEDE Symposium

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Please follow me looking back to the beginning of 1989: Georg Holzhey (Haindl) and Heinrich Baumgarten (PTS) had developed the idea to support research in the field of deinking technology with funds raised from deinkers.

They found open ears as many deinkers thought in the same direction, and the fees charged per ton of paper for recycling did not really hurt.

This way a first meeting took place already on 29 February at PTS in Munich.

Before that, the initiators had asked me whether I could imagine to be a candidate for chairmanship. I knew that the risk of being elected for this sort of jobs was nearly 100% – very much like in communist countries.

There were two reasons for me to agree:

- 1) The promise that PTS would take care of all the organisational work
- 2) Nobody was menacing me that 30 years after I would be asked to deliver a welcome address.

So, big surprise, I not only got the job, but I liked it.

The meetings were well prepared, the subjects were interesting, the spirit was good, and the projects took their time but were promising.

But there is no paradise on earth: At every meeting, at 12:00 o'clock, an enormous meatloaf was brought in, and nobody dared to complain about this element of PTS-Bavarian hospitality.

INGEDE developed well. Erwin Krauthauf, chairman from 1992–2002, succeeded to win members from many European countries.

The chairmen Rolf Maisch, Ulrich Höke, and Thomas Krauthauf and managing director Andreas Faul achieved a peak membership of 37 paper mills with 11 million tons of paper for recycling/year.

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To me, INGEDE seems to be an island of happiness comparing it to the present environmental and political situation:

- INGEDE has a clear and simple structure whereas the complexity around us is overwhelming
- INGEDE is financing honest scientific work – and not spin doctors and fake news. Results are published by Axel Fischer through all the years, and so he has his personal 30th INGEDE anniversary soon. Congratulations!
- INGEDE reduced the fee from 15 to 7 Cents per ton of paper for recycling while the world around is greedy without end.
- INGEDE contributes to recycle paper to the highest level of purity and brightness while the world is still consuming natural resources as if they were unlimited.
- INGEDE succeeded to build up an atmosphere of confidence with its partners like ink and glue manufacturers – very different to the way, European countries are dealing with one another.
- INGEDE members like international collaboration whereas populist parties try to convince people to national egoism.

This wonderful balance sheet is reason enough to warm-hearted congratulations to INGEDE's 30th anniversary, and for all of us it is encouraging to go on working to preserve the basis for life on earth.

Thank you!