



*The City of Urbino's Commitment to the Earth Charter* 5  
By Massimo Galuzzi

*Arab Environmentalists Call for Adoption of the Earth Charter* 6

*Earth Dialogues Lyon, France* 7

*Ethical Investment* 7  
By Michele Hawkins

*Update on the Earth Charter Education Programme* 8  
By Brendan Mackey

*Expanding the Boundaries of Transformative Learning* 10  
By Edmund O' Sullivan

*International Online Forum* 10  
By Steve Glass

*Roundtable on the Earth Charter in India* 11  
By Ajoy Bagchi

*Earth Charter & Youth* 12  
By Martin Williams

*Annual Town Meetings Campaign* 13  
By Gwendolyn Hallsmith

*Ethics for Sustainable Development* 14  
By Frank Mayberg

*US Earth Charter Community Summits* 15  
By Jan Roberts

*2001 Asia - Pacific Regional conference* 17  
By Noel Preston

*Updates* 18

## for love of Earth Celebration of the Earth Charter

by Cami Davis (\*)

**F**or Love of Earth, A Celebration of the Earth Charter was deeply moving for all those who found themselves participating on September 9, 2001 in Shelburne, Vermont, USA. What was co-created that day, was done so by all the participants and all of the "invisibles" reverentially invoked. Letters and emails are testimony, that many of us shared an extraordinary expression of unconditional love and beauty. Two days later, on September 11, 2001, the attack on the World Trade Center towers, in New York, the Pentagon in Washington, D.C. and the attempted attack ending in the plane crash in Pennsylvania, also crashed into our collective psyches throughout the United States and globally.

The juxtaposition of these two apparent contrasts, could feel nothing less than significant for all those involved. I was instantly clearer and deeply appreciative of the significance of the Earth Charter. It is beyond remarkable that it exists at all; that thousands of people of diverse needs and desires could come together in a shared expression of values, principles and hope towards a sustainable and peaceful global

society. Secondly, the necessity for just such an instrument to guide our responses at this "critical juncture in planetary history," became exceedingly clear and perhaps prophetic in light of the September 11th attack.

And so I would like to share the event *For Love of Earth, A Celebration of the Earth Charter*, as well as the grassroots project *The Temenos Books*, Images for Global Healing, Peace and Gratitude, and the *Temenos Earth Masks*. I would also like to share the extraordinary response to the Sept 11th attack; when artists Sally Linder and Janet Fredericks, and Site Designer, Andrea Morgante decided to walk the *The Ark of Hope* filled with *The Temenos Books* and images of *visual prayers* created at the event. The journey embarked that day from Shelburne Farms in northern Vermont to the United Nations in New York City.

But let's not get ahead of ourselves. On September 9, 2001, the day began in a meadow at 8 am. A conch shell sounded, calling the nearly 2000 people to gather around global peace walker Satish Kumar, Programme Director of Schumacher College, and editor of

*Resurgence Magazine*. Satish invited us to join him on a silent pilgrimage walk through the meadows to the event site at Shelburne Farms, a 1400 acre working farm and National Historic Site whose mission is environmental education and fostering ecological land-stewardship practices. Like a medieval pageant, the sixteen Earth Charter principles, written on colorful banners, were carried beside us. A human line a mile long, 10-20 people abreast, merged with the undulations of the landscape, becoming one with Earth. The only sounds were late summer crickets, the mooing of the curious cows, and the neigh of the old beloved draft horse, Lucy. As we crested the hill we caught our first glimpse of the massive historic Breeding Barn. We could see the giant spiral sculpture of bamboo, raffia and bits of gold, created by artist Jane Horner, titled outward to embrace the heavens while simultaneously being connected to soil. The music of Paul Winter's soprano honoring the morning with *Sun Singer* beckoned us forward in anticipation of what the day would hold. Dancers in white move about in the trees. We narrowed our path to walk beneath the banner of the Earth Charter Preamble. As Paul Winter's wife, Chez suggested, it was as if we were passing across a threshold and by doing so were making a commitment to the words before us.

By Janson Houston



Peace Walk with Satish Kumar, of Schumacher College

inspirational words of Jane Goodall, Satish Kumar, Steven C. Rockefeller, The Very Reverend James Parks Morton, and Stephanie Kaza. All elements were woven together by the brilliance, heart and love of our hosts, ecological designer, John Todd, and *Annals of Earth*, writer-editor, Nancy Jack Todd. The intent of the day was to introduce and celebrate the Earth Charter by bringing the words into our bodies through the sensate arts; opening our hearts through beauty, and thereby, cultivating the desire to *take care of*, Earth, all beings, and each other.

Satish Kumar inspired us to hope for the future. He reminded us that if changes like the falling of the Berlin Wall and the destruction of apartheid in South Africa can happen, that the Earth Charter principles can guide us through the necessary challenges and changes before us now. He called for a new trinity of soil, society and soul, along with policies that reflect a new Earth Democracy.

Dr. Steven C. Rockefeller's vibrant telling of the "creation stories" of the Earth Charter reflected the remarkable eight-year process of finding common ground and crafting representative language, in the midst of our differences. He successfully put into perspective both the accomplishment of the creation of the Earth Charter and an understanding of some of its possible applications. For many his talk was the

"substance" supporting actualizing their inspirations.

Dancers guided by choreographer Tarin Chaplin of Floating World Dance Co., and musicians from Talisman, led by Heidi Champney, interpreted the principles of the Earth Charter.

Called again, by the conch and then by the beat of African drums and dancers, we returned to the barn to hear Jane Goodall. Jane greeted us with a loud, exuberant chimpanzee call! She went on to share many of the dire details we find ourselves up against and the shame that she feels when she looks into the eyes of her own grandson. Yet she also urged us to hope and believes in the possibility that we can meet these challenges we face. She told us of her new effort *Roots and Shoots*, and how it is a way to break through the challenges, making the world a better place for animals, the human environment and global community. She further stated, "I urge people to say every single day that they will follow the



Paul Winter presentation

And so the day began, one of participation, reverence and a call to responsibility. The day was filled with ritual, music, visual arts, and the



Jane Goodal's presentation

odictates of the Earth Charter." (Later that evening at dinner Jane committed to sharing the Earth Charter through her *Roots and Shoots* organization making the prospect of widespread circulation promising).

The culmination of the event *For Love of Earth, A Celebration of the Earth Charter* was the creation of the largest **Temenos** image-making circle to date, and the unveiling of *The Ark of Hope*.

*The Temenos Project* began in 1999, when we (Cami Davis and Sally Linder) came together with a small group of artists to share our common sorrows about the state of the world. Out of our questioning arose the collaborative idea; **The Temenos Project: Temenos Books, Images for Global Healing, Peace and Gratitude** and the **Temenos Earth Masks**. Sally and I went on to combine this project with the introduction of the Earth Charter in educational and private sectors. Over 3000 Vermont artists, teachers, school children, university students and community members have participated in the *Temenos Project*.

At this point during the event *For Love of Earth*, the entire center of the barn was emptied. The nearly 2000 people sat beneath the eaves at tables filled with donated art supplies. In the center on a bed of straw was the exquisitely painted sculptural vessel, **The Ark of Hope**, designed and painted by artist, Sally Linder, built by woodworker Kevin Jenness and lined by artist Beth Haggart. *The Ark of Hope* was created as a place of refuge for the Earth Charter document handwritten on papyrus taken from the Living Systems greenhouse in South Burlington, Vermont, and the *Temenos Books, Images for Global Healing, Peace and Gratitude* created over the past two years as well as from the event. The Ark's painted panels each represent the flora and fauna of the world as seen through the images of the world's traditional



*The Ark of Hope*

artists. Each panel visualizes a season, a direction, an element and a universal symbol. Symbols of faith from traditional religions and indigenous societies surround the Ark. The top honors the children and young animals of the world. The carrying poles are unicorn horns. The unicorn's horn renders evil ineffective. The Ark was opened awaiting all the Temenos Books and tiny prayer images about to be made.

We ended with a reading of the last sentence from The Earth Charter, "The Way Forward"; *May ours be a time remembered for the awakening of a new reverence for life, the firm resolve to achieve sustainability, the quickening of the struggle for justice and peace, and the joyful celebration of life.*

And celebrate we did: dancing and jumping in circles!

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## September 11, 2001

Artists Sally Linder, Janet Fredericks, Andrea Morgante, and Barbara Waters, were cleaning up after the event when they heard the news of the World Trade Towers tragedy. They decided in that moment that now was the time to walk *The Ark of Hope* to the United Nations. The journey has been a remarkable one, trusting in the generosity of everyone they have encountered along the way. The *Ark Pilgrimage Walkers* numbers have varied; sometimes four, sometimes twenty-four. They have held Temenos gatherings in communities, adding images of prayers along the way, attended potluck dinners in their honor, participated in peace rallies, and engaged in intimate conversations with onlookers. At every stop the walkers have shared the message of hope that the Earth Charter holds, as it outlines principles for creating a just, sustainable and peaceful world.



*The Ark of Hope*

## Words of Sally Linder in the journey to New York (\*):

*The walk is one of the most transformational things I have ever done. I walk with it (The Ark of Hope) almost every day, either pushing or pulling. I walk with tiny steps, a strongly beating heart, and with my senses wide open. There is beauty everywhere: in the shade trees, in the snakes crossing the road, in the wetlands, in the geese and monarchs flying south, in the manure being spread on the fields, in the sighting of an otter playing on a log, and the gentle folks coming out of their homes or businesses, being pulled to this beautiful wooden chest, Wondering What It Is. There is listening, and talking, giggling and hugs. There are gifts of flowers, apples, water and bread. I am overflowing with Hope, with Love, and a strong belief in Transformation.*

*I am joyous. I am tired and I love the simplicity. People are joining the ark for a block, for a day, for a picnic by the side of the road. And then there are long stretches of road with just silence. The brooks, the songbirds, the crickets, the gently falling rain.*

*Each day I come upon a tangible need for one or more of the Earth Charter's principles. I am walking through them, with them and they are real.*

*Walking, I see squirrels and chipmunks gathering acorns for the winter.*

*I see monarchs beginning their long journey south.*

*I see milkweed pods forming and hear geese heralding their path.*

*These beings that give us their love so unconditionally are moving toward the future. Indeed there is hope.*

*They carry vision far wiser than us. I believe that in the food of the acorns, beneath the strong and fragile wings, and in the notes of song, the vision of the Earth Charter is being carried. How gracious of them to help us in the work.*

*At times I am concerned that I feel so centered, and so joyous, and so very grateful. All around the globe there is such fear, such tragedy, and such despair. But walking transcends and faith guides.*

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(\*) Sally Linder is an artist from Burlington, Vermont, USA, who, together with others carried the Ark of Hope from Burlington to New York.

## Unsung heroines and heroes:

The phenomena that have created the *Temenos Project* and *The Ark of Hope*, as well as the event *For Love of Earth, A Celebration of the Earth Charter* has only been, and continues to be possible, through the massive web of collaborations and gifts of thousands of people. The art teachers brought, and continue to bring, the Earth Charter into their schools. Shelburne Farms gave endless staffing hours to the event, as well as huge financial support and commitment to the Earth Charter. Generous financial support of individuals and businesses made it possible. Hundreds of volunteers gave their time and ideas. The entire process of sharing the Earth Charter in this non-strategic, but organic and living way, is a model of grassroots communities in action. It is a miraculous living tapestry; a testimony to the web of our intentions to live reverentially with each other, all beings and Earth. The awakening of September 11th intensifies our commitment.

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(\*) Cami Davis is an artist from Vermont, USA, who, together with Sally Linder and others of Shelburn Farms put together the Celebration of the Earth Charter event.



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**Note:** The Earth Charter was carried for 59 days from Burlington, Vermont in the Ark of Hope, and the last leg of the journey the Ark was placed upon the Sloop Clearwater ([www.clearwater.org/news/ark.html](http://www.clearwater.org/news/ark.html)), owned by Pete Seeger, renowned folk singer, where it sailed up the Hudson River to land in New York where the Ark is housed at the Interfaith Center of New York before being exhibited at the United Nations.

For more information and pictures of the Ark of Hope, please see the website: <http://www.ark-of-hope.org>

"The common underlying factor of conflicts today is the issue of insecurity prompted by the prospect of exclusion or the perceived threat of starvation for both people and communities. The circumstances for this feeling of insecurity are often brought about by the degradation of the environment. An Earth Charter will make everyone of us conscious of this and help develop a culture of peace, care and solidarity." -

Ambassador Mohamed Sahnoun, Algeria



# Urbino's Commitment to the Earth Charter

By Massimo Galuzzi,  
Mayor of Urbino, Italy

On 2 July 2001, the City of Urbino was the promoter of an initiative of exceptional importance: the presentation of the *Earth Charter* by Mikhail Gorbachev, winner of the Nobel Peace Prize and President of Green Cross International. Those taking part in the ceremony were: Rita Levi Montalcini, winner of the Nobel Prize for Medicine and Honorary President of Green Cross Italia, international guests from the Federation of Russian Republics and from Japan, the presidents of Italian regions and provinces, the mayors of various towns, representatives of several civil, religious and military institutions as well as important spokesmen from the Italian economic world. The initiative took place under the High Patronage of the President of the Italian Republic, Carlo Azeglio Ciampi, and served to make known to a wide audience the principles and values on which the *Earth Charter* is based. During the ceremony the various representatives of institutions who spoke emphasized how necessary it is today to face up to the problem of protecting the environment and to set up concrete policies that can guarantee sustainable development for the future.

On the same day at the beginning of July, another important official step was taken: the *Urbino Declaration* was launched, by which the direct representatives of the citizens and the basic institutions of the Italian Republic (local authorities, provinces and regions) declared that they had examined the "*Earth Charter*" project and had agreed with the principles it contains, adopting them as the foundation for a new ethic on which to base their administration and the development of their respective communities. Official communications for membership of the *Earth Charter* are now gradually arriving in Urbino and we shall soon be able to supply more details about this movement in support of the Charter.

Many people have asked me how this very strong link has arisen between the City of Urbino and the *Earth Charter*. I firmly believe that there has been a set of particular circumstances at the bottom of it all. Urbino is held to be a symbol of the balance between art, culture, environment and modern business. In 1998, UNESCO declared the entire old town centre of Urbino as a "World Heritage Site" and at the

beginning of 2001, the city supported both the Agenda 21 Project and the "European Cities' Charter for lasting and sustainable development", drawn up in Aalborg, Denmark. Our ideas and our sensibilities were therefore in tune with the principles expressed in the *Earth Charter*, even before we were aware of the document itself. When we were then able to meet some of the people who had been involved in the *Earth Charter* initiative, and who showed us its contents, we eagerly joined forces with those who are working to guarantee a better future for our planet.

The Urbino City Council officially gave its support to the *Earth Charter* on 25 May 2001 and we will continue, as a City Administration, to commit ourselves to spreading and developing this exceptional project, convinced that with the contribution of so many cities, public and private institutions, and individual citizens from the different countries, we can take up a challenge that affects us all: because the protection of the environment, cultural heritage, human rights, and responsible development, are not subjects towards which we can display indifference.

"The Earth Charter is important to rebuild and revitalize people's existing commitment to protect the earth and the environment. It is also important to generate new and wider commitments, since responsibility to the earth is everybody's responsibility. The Earth Charter is needed to continuously remind us all to put our commitments into actions in our daily lives, in decisions we make at work, and in joint efforts to make a real difference."

Erna Witoelar, Former State Minister, Indonesia

# Arab environmentalists call for adoption of Earth Charter

From Jordan Times of 13 November 2001,

by Ruba Saqr

**AMMAN** - Arab environmentalists from governmental and non-governmental organizations on Monday called on their governments to adopt the Earth Charter, an international initiative that promotes the respect of justice for humanity and the integrity of the environment.

Around 50 participants meeting here endorsed the "Amman Statement of the Earth Charter," which will be submitted during the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) in 2002 in Johannesburg, South Africa.

Among participants were representatives of the United Nations Development Programme's (UNDP) Global Environment Facility (GEF), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), in addition to child-care and environmental NGOs.

The statement included seven points emphasising the role of Arab governments in easing poverty, establishing peace in the region, respecting human rights and adopting environment-friendly programmes at the state level. "We feel today that it is time for our nation to participate in this endeavour, of adopting the Earth

Charter," said HRH Princess Basma, who chairs the Jordanian Hashemite Fund for Human Development (JOHUD).

"The Arab nation still holds an immense reservoir of ambitions and noble values and principles. This reservoir is vast enough to breathe renewed fortitude into the nation and motivate it to restore its leading role in the arena of progress and civilisation," said Princess Basma, who is one of the Earth Charter commissioners.

Environmentalists and development experts around the world hope that this "people's declaration" will lead to an emerging global consensus on fundamental values and principles for a just and sustainable world.

In yesterday's meeting, participants from Jordan, Palestine, Egypt, Bahrain, Lebanon and Tunisia expressed their full support for the charter's principles and formulated recommendations that work within the Arab context.

"We believe that the principles of the Earth Charter are in agreement with the values, traditions and customs of Arab communities and all religions," participants said in their final statement.

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*The above is a Jordan Times newspaper clipping.*

*Under the patronage of Earth Charter Commissioner Her Royal Highness Princess Basma Bint Talal, a regional Arab Earth Charter Meeting was held in Amman, Jordan on November 12-13th. Key participants attended from Jordan, Palestine, Egypt, Tunisia, Lebanon, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Syria, and Algeria. There were contributions by religious leaders, parliamentarians, journalists, professors, and Agenda 21 leaders. The meeting was highlighted by the City of Amman endorsing the Earth Charter and it is anticipated that after more review, Amman will implement the Charter Principles in developing its sustainability planning.*

"The Earth Charter is a unique instrument, promoting the empowerment and global sovereignty of the peoples to achieve a just, sustainable and participatory society"-

Ruud Lubbers, United Nations High Commissioner of Refugees

# Earth Dialogues

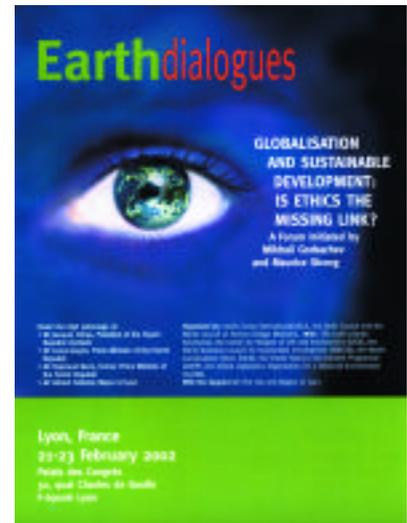
## Lyon, France

On February 21-23, 2002, in Lyon, France a forum initiated by Mikhail Gorbachev and Maurice Strong will be held. The theme of the meeting will be **"Globalization and Sustainable Development: Is Ethics the Missing Link?"** The forum is organized by Green Cross International, the City of Lyon, the Earth Council, the Earth Charter Secretariat, the Center for Respect of Life and Environment, the World Business Council for Sustainable Development, IUCN, UNEP, the Global Legislators Organization for a Balanced Environment (GLOBE), and key representatives of civil society. It will be held under the high patronage of Mr. Lionel Jospin, Prime Minister of the French Republic, Mr. Raymond Barre, Former Prime Minister of the French Republic, and Mr. Gerard Collomb, Mayor of Lyon.

The Earth Dialogues will precede the Rio+10 World Summit on Sustainable Development to be held in Johannesburg from 2-11 September 2002, which has been called to identify major constraints hindering the implementation of Agenda 21 and to address new challenges and opportunities that have emerged since the 1992 Earth Summit. The Earth Dialogues will discuss the issues to be raised in Johannesburg from an ethical perspective and it is hoped that elements of the discussions and resolutions from Lyon will be carried forward to the Johannesburg Summit. For more information contact:

E-mail: [secretariat@gci.ch](mailto:secretariat@gci.ch), Tel: (41 22) 789 1662, Fax: (41 22) 789 1695

[www.earthdialogues.org](http://www.earthdialogues.org)



## Ethical Investment

By Michele Hawkins

**E**thical investment is moving into the mainstream and is considered a new, high potential market for financial services. Socially responsible investing in the US now tops the two trillion dollar mark, with one out of every eight dollars under professional management part of a socially responsible portfolio. Between 1997 and 1999, Socially Responsible Investment (SRI) assets grew at twice the rate of all other assets under professional management in the United States<sup>1</sup>.

SRI in Australia is currently making its transition from a niche product to a mainstream investment trend. Two preconditions for future growth are: investor confidence in the credibility of the indexes themselves, and investor

confidence in the financial security of their investment.

This landscape offers a unique opportunity for use of the Earth Charter, which satisfies both of these preconditions by providing the framework for addressing investor confidence issues by defining environmentally and socially responsible practices for investment.

Within this context, a workshop on the use of the Earth Charter in ethical investment was held at Parliament House in Canberra, Australia, on October 9, 2001. The workshop was organised by Dr. Brendan Mackey (in his role as Chair, Earth Charter Australia) in partnership with the

Australian Wilderness Committee, Dr Sasha Courville (Australia National University) and Henderson Walton Consulting P/L. It was hosted by Judi Moylan MP, sponsored by Woodside Petroleum, and chaired by the Chancellor of the Australian National University, The Honourable Emeritus Professor Peter Baume AO. The workshop was extraordinary in bringing together people from diverse backgrounds and interests, spanning the spectrum from carbon-based industries to conservationists.

Dr. Mackey began the workshop with an address on the value of the Earth Charter as a document that outlines fundamental ethical principles for an environmentally and socially sustain-

able way of life. The Earth Charter provides an ideal basis on which to build criteria and a certification framework for ethical investment – critical at this time as ethical investment in Australia is gaining in profile. Christine Milne (a member of the IUCN global council) then addressed the challenges of building a sustainable future from a civil society perspective. Jonathan Ling, C.E.O of Visy Recycling, followed by speaking on the social responsibilities of business, and Gary Gray, Principle Strategic Advisor for Woodside, addressed sustainability from an energy sector perspective.

In looking at the opportunities and impediments facing the Australian investment industry, Jane Walton, a principal in Henderson Walton Consulting, gave a thought-provoking discussion on the ethics of ethical investment. Paddy Manning, Publishing Editor of Ethical Investor magazine, drew attention to the

necessary preconditions for advancing the ethical investment sector. Leanne Minshull from The Wilderness Society and Sasha Courville from the ANU brought the discussion full circle with their presentation of The Earth Charter Ethical Investment proposal.

A plenary session was held in the afternoon, during which issues were discussed such as: the advantages of a common and accepted ethical framework; integration of environmental and social concerns; the need for universal acceptance of criteria and assessments; the inadequacy of information verification; and the need for overall transparency and resultant credibility issues.

Participants broke into four groups, each focusing on either the development of sector-specific criteria, performance evaluation, organizational structure and resourcing for an industry-wide initiative, or incentives

for co-operation. The groups then rejoined to share their deliberations.

There has been considerable feedback from the workshop, all of which has been very positive. A follow-up event is planned for early to mid 2002, which will examine the next steps necessary to advance the Earth Charter Ethical Investment proposal in Australia. This event will involve activities such as developing sets of sustainability assessments (with index) for ethical investment based on a series of sector-based workshops involving industry representatives, NGOs, and independent experts, and establishing a certification framework for ensuring appropriate and independent assessment of companies' activities against the sustainability criteria.

For more information contact Earth Charter Australia on Tel. + 61 2 6125 4960 or + 61 2 6125 8150.

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*1 Figures taken from International Case Study: The US Market and US Screening Standards presented at the Ethical Investment Association Annual Conference, Sydney Australia August 21st 2000.*

# Update on the

# Earth Charter

# E d u c a t i o n P r o g r a m m e

By Brendan Mackey, PhD(\*)

## Introduction

The Earth Charter international secretariat has established a programme to promote the educational use of the Earth Charter and to develop associated educational resources. An international advisory panel has been formed to assist development of a strategic plan, including specific projects aimed at using the Earth Charter in higher

education, schools, professional development, and as part of life-long learning at the community level. Members of the advisory panel are drawn from organizations and individuals who support the Earth Charter and either have been using it in their educational activities or are interested in so doing. Organizations who are represented on the advisory

committee include UNESCO, LEAD, and the International Baccalaureate Organization.

An online (internet) discussion forum was held between 26 August and 9 September with the aims of articulating an educational philosophy to underpin the educational use of the Earth Charter, and to identify

strategic educational opportunities, priorities and partnerships. The results of this exchange are summarized in a [Synthesis](#) document that will be available shortly online at the Earth Charter web site. Some key conclusions and recommendations from this forum are presented here.

## Key principles

There was general agreement on a set of key principles that should be used to guide the development of Earth Charter educational programmes and materials:

- *Action research* – material should be developed in collaboration with a network of educators representative of the target audience;
- *Experiential learning* – wherever possible, use should be made of learning activities that involve action orientated learning or “learning by doing”;
- *Transdisciplinarity* – the integrated ethical perspective presented by the Earth Charter requires inquiry unconstrained by conventional disciplinary boundaries;
- *Collaboration* – it is essential that we find collaborative ways to join efforts with educators in all fields.

## Key roles

A key conclusion reached by the advisory panel was recognition of two key educational roles for the Earth Charter, namely, (1) a framework and source of content for curricula aimed at educating for sustainable living, and (2) a catalyst for promoting an ongoing multi-sectoral dialogue on global ethics.

Values education is an often-contested theme in education due to legitimate concerns about “which values” and “whose values” are being promoted. These concerns can be accommodated so long as the values represent core values that are life-affirming, promote human dignity, advance environmental

protection and social and economic justice, and respect cultural and ecological diversity and integrity.

The Earth Charter can validly lay claim to represent such a core set of values, particularly given the participatory and multicultural process that underpinned the drafting of the document. Given this, the Earth Charter provides critical content for development of curricula with the educational aim of teaching values and principles for sustainable living.

## Unique contributions

The Earth Charter provides material for three main educational outcomes:

- *Consciousness raising* - in terms of sensitizing people to the complex matrix of environmental, social and economic problems extant in the world today and the need to move towards more sustainable patterns of behaviour;
- *Application of values and principles* – the main body of the Charter is action orientated and functions as a guide to more sustainable ways of living;
- *Call for action* – the educational challenge here is to help foster a culture of collaboration aimed at promoting justice, sustainability and peace.

## Educational Projects

Planning is currently underway in relation to five educational projects:

- Generic educational resource focussed on the unique themes and perspectives presented by the Earth Charter that provide information to educators on its origin and uses, key questions that guide students to consider what its values and principles mean to their lives, and how the Charter can be used within existing curricula;

Professional development workshop materials based on using the Earth Charter to facilitate multi-stakeholder dialogues, especially on community level problems;

- Establishment of an Earth Charter Schools network to provide contributors for the action research that will co-develop and trial new educational resources, and provide support and inspiration for school communities working in ways that reflect Earth Charter values;
- The Earth Charter will be used to assist in planning for the UNESCO/University for Peace - Chair in Education in Peace;
- An Earth Charter module will be developed as a contribution to the UNESCO “Teaching and Learning for a Sustainable Future” programme

## What can you do to help?

The advisory panel recognized that in the hands of a good teacher, the Earth Charter itself is an excellent educational resource. Already a significant number of teachers have been utilising the Charter in a diversity of educational settings. An important priority for the education programme is to capture these educational initiatives and document them in a way that makes them available as a source of ideas and inspiration for other teachers.

If you have or do make use of the Earth Charter in your teaching I encourage you to contribute to our *Teaching Resource Archive*. This can be done online by answering a simple questionnaire and providing the requested level of documentation. We hope that with your help over the coming months and years we can build an archive of working examples of the educational uses of the Earth Charter in different cultures and contexts.

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(\*) Dr. Mackey is Director, Earth Charter Education Program, Earth Charter International Secretariat c/o The Australian National University, [Brendan.Mackey@anu.edu.au](mailto:Brendan.Mackey@anu.edu.au)

# Expanding the Boundaries

## Conference on Transformative Learning Toronto, Canada

By Edmund O'Sullivan (\*)

On November 01-04, 2001, in Toronto, Canada the Conference: "Multiple Currents: Expanding The Boundaries of Transformative Learning" took place and reaffirmed the commitment of many to use the Earth Charter. In the field of education there is a growing use of the term *transformative learning* which appears to be coming out of multiple and diverse areas of educational concern. We enjoyed a celebration in adopting the Earth Charter after an inspiring concert of Pianist Manuel Obregon.

At the Transformative Learning Centre (TLC), we attempt dialogue between people and communities in areas as diverse as ecological, aboriginal, feminist, anti-racist, and post-colonial studies and/or move-

ments; popular, global and holistic education; critical pedagogy and cultural studies. This dialogue generates creative tensions that have informed and expanded our views of transformative learning and the possibilities of personal and/or social transformation. Our intention in hosting this Fourth Annual Conference was to engage other educators / learners / researchers / social actors in this broader exploration.

The TLC's working definition of transformative learning is as follows: "**Transformative learning** involves *experiencing a deep, structural shift in basic premises of thought, feelings, and actions. It is a shift of consciousness that dramatically and permanently alters our way of being in the*

*world. Such a shift involves our understanding of ourselves and our self-locations; our relationships with other humans and with the natural world; our understanding of relations of power in interlocking structures of class, race and gender; our body awarenesses; our visions of alternative approaches to living; and our sense of possibilities for social and peace and personal joy."*

This remarkable conference of Transformative Learning offered a unique occasion to raise awareness and commitment to utilize the Earth Charter in our work. For more information, see website:

[www.tlcentre.org](http://www.tlcentre.org)

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(\*) Dr. Sullivan is the Director of Transformative Learning Centre at Ontario Institute for Studies in Education in Canada.

## International Online Forum

By Steve Glass(\*)

**F**rom July 2<sup>nd</sup> through July 12<sup>th</sup>, groups working with The Earth Charter worldwide were brought together. 78 individuals from many parts of the world participated in an Earth Charter Online Discussion Forum. The topics discussed included past and future initiatives, national activities, and strategies toward the World Summit on Sustainable

Development. Participants were able to learn of activities the world over and discussed different ways to integrate the Earth Charter within differing cultures, from the local community to the international level. The Forum served to link individuals and efforts toward sharing creative methods to disseminate and use the Earth Charter. It served to foster a

sense of the worldwide dimensions of the Earth Charter and it stimulated a connection amongst those who participated.

In discussing how to disseminate the Earth Charter, it became apparent that communities must be viewed as a connected whole, with each segment requiring contact, but also

viewing each community segment as connected to and touching upon the other segments. This fact is essential to dissemination of the Earth Charter and it also represents the path toward sustainability: it must be accomplished through the interconnected efforts of the various sectors and there must be a common linkage between variously defined agendas. It must link civil society with government, for government effort, without the resolve and political will fostered by civil society will be a paltry attempt.

Various means of dissemination discussed included the arts, service clubs, story telling, schools, websites, universities, local government, activities focused on youth, religious

communities, environmental groups, peace groups, business groups, UN Associations, and Local Agenda 21 groups. The important message was that no one group is a finish point: the idea is to then link the groups until a broad community dialogue, vision, and comprehensive activity can be accomplished.

Participants felt the Earth Charter to be a way to invigorate the United Nations Summit on Sustainable Development. While many participants felt unable to contact key members of national government, the idea was offered that influential NGO's or local government officials often have the ability to secure national support. Local efforts do connect with national and international agendas and pol-

icy. It is a matter of seeking connections and following through. Each contributes in his or her own way, but the responsibility belongs to all of us equally.

A wonderful analogy was offered, that the Secretariat functions similarly to the way a rock thrown into a pool causes ripples to circulate outward. The dissemination of information concerning the activities the world over, incites others to become active. The Online Forum was a method for each participant, through the sharing of initiatives, to create ripples for others to follow. We together share the Earth Charter opportunity.

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(\*) Steve Glass is Programme Coordinator at the Earth Charter International Secretariat

## Roundtable on the Earth Charter in India

By Ajoy Bagchi (\*)

The People's Commission on Environment and Development India (PCED), a national level environmental advocacy NGO, in association with the Amity School of Governance (AGS), a leading center of education in governance, held the "Roundtable on the Earth Charter" in New Delhi on November 1, 2001. It was inaugurated by Dr Karan Singh, Member of Parliament and President of PCED. Dr. D. N. Tewari, a leading forestry expert and Member in charge of Science, Technology & Environment in India's National

Planning Commission, presided over the inaugural session. There were 70 participants including 20 students from educational institutions. The brief inaugural session was followed by an open house discussion session. In the concluding session, the valedictorian was Honorable Shiela Dikshit, Chief Minister of National Capital, Territory of Delhi.

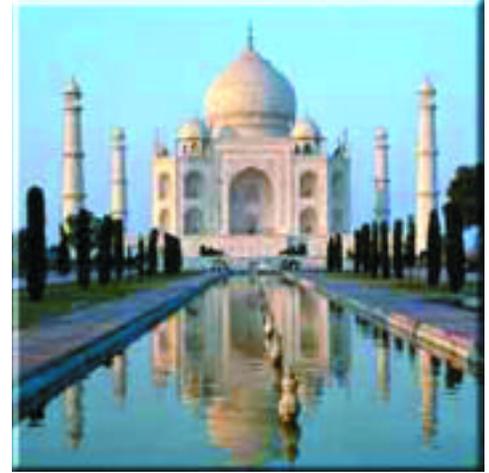
Inaugurating the Roundtable, Dr. Karan Singh highlighted the fact that the very first "earth charter" is in India's ancient scripture, Atharva

Veda, written more than 300 years ago. 63 verses of "Bhumi Suktam" contained in Atharva Veda encapsulate an ethical vision that prompts human beings to preserve and protect the earth and all life forms on it. Dr. Singh said that, like the Earth Charter, these verses also are "the inspiring expression of an integral ethical vision for mankind's future on the planet Earth". He pleaded that the need for revival of that ethical vision is more today than ever, particularly in a world that is

under the threat of nuclear devastation. Honorable Shiela Dikshit, Chief Minister of Delhi, stressed the need of inculcating the values implicit in the Earth Charter in the younger generation through the educational system.

The discussion session started with presentations by 3 discussants. They were Professor Shekhar Singh from the Indian Institute of

Public Administration, Mr. Ajay S. Mehta, Executive Director, National Foundation for India and Dr (Ms) Syeda Hameed, Convenor, Muslim Women's Forum, India. After the presentations, there was an interactive session. The proceedings have been audio-recorded and, after transcription, a report highlighting the views expressed will be brought out.



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(\*) Ajoy Bagchi is Executive Director of PCED India.

## Earth Charter & Youth

By Martyn Williams, Executive Director, Pole to Pole

**W**e have been sharing the Earth Charter with thousands of students of all ages from Canada to Argentina, to inspire them to see the possibilities for the future, but before I tell you how, let's go back to 1999. I first came across the Earth Charter when Steven Rockefeller spoke at the Millennium Institute in 1999 about it. I was pursuing my own plan to add to the world by using my own skills, which are in the areas of youth leadership, wilderness and business. I had come up with one way to inspire millions of people to take positive action, by having a team of youth do a journey that had never been done before by anyone, from one pole to the other by human power. Along the way we would help with local environmental and social issues and speak to young people about the fact that we each have a huge influence on the world, and we change it for the better by taking small action steps.

Once the team came together from 5 continents and different ethnic backgrounds, we looked for a common thread that could underlie

our message and our actions. We found this common thread in the Earth Charter, because we were not only motivated about a specific issue; the environment, poverty, or human rights, we shared a common if elastic view of what we wanted for our future, which was hard to put into words until the Earth Charter.

In speaking to 12,000 youth at schools and universities including Harvard, from the Yukon to Punta Arenas in Chile we have been using various versions of the curriculum we developed, which addresses a global future and what it could look like. We teach how to create and realize these goals. We have introduced the Earth Charter and asked students to consider adopting it as a pathway forward into the future. Since we started we have been speaking about the journey and teaching leadership courses in schools, and corporations with similar materials. This is our curriculum:

- *Current state of the planet.* We talk about major issues, global

warming, poverty, hunger, and war. Statistics are pretty shocking to many young people such as: One in every 6 children on the planet is starving; we then count around the class, "That is you and you and you and..."

- *What people are doing about it?* We look at stories of heroes for the planet from a variety of sources; some based on our Pole to Pole experiences. Stories about people who have saved penguin colonies from extinction, banned land mines, created inner city parks, helped the homeless. The students really love to hear these stories.
- *How did they create it?* We look at how the examples were created, a process of dreaming, daring, goal setting and taking small steps.
- *What would an ideal future look like?* Water, air, animals, plants, people, borders, poverty. We ask the students to develop artwork and writing around this. Younger children particularly love to draw pictures of their ideal world,

which often contains an abundance of nature, animals, trees and friendly people [something for us all to emulate I believe]. The expressiveness, passion and insight of the writing brings tears to my eyes.

- We show them an Earth Charter applicable to their age and ask them if this represents what they are saying. We ask them what would happen if we all started to work towards having this come true. We create an opportunity for the class to adopt the Earth Charter for themselves. Having them sign the Earth Charter and then display it in the classroom.
- *Action steps.* What action steps can you take? We discuss the action steps the students can take individually or as a class. We ask for commitments and timelines, then take this information with us on the next Pole To Pole to show other students.
- We ask them to follow their promises around the world with the Pole to Pole team. This gives

the students the opportunity to see youth helping with exciting environmental and humanitarian projects. It provides ongoing continuity to instill the Earth Charter values and ideals.

- We encourage the students to add their class artwork to a banner that goes around the world with the Pole To Pole team

We have found that youth particularly like creating their ideal world and like taking small action steps that they get instant feedback and recognition for. Many of them dream of making a difference in the world and are looking for simple vehicles to do this.

Based on this experience I see that the youth in the first world have tremendous power to shape the future. If we can create the awareness within youth of their power and a climate of action awareness we will move much faster to an implemented Earth Charter, with all its benefits.

I am proposing a set of Youth Global Leadership Awards that youth can participate in, with a series of action steps based on the Earth Charter each year from age 6-18. Over these years the participants would learn about their planet and how to contribute to it. The critical factor in the success of these awards is that they are desirable to participate in and marketed actively to youth. This requires a major organization such as the UN, International Corporation or a major foundation to take this one.

We are active in public speaking, working with schools and planning a second journey. We are looking beyond our journey which touched millions of people, to implementing the Global Youth Leadership Awards, which we believe, can have far greater effect. We are seeking contacts and suggestions for how to move ahead with this dream! For more, please contact:  
e-mail: [martyn@pole2pole2000.com](mailto:martyn@pole2pole2000.com),  
<http://www.pole2pole2000.com>

## Annual Town Meetings - Vermonters will Vote on Earth Charter

By Gwendolyn Hallsmith(\*)

The Earth Charter Initiative inspired a campaign to put the Charter on the agendas for the Annual Town Meetings that convene in small, rural villages all over the state every March. Town Meetings are pure democracy in action. Every registered voter in town is invited to these meetings – towns are required to send the town budget and the agenda for the meeting to everyone in advance of the annual democratic ritual. People need to understand the Charter, and to take its principles to

heart. Town meetings in Vermont offer great forum for discussing these issues and raising awareness throughout town.

During the meeting, expenditures on roads, fire engines, schools, trash removal, water and sewer services, police, recreation, and social services are debated and voted on, using Robert's Rules of Order, and testing the perseverance and patience of thousands of citizens, at the road foreman inevitably quibbles with the local curmudgeon

about the need for a new snowplow truck this year. It is also not uncommon for issues of state, national, or global significance to be considered along with the local concerns – several years ago, a majority of Vermont towns voted for a freeze on nuclear weapons production, a vote that made headlines around the world. The international attention that Vermont has had for being democratic is part of the reason why I began the People's Treaty for Vermont Campaign on

the Earth Charter.

To date, there are people circulating petitions in 30 towns around the state, and the numbers are increasing each week. To be placed on the warrant for the meeting, 5% of the registered voters in town need to sign the petition. Once the article is warned, then Town Meeting can discuss it and vote on it. The City of

Burlington has already endorsed the Earth Charter – they have a City Council form of government, and the Council endorsed it in June, 2001. One month later, with the help of Burlington's Mayor, Peter Clavelle, the U.S. Conference of Mayors unanimously endorsed the Charter. The Earth Charter has particular relevance for local communities because so many of the core issues that effect

people's lives are addressed in some way by local government. Peace, justice, ecological integrity, mutual respect – all of these are felt most poignantly in our communities, by and toward our friends, family and neighbors, yet they are all needed at every level of government. For more information please contact Gwendolyn Hallsmith at e-mail: [ghs@innevi.com](mailto:ghs@innevi.com)

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(\*) Gwendolyn Hallsmith currently serves as a pastor for a small church in Williamstown, Vermont. Until recently, she worked with the Institute for Sustainable Communities in Montpelier, Vermont, an organization dedicated to sustainable development.

## Ethics for Sustainable Development

### - Challenges and Perspectives for Rio+10 -

by Frank Meyberg, Hamburg, Germany

An Earth Charter meeting took place at the Evangelical Academy Muelheim from September, 28-30, 2001. It was organized by OeIEW-Ecumenical Initiative One World (the German focal point organization for the Earth Charter) in cooperation with several other organizations: BUND-(Friends of the Earth Germany), INES-International Network of Engineers and Scientists for Global Responsibility and the Evangelical Academies Muelheim and Hamburg.

Some weeks before OeIEW and BUND had presented in Frankfurt the German Earth Charter publication with a foreword by Klaus Toepfer (Executive Director of UNEP). The meeting in Muelheim was one further step to spread the Earth Charter to the public as well as to representatives of NGOs and political realms.

After introductory remarks of H-J. Fischbek and F. Meyberg, showing the meaning and relation of the Earth Charter to the sustainability

discussions in Germany, two international speakers showed the global background of the process. Prof. K. Bosselmann from New Zealand put the Earth Charter in a large context of environmental (hard and soft) law, human rights, civil society, international justice as a necessary step in fighting terrorism.

A. Lienkamp illustrated the meaning of respect and reverence, starting from the ethics of Albert Schweitzer, followed by an overview about church documents in the field of ecology and development. Respect, as a basic virtue for sustainable development, has to be translated in the language of economy!

M. Seiche (BUND) discussed the pros and cons of the Earth Charter in relation to the guiding principle of "sustainable development", as it is given in the study "Sustainable Germany" (edited by BUND and Misereor).

All of these lecture were discussed during four working groups (following

the four Parts of the Earth Charter). Results of the working groups were focused toward political outcomes and were presented to the last speaker: G. Obschernikat described the work and aims of the "German Council for Sustainable Development" which was formed some months ago to support the Federal Government, especially for preparing the German position for the Johannesburg summit. This Council will also discuss the Earth Charter as an ethical basis for the German position!

Some paragraphs of the Earth Charter itself were recited in the course of our meeting, starting from the preamble and ending at "The way forward". Furthermore we had some exercises in practical awareness and respect, given in a Western and a Buddhist view of life and nature. The meeting ended with "words of hope" from Christian, Buddhist and Hindu perspectives.

About 40 participants attended – many of them committed to use the

Earth Charter in their fields of work! A documentation of the meeting in German preparation and will be available next year.

Some of the participants also

attended a meeting of OeIEW in November, 17, 2001, where we started to create a "standard speech" about the Earth Charter and to train "ambassadors". Contact:

Hermann Garritzmann,  
Earth Charter Project Coordinator,  
Fax (0049-5694) 1532  
E-mail: [erdcharta@oeiew.de](mailto:erdcharta@oeiew.de),  
[www.erdcharta.de](http://www.erdcharta.de).

## US Earth Charter Community Summits

By Jan Roberts(\*)

"Life-changing--that's what most people are saying about the day", reported Kat Gjovik, Seattle Earth Charter Community Summit organizer, during the post-summit conference call among the 12 city organizers. The organizers of the historic U.S. grassroots launch of the Earth Charter: A Declaration of Interdependence held on September 29th included an African American printer in Philadelphia, a graduate student at the University of Chicago, a feminist activist single mom in Portland, Maine, a Soka Gakkai Buddhist in San Francisco, and a former mayoral candidate in Indianapolis--all linked by their love for the Earth Charter and their dedication to bring it to the folks in their hometowns. Each of the 12 cities that participated in the satellite-uplinked day of celebration and inspiration joined at various times over a two-year period to form a growing network that, in true grassroots fashion, made the day happen on a shoestring budget and generous in-kind donations.

In light of the events of September 11<sup>th</sup> the national launch of the Earth Charter with its emphasis on inclusivity and interdependence had increased significance. The satellite connection of the cities gave a feeling of national solidarity among all

the participants as their city was uplinked during lift-off so all could experience being part of the national excitement for the Earth Charter. Following the uplinked keynote speeches from the national site in Tampa, Florida of Steven Rockefeller, Earth Charter Commissioner and David Korten, author of *When Corporations Rule the World* and publisher of YES! magazine, each city customized their event to capture the excitement and involvement of their local community members. At the end of day, participants across the nation were linked together again to hear Danny Glover, actor and activist, talk about *What the Earth Charter Means to Me* and to share during a millennium-styled round robin the highlights of the day in each of their cities. It was a moving and uplifting day that not only was the first of annual Earth Charter Community Summits but also spawned a grassroots movement to bring the Earth Charter's principles to life in the United States.

The story about the individuals who came together to make this launch possible is a worthy one in itself and it also includes the support of universities, city governments and the Allegany Franciscan Foundation, which made the critical

satellite broadcast happen with a last minute \$50,000 matching grant award. But the real story is the individuals who roused themselves out of their despair about the September tragedies to get to the launch and express their choice for the Earth Charter's vision of hope, optimism and interdependence.

The goal of the summits was to raise consciousness among the people, not just activists, about the Earth Charter and to inspire them to implement its principles within their own spheres of influence. Since the prevailing worldview of western culture has been individualism, the shift to a framework of interdependence is a deep and profound change and one that will take on-going education along with big doses of nurturance. Another key issue is the involvement of people who have not typically labeled themselves as activists but do care about what is happening in the world and want to help make a difference. Some summit cities were more successful than others in attracting goodhearted people who were not already "members of the choir". The task of the organizers is unfolding as one that mixes an organic approach with a structured one that allows people to create their own "way" with the Earth Charter with support

and guidance when they need it.

Summit organizers have reported an upsurge in interest in future summits and a strong desire from people to learn more about the Earth Charter and what they can do. Ann Zill, in Portland, Maine reports a "ripple effect" of people calling for copies of the Earth Charter to take to their own organizations and to help with the next summit.

As a result of the summit interactive discussions in Seattle, public and higher education personnel are exploring ways to establish Earth Charter curriculum that extends from primary school to college students.

John Gibson reports that in Indianapolis they have organized subcommittees to keep the Earth Charter Community Summits momentum going that includes establishing core groups in other cities throughout Indiana and a Leadership Kit to be used by citizens from all sectors of the community.

As a result of the Jackson, Mississippi Mayor's Policy Chief's attendance at the summit, Bob

Kochtitzky, summit organizer, was invited to put forth a citywide plan based on the Earth Charter that includes local currency program, sustainable transportation and housing.

In Philadelphia, Susan Curry says that the follow up conference to the summits resulted in the planning for a Green Design Conference aimed at municipal leaders coming together to adopt the Earth Charter for local development. In addition, an arts initiative by local artists was launched to use the Earth Charter in their work and post it on the Earth Charter Summits' website.

In Tampa, Florida several initiatives are underway. Hillsborough County Public School educators completed a teacher Earth Charter instructional manual for elementary, middle and high school students. Two popular restaurants are hosting Earth Charter Conversational Parties every other weeks to introduce and educate folks about it. Jeff Klepfer, Ph.D., Dean of Arts & Sciences at the University of Tampa is researching a Master's Degree program in Public Policy

based on the Earth Charter. A group of citizens are preparing a lobbying campaign to have the city of Tampa offer sustainability training to employees based on the Earth Charter. The National Conference on Community and Justice is offering a mini-grants award program to youth to use the Earth Charter and an Earth Charter Discussion Guide is being developed by the Institute for Ethics & Meaning in conjunction with the University of South Florida.

The next Earth Charter Community Summits are scheduled for September 28<sup>th</sup>, 2002 and will again satellite link cities together to foster the implementation of the Earth Charter, our Declaration of Interdependence. For more information about how your city can participate please contact the Institute for Ethics & Meaning at 1-888-Let's Care (538-7227) or [www.earthchartersummits.org](http://www.earthchartersummits.org). Videos of the 2001 Earth Charter Community Summits will be available after January 1, 2002 as well as a national newsletter on the Earth Charter Community Summits.

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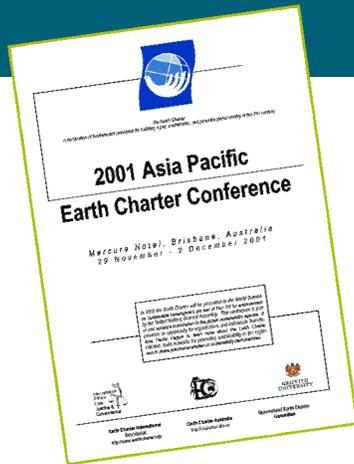
(\*) Jan Roberts is the Coordinator for the overall Earth Charter community summits in the USA.

"The World Conservation Union - IUCN is proud to be associated with the Earth Charter initiative. We are conscious that in supporting this effort, we are furthering the Union's mission to influence, encourage and assist societies throughout the world to conserve the integrity and diversity of nature and to ensure that any use of natural resources is equitable and ecologically sustainable. Inspirational documents have changed the course of events and impacted human societies: the Magna Carta, the American Declaration of Independence, the French Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, all stirred human imagination and changed the quality of life of peoples all over the globe. It has been my unflinching hope that the Earth Charter will, similarly, provide an appropriate vision for nature conservation, environmental protection and sustainable development for the new millennium." -

**Parvez Hassan, Former Chair, IUCN Commission on Environmental Law, Pakistan**

# 2001 Asia - Pacific Earth Charter Conference

By Noel Preston (\*)



Organising a forum within the Asia-Pacific region for networking, dialogue, study and celebration around the Earth Charter was a prospect we in Brisbane (Australia) relished, though it was a daunting challenge. At the end of the four-day meeting I marvelled at the friendships and partnerships that had been forged by a wonderful team whose co-operation was inspired by the Earth Charter's vision of eco-justice.

More than 300 delegates from sixteen Asia-Pacific countries gathered at the inner city conference centre on the picturesque Brisbane River between November 29 and December 2. Among the delegates were Earth Charter Commissioners, Dr. Kamla Chowdhry of India and Erna Witoelar of Indonesia. Other contributors who have played a prominent role internationally within the Earth Charter initiative included Mirian Vilela from the Secretariat in Costa Rica, Ella Antonio from the Philippines, and Rick Clugston from the USA.

In all, there were more than fifty presentations in what was essentially a people's gathering, representative of the riches of grassroots action for sustainability. In fact, the participation fundamentally reflected civil society, with business and government only minimally involved. Financial sponsorship for the event came from religious groups, the Queensland Government, the Brisbane City Council, UNESCO and a couple of businesses. Planning and organisation came from the local Earth Charter group with assistance from Earth Charter Australia and the International Secretariat under the

direction of Conference Co-ordinator, Clem Campbell. Major support came from the Key Centre for Ethics, Law, Justice and Governance at Brisbane's Griffith University, which housed the Conference Secretariat.

There were many highlights and quality speeches. At the top of the list were Kamla Chowdhry's recurring, Gandhi-inspired challenges to deepen personal spirituality, as a pre-requisite to making the changes the Earth Charter calls us to make. Then there was the comprehensive analysis and call to action by Australia's leading scientific voice for sustainability, Ian Lowe. Cielito Habito, from the Philippines, made a profound impression with his address and subsequent musical abilities. Thirty elective sessions were grouped in streams such as Governance, Globalisation, Biodiversity and Conservation, Youth, Cities and Towns.

The conference was preceded by a Reception given by Brisbane's Lord Mayor, who set the tone with a rallying call for social justice. The two-hour opening ceremony featured an Aboriginal smoking ceremony and welcome, and the rendition of a song written especially for the occasion. Erna Witoelar gave the introductory address and the Conference was opened by Australia's Governor-General. Celebration of the Earth Charter through art and culture continued in a Gala Celebration around the conference dinner, a quilt being crafted during the proceedings by conference delegates and, finally, in a video collage, recalling features of the Conference, shown in the closing.

Measuring outcomes of such a meeting is not always easy. At the very least, it is accurate to say that this Conference has strengthened the regional ties around the Earth Charter, and increased the profile of the Earth Charter, especially in Australia. In this host country, the Earth Charter Initiative's infrastructure

has been strengthened, though there is still much to be done to obtain endorsements from government, business and environment groups. In addition, this was an important regional step toward a role for the Earth Charter in the Rio+10 in Johannesburg in 2002.

A series of resolutions emanating from the Conference are still being processed. They include the intention to have another such Asia-Pacific event in 2003 and expressions, especially from Australian delegates, of concerns about current Australian policies on Asylum Seekers and climate change.

A major focus, which formed a sub-theme of the conference, "Sustainability and Spirituality" interested many delegates, and a line of follow-up was suggested. This was the title of the final session, which illustrated the rich multi-faith connections present throughout the procedures. Education was another major interest reflected in a well-supported educational strand and a session at the Griffith University Eco-Centre highlighted the educational support of the Earth Charter. Significantly, related to the conference and on the day following it, a workshop of Universities for a Sustainable Future was conducted, launching a network of Universities now connected to the Earth Charter Initiative in the Asia Pacific Region.

This was an experience fashioning lasting memories but, more than that, it is a spur to renewed commitment and action for change. International gatherings occasioned by ethical aspirations are full of promise. As an expression of people power following the tragedy of September 11, this conference was a sign that hope is not destroyed and that a Coalition for global justice and sustainability is possible. Those who came to the 2001 Asia-Pacific Earth Charter Conference know "it is better to light a candle than to curse the darkness".

(\*) Noel Preston, Conference Chair, 2001 Asia-Pacific Earth Charter Conference, Brisbane, Australia, Adjunct Professor, Griffith University and Director of the UnitingCare Centre for Social Justice.

# Updates

## National Workshop in Mexico: Internalization of Values and Principles

**On 18 – 20 October, 2001 in Morelia.** Over 70 participants from different parts of the country were brought together to reflect on the content and the use of the Earth Charter. The majority of participants were NGOs or Counselors for the National Council for Sustainable Development. The main purpose for this gathering was to promote the understanding and use of the Earth Charter

as an educational instrument; the Local Network of Environment Education facilitated it.

Endorsement of the Earth Charter was also sought. They came out with a Declaration of support to the Earth Charter, which many individuals and organizations signed. The full report and video of this workshop will be available

soon.

The city of Morelia and the State of Michoacan sponsored this gathering and were very supportive and willing to continue working on this. The City of Morelia already inserted the Earth Charter in their website at [www.morelia.gob.mx](http://www.morelia.gob.mx)

## A Study Book to be published

*“The Earth Charter: A Study Book Of Reflection For Action”* by Elisabeth Maria Ferrero & Joe Holland, from The Center For Sustainable Living, is to be launched very soon. The book includes an overview of the Earth Charter process

and principles. It is focused on reflections on the principles of the Earth Charter, and is to be used in education.

For information on ordering copies of this book (soon to be published), please

contact by email either of the authors: Elisabeth Maria Ferrero at: [ElisabethFerreroOffice@aol.com](mailto:ElisabethFerreroOffice@aol.com) or Joe Holland at: [JoeHollandOffice@aol.com](mailto:JoeHollandOffice@aol.com)

## Reflections on the Earth Charter

The Italian organization Federazione Nazionale Pro Natura, one of the oldest and most active environmental organizations in Italy, published “Riflessioni sulla Carta della Terra” (Reflections about the Earth Charter).

The book will be distributed to more than 5,000 Italian schools. The author, Guiliana del Signore, is an important Italian pedagogist and a member of the executive committee of Pro Natura. For more, contact: [press@cartadellaterra.it](mailto:press@cartadellaterra.it)



## The Earth Charter is Declared an Instrument of Public Interest - Costa Rica -

The Minister of Education and the Minister of Environment of Costa Rica signed a declaration expressing their agreement to work with the Earth Charter using it as educational tool within the national territory, and

declaring the Charter of public interest. The ceremony took place on October 30<sup>th</sup>, 2001 at the Municipality of San José, as a closing session of a workshop held in the same day that addressed the utilization of the Earth Charter in

education. The workshop gathered many groups already working with the Earth Charter in education as an opportunity to share experiences. For more, contact Cristina Briceño at e-mail: [cbricenolobo@costarricense.com](mailto:cbricenolobo@costarricense.com)

## Earth Charter to be Showcased in Soon to be Released Publication

In March, 2002, a book will be released by Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc entitled *Just Ecological Integrity: The Ethics of Maintaining Planetary Life*. This book is co-edited by Peter Miller, professor of philosophy at the Centre for Forest Interdisciplinary Research at the University of Winnipeg, and Laura Westra, professor emerita of philosophy at the University of Windsor, the author of numerous books, and a

central spokeswoman in the environmental movement. The book is forwarded by Steven C. Rockefeller, Earth Charter Commissioner and Chair of the Earth Charter Drafting Committee.

Part I showcases the Earth Charter with an exposition and critique of the Earth Charter itself, its meaning, history and uses; reflections connecting humanistic ethical systems with the

Earth Charter; and systems of measurement to indicate progress and decline in achieving Earth Charter ideals.

Part II moves from principles to practice by exploring more concretely reciprocal impacts between humans and nature, with consequent responsibilities.

Part III begins by focusing on

questions of justice that arise once nature is re-valued to recognize intrinsic qualities with benefit to humans, various kinds of environmental harms and limits, and our

dependence upon the natural systems of which we are a part. A series of case studies follows, examining issues of violence, risk, diverse perspectives and the preservation of nature in local circum-

stances. Ordering information can be found at:

<http://www.rowmanlittlefield.com/Catalog>

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## Youth Workshop after the September 11<sup>th</sup> Attack

On October 24<sup>th</sup>, 2001 the Earth Charter Initiative and The Boston Research Center for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century organized the Workshop entitled: *"Youth reflections on the Attacks of September 11: Acting on Realities, Confronting Perceptions."* This Youth Workshop was hosted by the Boston Research Center and had the support of Taking IT Global and the Youth Employment Summit.

As per organizers, immediately after the attacks on the USA in September, the Internet was a hotspot with people from every country sharing ideas, stories, insights and perspectives. Perhaps, now, more than ever we can begin to realize and appreciate the other strengths and potential of the World Wide Web and the potential it holds. "Our response to this tragedy will largely define the way we will be citizens and leaders in our world; citizens of a different world. A world whose shape will be affected by the decisions we make today and the perspectives and ideologies we develop together across the various divides of national-

ity, race, and other differences." -

The purpose of the workshop was to bring together young people from in and around Boston to share our experiences, thoughts and views on the terrorist attacks on the USA. The workshop was a forum to *"deepen and expand... dialogue"* that would empower youth to respond to the effect of September 11 as agents of positive change. Based on the Earth Charter, the workshop's aim was to

a. *"Promote a culture of tolerance, non violence and peace"* and

b. *"Encourage and support mutual understanding, solidarity, and cooperation among youth"* and through giving them the opportunity to develop ideas and plans of action to *"implement comprehensive strategies to prevent violent conflict."* (Earth Charter, Principles 16a and 16b)

Participants representing different organizations came in from Boston or areas surrounding Boston and

represented a wide range of countries such as Egypt, Greece, Canada, the USA, Australia, Ireland, South Africa, China and Zimbabwe.

Themes and questions emerging from the discussion were repeatedly brought up and they formed the focuses of the group discussions that followed:

Anger, Fear, Hatred-where does it lead to? Who is it directed to? What is driving these emotions?

Patriotism-what does it mean? What should we as youth leaders be doing to effectively address these questions?

Dialogue-there is need for increased dialogue to raise awareness of these issues and to promote discussion that will lead to practical solutions. For more information: e-mail: [center@BRC21.org](mailto:center@BRC21.org) or [www.BRC21.org](http://www.BRC21.org)

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## Earth Charter Seminar in Brazil

A seminar gathering groups from the local government, the university, and NGOs took place on September 21<sup>st</sup>, 2001 in Cuiaba, Mato Grosso Brazil. This is one of many Earth Charter events taking place in the State of Mato Grosso, promoted by the University of Mato

Grosso, UNESCO and some other organizations. Congressmen, Municipal leaders, the Secretary of Education, Federal University of Mato Grosso, Instituto Paulo Freire, and NGOs took part in this event that focused on the use of the Earth Charter in education.

One of the themes addressed was the relationship of the Earth Charter to the Rio Declaration. The importance of broad dissemination of the Earth Charter was also stressed. For more <http://www.cartadaterra.org>

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## Catalonia Earth Charter Group brings the Earth Charter to the authorities in Barcelona

The Earth Charter was presented - last May - in the Environmental and Sustainability Council, a consultative body gathering 100 representatives from NGO's, private companies, public administrations and universities -.

The Catalan Earth Charter version has

been distributed among the Council members, as well as Councilors from the Barcelona City Council. A formal approval of endorsement from the Plenary Committee of the City Council, is expected to take place in the next few months. The City Municipal Council for Environment and Sustainability is

working in cooperation with the UNESCO Centre in Barcelona, an organization that is promoting the Earth Charter in Catalonia. For more contact Joseph Xercavins I Vallis, e-mail: [xerca@catunesco.upc.es](mailto:xerca@catunesco.upc.es)

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## Local Communities in Thailand

The quest for sustainable development is considered under holistic and integrated strategies in Thailand. Thailand Environment Institute, as deputy secretariat of the NCS Thailand, also works to promote the Earth Charter in the country. In addition to on-going activities in preparation for Rio+10, Dr. Chamniern, TEI Program Director, was recently invited back to Rajabhat Institute, where a previous consultation on the Earth Charter was conducted in

February, 2001. Dr. Chamniern was asked to further present and lecture on the Earth Charter to a group of students and teachers.

Using a real-life current 'hot issue' – the conflict between shrimp farming and rice cultivation in the central part of the country – Dr. Chamniern instigated lively discussion and debate on the pros and cons of each perspective. The Earth Charter was used as a guide, and role

playing (as the Prime Minister, shrimp farmer, Minister of Finance, etc.) among the participants was encouraged. Everyone learned, in particular about the real dilemmas and contentious issues between environment and development, and how the Earth Charter can be used to resolve conflicts. For more, contact Elizabeth C. Hollister, Research Fellow, TEI e-mail: [bethholl@ait.ac.th](mailto:bethholl@ait.ac.th)

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## Endorsements

### Florida League of Cities Endorses the Earth Charter

More than 400 cities belonging to the Florida League of Cities endorsed the Earth Charter in League's 75<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference, at the Wyndham Palace, Lake Buena Vista, Florida, the 25<sup>th</sup> of August 2001. The resolution calls on its members to study ways of incorporating the Earth Charter in its work and also calls on its members to support adoption of the Earth Charter at the annual meeting of the National League of Cities.

### The City of Berkeley Endorsed the Earth Charter

The Earth Charter was endorsed by the Council of the City of Berkeley "in support of its principles..." on March 27, 2001. This endorsement was signed by Mayor Shirley Dean.



### US Mayors Expressed Commitment To The Earth Charter

On June 25<sup>th</sup>, 2001 The U.S. Conference of Mayors passed a resolution that states:

"The US Conference of Mayors endorses the Earth Charter and commits the organization to the realization of its aim. It further urges its mayors and their cities to formally review and debate the Earth Charter and its relationship to its work." For more see the US Mayors site at: [www.usmayors.org](http://www.usmayors.org)

As the New-Year approaches, the Earth Charter staff wishes for each of us the capacity for compassion, the gift of endeavoring to be a peacemaker, and the insight to grasp how we as a human family have failed to achieve a more peaceful world. We hope and wish that this new year brings us better possibilities and opportunities to grow and move forward with a deep sense of responsibility, with the certainty that our contribution for justice will enrich ourselves and others.

Happy new year!!

*For questions, commentaries or requests please contact:*

*Earth Charter International Secretariat  
C/o Earth Council  
P.O. Box 319-6100  
San José, Costa Rica  
Tel. (506) 205 1600 Fax: (506) 249 3500  
E-mail: [info@earthcharter.org](mailto:info@earthcharter.org)  
Webpage: [www.earthcharter.org](http://www.earthcharter.org)*