

Charting the way forward: Cases of the Earth Charter in Motion



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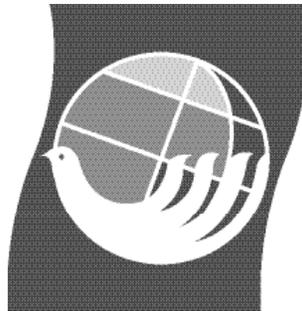
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Charting the way Forward:

Cases of the Earth Charter in Motion



Produced By: The Earth Charter Initiative International Secretariat

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	i
Overview of Cases	iii
SECTION 1: <i>The Earth Charter in Education</i>	1
In Schools	
Educating for a Sustainable Lifestyle with the Earth Charter; <i>Collaborative project, COSTA RICA</i>	1-3
Education for Peace and Cooperation in a Multicultural Society; <i>Vivim Plegats, SPAIN</i>	4-6
An International Expedition Carrying the Charter's Message; <i>The Brink Expedition, AUSTRALIA</i>	7-10
In Universities	
A University Course based on the Earth Charter; <i>Michigan State University, USA</i>	11-13
From Endorsement to Implementation; <i>The University for Peace, COSTA RICA</i>	14-16
Dentistry Students Develop their Decalogue; <i>Universidad Autonoma del Estado de Mexico , MEXICO</i>	17-18
In Non Formal Education	
'Cultivating Good Water' with the Earth Charter; <i>Itaipu Hydroelectric Power Plant, BRAZIL</i>	19-21
A Travelling Exhibition Featuring the Earth Charter; <i>Soka Gakkai International, JAPAN</i>	22-24
Inclusive Leadership Adventures – Exploring the Earth Charter; <i>Building Bridges Consulting, CANADA</i>	25-27
The Earth Charter and Education for Social Change; <i>The Paulo Freire Institute, BRAZIL</i>	28-30

TABLE OF CONTENTS

SECTION 2: The Earth Charter in Local Communities	31
Strategic Planning	
The Earth Charter as a Guiding Framework; <i>Toronto & Region Conservation Authority, CANADA</i>	31-33
Strategic Planning with the Earth Charter; <i>City of Joondalup, AUSTRALIA</i>	34-36
The Earth Charter as an Organizing Framework for the Republic of Tatarstan, <i>RUSSIA</i>	37-39
A Tool for Communities to Implement the Earth Charter; <i>Earth Charter Partnership for Sustainable Communities, USA</i>	40-42
Community and Local Government Education	
Education for Sustainable Living with the Earth Charter; <i>National Earth Charter Committee, MEXICO</i>	43-45
Training Municipal Workers with the Earth Charter; <i>City of San José, COSTA RICA</i>	46-48
Developing a Local, Contextualized Earth Charter; <i>Municipality of Alajuela, COSTA RICA</i>	49-51
An Earth Charter-Based Approach for Local Governments in Spain; <i>Fundación Desarrollo y Naturaleza (DEYNA), SPAIN</i>	52-54
Grassroots Implementation	
The Earth Charter Local Communities Summits; <i>Earth Charter Community Initiatives, USA</i>	55-57
The Vermont Town Meetings Campaign; <i>Global Community Initiative,</i> <i>USA</i>	58-60
Appendix: Contact Information	61-62

INTRODUCTION

The Earth Charter was crafted over nearly a decade to clarify the ethical principles and the major dimensions of sustainable development. Specifically, the Earth Charter's principles are structured around four main themes: respect and care for the community of life; ecological integrity; social and economic justice; democracy nonviolence and peace.

While the Earth Charter claims to offer a compelling vision for a more sustainable world, can individuals and organizations *really* use the document for action-oriented projects? How, for instance, could you take a declaration and use it as an educational tool in primary schools? Or, how could a municipality use the Earth Charter as a training instrument to better integrate ethical principles into the everyday activities of its workers and policies? The Earth Charter Secretariat realized that there is a compelling need to tell the stories of how different groups around the world are using the Earth Charter in their schools, universities, other educational organizations and local community institutions.

In order to fulfil this need, the Secretariat is happy to bring you this publication of twenty cases of the Earth Charter in motion - ten in education and ten involving local communities. The goal is not to present a comprehensive picture of *all* the different groups implementing the Charter. Rather, we selected cases from different contexts to help show the diversity in the uses of the Charter. A number of these projects have been carried out with no external funds at all. In others, a large budget was secured. In all instances, these experiences contributed to the quest towards a more just and sustainable global society.

I want to thank the remarkable good work of Betty McDermott, Marina Bakhnova and specially Mohit Mukherjee in putting this material together.

Our hope, with this material, is to inspire you to use the Earth Charter as an instrument for positive action.

Mirian Vilela
Executive Director

OVERVIEW OF CASES

Education cases

Organization	Summary
Collaboration of partners, Costa Rica	In Costa Rica several organizations, universities, and government bodies have been working with the Earth Charter Initiative for a number of years. Given this broad-based support, a collaborative project of various organizations developed and distributed educational materials for primary schools based on the Earth Charter.
Vivim Plegats, Spain	The Earth Charter is used as the principal educational instrument in the <i>Vivim Plegats (Living Together)</i> programme in primary schools in the Balearic Islands. The programme promotes understanding, tolerance, peace, and cooperation in the face of growing xenophobic and racist sentiments due to immigration to the Islands.
The Brink Expedition, Australia	The aim of the Brink Expedition is to bring social and environmental issues into mainstream awareness. As the Expedition travels through various countries, it visits a number of schools with the goal of engaging teachers and students in the creation of a more sustainable future. The philosophy of the Earth Charter is the basis for the educational goals of the Expedition.
Michigan State University, USA	Two professors at Michigan State University chose the Earth Charter as a vehicle for discussing and venturing into the ideas and ideals of sustainability in a college-level course.
The University for Peace, Costa Rica	The UN-affiliated University for Peace (UPEACE) incorporates the Earth Charter into some of its courses and programmes, collaborating closely with the Earth Charter Secretariat, which is based on its campus.
Universidad Autonoma del Estado de Mexico, Mexico	The intention of the project is to reincorporate 'humanistic education' into dentistry curricula with the purpose of training students to have a holistic vision of their work and to always have an ethical code for the medical occupation they carry out. The Earth Charter served as the guiding framework in the process.
Itaipu Power Plant, Brazil	Itaipu Hydroelectric Power Plant is using the Earth Charter as a valuable ethical framework, an educational tool, and as the common thread linking the 70 or more individual projects that are part of its socio-environmental programme <i>Cultivando Agua Buena (Cultivating Good Water)</i> .
Soka Gakkai International (SGI), Japan	In early 2001, SGI and the Earth Charter Initiative identified the need to feature inspirational stories of how the Earth Charter was being used in different parts of the world, in order to bring the document to a larger audience. This led to the development of <i>The Seeds of Change: The Earth Charter and Human Potential</i> exhibition.
Building Bridges Consulting, Canada	<i>Inclusive Leadership Adventure – Exploring the Earth Charter</i> is a multi-day workshop to build bridges across differences. The aim of the workshop is for participants and co-facilitators to get beyond the words of the Earth Charter and develop spiritual, emotional, and intellectual connections.
The Paulo Freire Institute (PFI), Brazil	As a participant in the development process of the Earth Charter since the Rio Summit in 1992, the PFI is using the Earth Charter's potential as a powerful tool to inspire positive change in individuals and communities in Brazil.

Local Community Cases

Organization	Summary
The Toronto & Region Conservation Authority, Canada (TRCA)	A TRCA staff team was selected to undertake a process of comparing Earth Charter principles with existing TRCA policies to consider the use of the Earth Charter as a framework for TRCA activities and programs. The process involved a series of facilitated meetings where the team identified, analyzed, interpreted and debated those Earth Charter principles that were most relevant to the work of TRCA.
The City of Joondalup, Australia	The City of Joondalup is the second largest local government authority in Western Australia. It came up with an innovative project of integrating the Earth Charter into its strategic planning process as an important initiative to build the community's capacity to address sustainability issues.
The Republic of Tatarstan, Russia	Tatarstan's State Council (parliament) formally embraced the Earth Charter in April 2001, becoming the first provincial government in the world to adopt the Earth Charter as a guide for conducting affairs of state. In doing so Tatarstan establishes itself as a potential world leader in charting a new course to development and building of a civil society based on tolerance and non-violence.
Earth Charter Partnership for Sustainable Communities, USA	The EarthCAT software and accompanying workbook provides communities with a step-by-step, self-directed guide on how to develop goals, targets and strategies to implement sustainable practices. It also offers a tool to measure their progress using indicators and reporting systems.
National Earth Charter Committee, Mexico	The Mexican Government joined the partnership, <i>Educating for Sustainable Living with the Earth Charter</i> . The goal of this project has been to provide community leaders and the communities themselves with information and education concerning the fundamental principles of sustainable development and how to blend these into decision-making processes.
City of San José, Costa Rica	The Municipality of San José developed an innovative project aimed at formulating a local vision of the Earth Charter in order to better integrate ethical principles and values into everyday work activities. This project was conducted as part of a training programme on sustainable development.
Municipality of Alajuela, Costa Rica	Alajuela is the second largest region in Costa Rica and is inhabited by approximately 238,000 residents. In 2002, the Municipality moved forward with an initiative to develop an <i>Earth Charter version for the Municipality of Alajuela</i> , as well as its local Agenda 21.
Fundación Desarrollo y Naturaleza (DEYNA), Spain	Fundación Desarrollo y Naturaleza (DEYNA) has developed a model of LA21, which in a later stage was linked with the Earth Charter. This model is applicable to any municipal organization interested in implementing sustainable development initiatives.
Earth Charter Community Initiatives, USA	The Earth Charter Community Summits are open, public gatherings that focus on the Earth Charter. They are dedicated to spawning multi-faceted grassroots efforts to implement the Earth Charter principles through individual action and local community policies and practices.
The Vermont Town Meeting Campaign, USA	The chief aim of the Vermont Town Meeting Campaign was to request Vermont town governments to endorse the Earth Charter and recommend that the Earth Charter guide decision-making on issues of local, state, national, and international importance.

Educating for a Sustainable Lifestyle with the Earth Charter; *collaborative project, COSTA RICA*

Background

In Costa Rica, several organizations, universities, and government bodies have been working with the Earth Charter Initiative for a number of years. In November 2000, the Earth Charter was formally presented to the President of Costa Rica. In October 2001, the Minister of Environment and the Minister of Education of Costa Rica declared the Earth Charter to be an initiative of public interest, and affirmed their intention to incorporate it in their respective ministry's activities. In 2003, The Ministry of Public Education in Costa Rica determined that 'values' should be a cross-cutting axis throughout the educational system in the country, with four specific themes under this area to be addressed in primary and secondary education. One of these themes is labelled "Environmental Culture for Sustainable Development" which carries with it a number of sub-themes. The Earth Charter has been included as one of these sub-themes.

Given this broad-based support for the Earth Charter Initiative in Costa Rica, the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (2005 – 2014), and the need for didactic materials on the subject, a collaborative effort was put in place to seek funds, develop and distribute educational materials based on the Earth Charter.

Aim

The general aim was to contribute to the promotion and understanding of values and



Cover of Teacher's Guide

principles of sustainability in public schools as means to achieve sustainable development practices and a better quality of life.

In order to accomplish this general aim, the project specifically planned to develop a teacher's guidebook and two student resources (a workbook and a planner) to facilitate the implementation of the "Environmental Culture for Sustainable Development" transversal theme decreed by the Minister of Education. The educational materials were developed for primary schools based on the Earth Charter under the title, "*Educating for a sustainable lifestyle with the Earth Charter*".

Partners and Participants

The direct beneficiaries of this project were the 35,000 teachers and 100,000 students of the selected schools who received the materials and training. The following partner organizations were directly involved in the project, which was funded by the Japanese Embassy:

- The Earth Charter Initiative Secretariat
- The Children's Museum
- The National University
- The University for Distance Learning
- The Ministry of Education
- The UN affiliated University for Peace
- The Ministry of Environment
- Fundacion Omar Dengo

Timeframe

In 2004, much of the development work and illustration of the teacher's guide and student publications was completed. The books were distributed in early 2005 in parallel with teacher-training workshops.

Description

The project involved the following main activities:

- 1) ***Developing and testing the teacher guidebook, the student workbook, and the planner:*** Working collaboratively with a number of partner organizations resulted in a slow process, but allowed for the development of materials that reflected input from different groups. Another advantage is that a number of organizations had a sense of ownership for the products and were therefore committed to seeing it implemented in schools. Several teachers were also consulted for their input. The Ministry of

Education approved the draft materials prepared and the Minister of Education presided over a launch event of the materials held in the Children's Museum.

- 2) ***Illustrating and printing the materials:*** As the draft materials were nearing completion, an important step in the process was selecting a company to work on the illustration, layout and printing of the large volume of materials. Then, the *Secretariat* and its partners worked closely with the selected printing company during this process to ensure the quality of the materials.
- 3) ***Materials distribution and teacher training:*** Considering that the initial funds did not cover for these costs, they were initially envisioned as a Phase II of the project as presented to the Japanese Embassy. However, owing to the Tsunami at the end of 2004 and resulting changes in funding priorities, the Phase II did not receive additional financial support. Despite this, the partner organizations, realizing that the materials would be much more effective if accompanied by appropriate training, took on this function using extra in-house resources. A 3-hr.



The Minister of Education presents a workbook to a student

training module was developed in collaboration with the National University. The Earth Charter Secretariat led a 'train the trainers' workshop within the Ministry of Education. In addition to this, a similar 'train the trainers' workshop was run at the 'Fundacion Omar Dengo', a respected educational NGO that works with a large number of public schools in the country.

Funding

The Japanese Embassy in Costa Rica funded the design and reproduction of the materials while the development of the content was an in-kind contribution of the Earth Charter Secretariat and its partner organizations. The teacher-training workshops were also provided as an in-kind contribution by the partners.

Results

The results of this project is a valuable set of didactic materials – two books and an planner – designed specifically for the Costa Rican curriculum, which offer important theoretic and practical information to work with the theme of sustainable development in primary schools. These materials provide important resources for the implementation of the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development.

Over 35,000 books for teachers, 100,000 for students and 15,000 planners were printed and distributed in Costa Rica public schools throughout the country in early and mid 2005.

While a formal evaluation of the project has yet to be conducted, the comments received from teachers during the training process regarding the materials have very positive. In fact, there was clearly a major need for didactic resources in this area.

Conclusion

A few critical success factors have been identified that allowed this national project to be implemented successfully:

- The number of engaged partners collaborating on the development of the materials allowed for a better product and also commitment to ensure the needed teacher training took place.
- The stamp of approval of the Ministry of Education was critical.
- The fact that these materials were developed keeping in mind the existing curriculum of the Costa Rican education system, allowed them to be resources welcomed by teachers rather than an 'add on'.
- The link with the Decade of Education for Sustainable Development was motivational and also helped secure funding for the project.
- Ideally, there will be the possibility of adapting these materials for usage in other countries, regionally or beyond, especially given the backdrop of the Decade of Education for Sustainable Development.

Sources:

This case was drawn from the proposals submitted to the Japanese Embassy in Costa Rica as well as accompanying progress reports.



The Vivim Plegats Team

German and Arabic to facilitate its accessibility by students and the families of recent immigrants. They became the starting point for a number of classroom activities.

Each school creates its own activities based on the Earth Charter. Each teacher is then encouraged to develop his or her own personal vision. Children as young as three years old learn about the Charter through simple illustrations showing the Earth as our common home. For older children, suggested activities range from cultural-exchange workshops to a photography project based on the Earth Charter principles.

As part of the *Vivim Plegats* programme, a multicultural team visits the schools regularly and gives performances about their cultures, so children learn about life in different immigrant communities and other countries. They reflect the multicultural nature of the society, the challenges that different groups experience on the islands, and the political and cultural situation in the world. The programme encourages inter-school collaboration on the island and exchanges with schools in other countries. Schools also involve the community, from parent participation to cultural

performances, exhibitions and essay competitions. In Guillem's words, "*Children learn that another world is possible, another Mallorca too!*"

Funding

Funding to establish the *Vivim Plegats* programme came from the Ministry of Education and Culture. Support was also obtained from UNICEF and UNESCO to publish and distribute children's adaptations of the Earth Charter.

Results

Through the work of the *Vivim Plegats* team, there are about 70 schools in the Balearic Islands that have incorporated this multicultural education programme based on the Earth Charter. The programme has also developed a number of materials including adaptations of the Earth Charter targeted at three different age groups, with each adaptation being translated into approximately a dozen languages. These resources reside on the Earth Charter website and are available to educators around the world.

The *Vivim Plegats* experience was show-cased in several international forums, including the World Education Forum, the World Social Forum, the Mallorca Social Forum, and the Congress of Environmental Education in Havana. The programme has also encouraged exchanges with schools and organizations in other countries, many of them leading to ongoing initiatives with the Earth Charter.

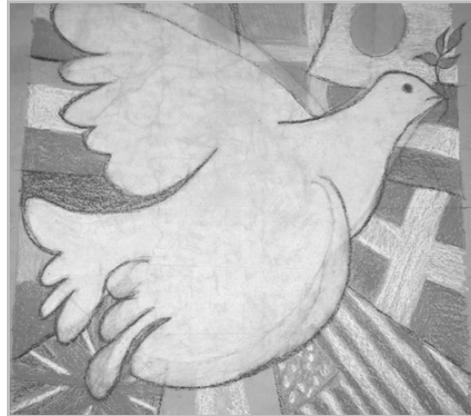
"The Earth Charter underpins our whole approach, with its beautiful vision of a harmonious world. The children absolutely understand the Earth Charter."

Guillem Ramis

Conclusion

The Vivim Plegats programme is an inspiring example of how an individual effort can grow to receive governmental recognition and support, thereby affecting not just one school, but an entire network. By adapting the words of the Earth Charter so that the key themes can be more easily understood by children, the *Vivim Plegats* programme has inspired a number of other teachers not only in Mallorca, in internationally as well.

Today, after nearly 30 years of working with the public school system, Guillem has retired. Given his experience during the years and with the help of many other teachers, he is preparing a training manual for children. Clearly, he continues to actively work with the Earth Charter, and in fact has more time to do so than ever before!



Student vision of peace

This case was drawn directly from the following sources:

- Guillem Ramis's description of the Vivim Plegats programme
- Earth Charter Teacher's Guidebook
- Earth Charter Annual Report 2004

An International Expedition Carrying the Charter's Message; *The Brink Expedition, AUSTRALIA*

Background

The plan for the Brink Expedition started in 2001, when two friends decided to combine their interest in traveling around the world and promoting a message for a more sustainable way of life. They mobilized a group of volunteers to work together on the logistics and funding for such an expedition. Together, they planned a 50,000 km. trip through some of the most difficult terrain and extreme weather on the planet, all the time attempting to use mainly human power and the natural elements, such as wind and sun.

When planning the Brink Expedition, the members decided to use the Earth Charter as the basis for the educational goals of the Expedition. They entered into a partnership with the Queensland Earth Charter Committee, which recognized the Brink Expedition as an

opportunity to transform the values and principles of the Earth Charter into action. Using the Earth Charter as a framework for the creation of environmental and social justice curriculum modules, Brink provides educators and students with a real life adventure that energises the learning process.

Aim

The aim of the Brink Expedition is to bring social and environmental issues into mainstream awareness – through technology, media, schools and sport. More specifically, as the Expedition travels through new countries, it visits a number of schools with the goal of actively involving teachers and students in the creation of a more sustainable future through the development of curriculum materials and online resources.



Coconut highway in Brazil

Participants

The Brink Organisation consists of 2 expedition team members – Kendon and Ben Glass, and one Education Co-ordinator – Louise Erbacher – all participating as volunteers. A team of curriculum writers to develop 9 curriculum modules are also involved. A range of non-government organizations participate on the periphery to offer resource support in relation to particular social and environmental issues. It is anticipated that by October 2006, there will be at least 300 schools participating in the project.

Timeframe

Planning and fundraising for the trip began in 2001, well in advance of the departure date. The 1,000 day journey started with the Brink Expedition Team's departure in May 2003, with the anticipated completion of the journey and the development of the materials extended until October 2006. Beyond that date, it is hoped that the materials that have been developed will continue to be used by schools and organizations all over the world.



School in Rio Grande

Description

As the Brink Expedition Team visits selected communities in the countries they travel through, they communicate the message of the Earth Charter and spend time in schools to discuss the Charter and issues of social and environmental concern. All schools registering with the Brink School Room receive a School Pack, containing the Earth Charter, a children's adaptation of the Earth Charter and a UNESCO CD-Rom – *Teaching and Learning for a Sustainable Future* – as well as other Brink materials. The School Room of the Brink website currently includes 65 schools from Australia, USA, Venezuela, Chile, Argentina, Kazakhstan, Spain and Sweden.

The Brink Curriculum covers nine "Hotspots", or issues of social and environmental concern. Each of these hotspots carefully links back to the relevant principles of the Earth Charter. The very first curriculum module - "The Brink Expedition and the Earth Charter" explores the Earth Charter and explains how the Expedition itself is an example of the Earth Charter in action. The other Hotspots include:

- Ocean Care, Global Warming
- Indigenous peoples of the Americas
- Understanding Cultures
- Fairer Trade
- Endangered Species
- Disappearing Forests
- Indigenous Australians

THE ROUTE

Americas

Venezuela, Brazil, Bolivia, Chile, Argentina

Atlantic Traverse

Azores Islands

Europe

Spain, France, Italy, Greece, Turkey

The Middle East

Iran

Central Asia

Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, China, Pakistan, India, Nepal, Tibet

South East Asia

Laos, Cambodia, Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia

Australasia

Australia

Funding

The Expedition was able to secure a number of individual and organizational sponsors, many supplying in-kind support, from bikes to laptop computers. Grant funding was secured and used

to pay a team of curriculum writers to develop nine curriculum modules to be used by at least 70 schools. A number of volunteers made significant in-kind contributions too.



Bike man, and writing on the wall

Results

The story of the Brink Expedition has made its way onto television, radio and newspapers in Australia, Argentina, Chile and Spain. People who would not necessarily be aware of, or concerned about social and environmental issues are beginning to take notice because they have been attracted to the adventure of the Expedition itself. Having already gained the support of the Education Department in Queensland, Australia, the Brink Organisation is working towards developing relationships with educational institutions across Australia and around the world, in order to shift education for sustainability into mainstream curriculum.

In terms of the use of the Brink curriculum materials in schools, Brink has been able to track this via school registrations and their contributions to the Brink website through emails and discussion forums. The responses from students have been particularly positive in terms of their interest and motivation for learning more about the issues. Another positive impact of the Brink Expedition is the way in

which schools are connecting with other schools.

Conclusion

The Brink website has closely documented the journey as it unfolds. Students are able to see that there are people all around the world who are working towards creating a more sustainable



Sant Joan School in Mallorca

future, helping them to see that they are part of a huge community of active global citizens. Additionally, the Brink Expedition encourages awareness and a respect for the natural environment, while emphasizing the students' role as active global citizens.

By integrating technology and adventure into a real-life context, the Brink project is delivering a progressive form of education that excites and inspires young imaginations, acting as a platform for further investigation and learning.

This case was directly drawn from the following sources:

- www.brinkx.org accessed on September 26, 2005
- Earth Charter Award application by Louise Erbacher
- Earth Charter Teacher's Guidebook

A University Course based on the Earth Charter

Michigan State University, USA



Background

Teaching sustainability at the university level is an complex endeavour. What is it? What pedagogy might be used? How does one invite the entire community to learn together? These were some of the questions that were challenging professors Laurie Thorp and Terry Link, at Michigan State University, as they were developing a course that would bring the complexity of sustainability to a diverse group of learners. They decided to choose the Earth Charter as a vehicle for discussing and venturing into the ideas and ideals of sustainability. In the Earth Charter, they saw a vehicle for *personal, institutional, community, national and global* transformation.

- action and engagement rather than passive receptivity
- creative self-expression rather than one-size-fits-all assignments
- individualized self-assessment rather than multiple guess tests with one right answer
- collaborative construction of meaning through dialogue rather than lobbying for position with debate and discussion
- The professors wanted students to feel that they could make a difference, that they could change the world.

Aim

The course they developed, '*Earth Charter: Pathway to a Sustainable Future?*' aimed to bring the abstract topic of sustainability into the classroom, using the Earth Charter as the backbone. In developing this course, the professors designed opportunities for:

- thoughtfulness and deep reflection rather than rote memorization of information

Participants

The direct participants were the course instructors and the 26 students representing a wide variety of majors including political theory, building construction management, anthropology, urban planning, environmental studies and philosophy. The students were not familiar with the Earth Charter at the beginning of the course.

Timeframe

This course was offered in Spring 2002. While the same course has not been offered in the same vein, the instructors have developed and taught other courses where the Earth Charter has been an important component.

Description

Course Design:

The course was purposefully designed as an alternative model for students, teachers and the subject to come together in a meaningful way. It was structured to meet twice a week for 1 hour and 20 minutes. The first session each week featured a speaker or group of speakers addressing a specific principle of the Earth Charter. The second class meeting of the week was a discussion session based upon the readings and the presentation earlier in the week. Each student was expected to participate in a semester-long project of engagement with the Earth Charter document and their community. The project was chronicled through the compilation of a *praxis* portfolio. In addition the students had two short reflective essays to write and attendance counted toward the grade.

In order to substantially cover the Earth Charter, the professors decided to cover the first four principles under “Respect and Care for the Community of Life” collectively as they are the values that are the foundation for the other 12. They then spent 1 week/principle for the next 12 principles.

“We’re conditioned to be linear thinkers. One can clearly teach the Earth Charter linearly, e.g., start with principle one and go through sixteen. I suspect a beginning place is to try and model the tone of the EC, i.e., incorporate care, respect, etc. into the everyday teaching process and continually inserting the neglected pieces through questions.”

Terry Link, Course Instructor

Methods:

The use of real-world speakers (in addition to academicians) was highly successful. Invited speakers included: a social worker, two elementary school teachers, a consultant, and a leader of a peace team. They were each passionate about their work and told personal stories that made the principles come alive. The course instructors are believers in the power of the narrative, storytelling. The instructors also shared stories and poems aloud with students throughout the course to reaffirm the power and beauty of the spoken word.

Activities:

The discussion sessions usually focused on the topic covered earlier in the week at the featured presentation. However, the instructors occasionally stepped outside that format through a checking-in process where students related what was on their mind generally at that time. They took a few occasions when the weather was supportive of going outside to meet. Ideas were characteristically challenged with respect, and differing perspectives were welcomed.

Student Projects:

Student projects were of their own choice and students were encouraged to pick something they were passionate or deeply curious about for project areas. Students worked in school gardens, literacy programs, underprivileged tutoring programs, studied green building standards, developed recycled products lists, organized a regional collegiate conference on global warming, raised consciousness on eating meat, studied and performed with a international dance for peace effort, and so on.

Of particular note, were those students who stumbled into projects with some ambivalence, yet experienced significant impact. They learned more about themselves and the complexities of life in a much deeper fashion than the typical classroom could offer. The freedom to express their projects through different media was also a



Lettuce harvest

delightful surprise. Student presentations took the form of poster sessions and displays, a long essay, a binder loaded with reflections and photos, a couple of power-point presentations, and a video.

Funding

The course was offered by Michigan State University and there was no need for external funding to make it happen.

Results

The course was a success. The professors were amazed at the generally positive energy the Earth Charter stimulated. In the words of Terry Link: *“There were a number of cynics in the course, who tended to soften their cynicism somewhat as the course developed. There was one week where a presentation on hunger and the schools, led to students wanting to take on the local school board over the inadequate food programme at a nearby school. Activism typified much of the discussion and projects.*

Yet there were clear differences among student values. The highly idealistic students learned how much more complicated their key issues were. Environmental activists learned to consider and balance the social and economic factors, while the social justice activists began to look at environmental and economic elements with more openness.”

Perhaps one of the strongest outcomes was the effect of the course on the instructors. Students in the course encouraged the instructors to help more people become aware of the Earth Charter. In summer of 2002, several informal community meetings began discussing the Earth Charter and a small study group was formed. Subsequently the instructors have been working to build awareness through attendance at public events and by approaching organizations and religious groups to ask them to endorse the Earth Charter. This work was ongoing in 2005, under the Mid-Michigan coalition for the Earth Charter. In addition both instructors have continued working with the Earth Charter in their courses.

Conclusion

According to the instructors, the Earth Charter proved to be an extremely valuable instrument in the design of the course. They felt that the power of the Earth Charter lies in its wholeness, bringing together the environmental, social, economic, and spiritual spheres into one. The Earth Charter can be taught in many different ways, such as going through the document principle by principle. However, the instructors of the course took it a few steps beyond, modelling the tone of the Earth Charter into the design and implementation of the course.

Sources:

- Drawn directly from ‘A Course Review from Michigan State University’ by Terry Link.
- Earth Charter Award Application submitted by Mid-Michigan Coalition

From Endorsement to Implementation

The University for Peace, COSTA RICA

Background

The UN-affiliated University for Peace (UPEACE), with its headquarters and main campus in Costa Rica, offers seven graduate degrees in various areas of peace studies. It also has several Regional Programmes which allow the organization to be present in many parts of the world.

The overarching mission of UPEACE is to provide humanity with an international institution of higher education for peace and with the aim of promoting among all human beings the spirit of understanding, tolerance and peaceful coexistence. Given the alignment of its mission with the Earth Charter Initiative's vision and goals, UPEACE's governing council endorsed the Earth Charter in the November 2000. The Earth Charter Secretariat is located on the campus of UPEACE.

In 2003, UPEACE and the Earth Charter Secretariat signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) aiming for the institutions to have closer ties and for the Earth Charter to be implemented into the programmes of UPEACE. Since then, UPEACE's academic programmes have developed extremely rapidly, and in 2005 it counted with over 100 graduate students from more than 40 countries.

Aim

The overall aim is for UPEACE to use the Earth Charter as an educational tool, using it in the development of its courses, curriculum materials and activities.



Beautiful Upeace Campus

Participants

The key participants are the students, faculty and administration of the UPEACE system. The Earth Charter Secretariat is also a participant, as it is located on the campus of UPEACE.

Timeframe

This effort started with UPEACE's endorsement in 2000, and gained momentum in 2003, with the signing of the MOU between the University and the Secretariat. It is ongoing in 2005, at the time this case was written.

Description

The Earth Charter has not only been incorporated into a number of UPEACE classes, but has also been used as an important framework in helping with the design of the Peace Education Master's programme which initiated in 2004. Below is a brief description of the different areas of collaboration:

a) Foundation Course

UPEACE realized that a strategic point of entry for the Earth Charter would be its 'Foundation Course', a required class for all its students. The faculty in charge of the class worked closely with the Earth Charter Secretariat to design and deliver a session in the Foundation course in 2003 and 2004. The Earth Charter was presented as a document, a process, and as a tool. The applications of the Earth Charter were examined, particularly focusing on its relevance as a document that furthers the idea and reality of a positive peace, rooted in justice and sustainability.

b) Master's in Peace Education

The Earth Charter was used as a frame of reference for the development of the Master's Degree in Peace Education aimed at training education policy makers and teacher educators. The programme pursues two intertwined goals: capacity building (leadership training) and educational reform and change in school systems toward peace-building education. The preamble of the Earth Charter was used to articulate the learning goals of the programme and the Earth Charter was used as the integrating framework for the course. In 2006, the Earth Charter Secretariat will collaborate with UPEACE in teaching one-third of a 45-hr. course titled, '*Education for Sustainable Development*'.



In class

c) Course on Sustainable Development

In 2005, UPEACE will be offering a 2-week course titled 'Sustainable Development' which is part of the Master's in International Peace Studies. This course will address the fact that the relationship and interdependencies of the economic, environmental, and social justice elements of our world require new ways of thinking about things and taking action. UPEACE has invited the Earth Charter Secretariat staff to teach that course.

Funding

UPEACE grants the Earth Charter Secretariat rent-free office facilities, technical assistance with the Earth Charter website, as well administration support. This constitutes a generous in-kind support for which the Secretariat is very grateful.

Results

As a result of the collaboration between UPEACE and the Earth Charter, for the past two years, all of UPEACE's international students are introduced to the Earth Charter during the course of their programme. As future international leaders in the area of peace building, this has potentially far-reaching results.

Conclusion

UPEACE represents a model case of where endorsement led to a more in-depth process of incorporating the Earth Charter into courses and activities. In the case of the Master's in Peace Education, the Earth Charter was used to help conceptualize and develop the whole programme.

UPEACE has leveraged the fact that the Earth Charter Secretariat is on its campus. With the growing influence of the UPEACE system, the Earth Charter Secretariat values this partnership and hopes that UPEACE will continue to work closely with the Earth Charter Initiative.

Source:

- UPEACE website: www.upeace.org

Dentistry Students Develop their Decalogue

Universidad Autonoma del Estado de Mexico, MEXICO

Background

Dentistry is a branch of medicine focused on the oral health of each individual. The teaching of dentistry in Mexico is comparable with world renowned institutions due to its teaching methods. It is also a field that has seen impressive development in clinical procedures over the last decade. Environmental educators in the Universidad Autonoma del Estado de Mexico (the Autonomous University of the State of Mexico) found the dentistry department at the university to be open and willing to consider the role of ethics in their field. The Earth Charter was used as the guiding framework in the process.

Aim

The intention of the project is to reincorporate 'humanistic education' into dentistry curricula with the purpose of training students to have a holistic vision of their work and to always have an ethical commitment to the medical occupation they carry out.

Participants

The participants for this project are the department of dentistry in the Universidad Autonoma del Estado de Mexico.

Timeframe

The programme began in September 2002 and is ongoing.



Preparing the decalogue

Description

The programme's thematic structure is organized on the following learning units:

- 1- Environmental Education knowledge building
- 2- Sustainable development and globalization
- 3- Social Institutions in Environmental Education
- 4- The dentist and his or her participation in the Environment Education field.

As part of the individual activities, students are asked to: "Read, analyze and discuss the Earth Charter with your student classmates. Then prepare a Decalogue, or ten points of ethical references that should guide your life as a dentist and as a citizen of a sustainable society, based on the Earth Charter." Each of the 125 students developed their own *Dentist's Decalogue*.

The Dentistry Department then decided to organize a 10-day online forum, where each student discussed what were the most important ethical guidelines for them. The goal was to jointly construct a shared set of ethical guidelines for the Department, based on the content of the Earth Charter.

The final ten principles to be included in the final Decalogue took place through a voting for each of the principles proposed by the students (approximately 200 principles). Once the analysis of the participation and the counting was carried out, the Decalogue of ethical guidelines was finalized. It was presented in class, where students analyzed how it was going to be submitted to the entire Department and to private practice dentists.

Funding

No external funding was needed for the project, beyond the Department's own resources and infrastructure.

Results

The Dentist's Decalogue was published in the internal bulletin of the Dentistry Department, posted on the website, and disseminated in a printed form in the Department's different academic and cultural events jointly with the promotion of the Earth Charter.

The programme, *Bioethics and Education for Sustainable Development* (PROBIOEDS) was created in June 2003 in order to promote an alternative culture of bioethical coexistence, responsibility towards human beings and their environment. This programme includes the

participation of students, educators and administrative personnel.

The project resulted in a greater commitment when the entire university formally endorsed the Earth Charter on 20 September 2004. With this, the Universidad Autonoma del Estado de Mexico became the first higher education institution in Mexico to officially commit to promote, disseminate and internalize the Earth Charter principles.

Conclusion

This dentistry department experience shows that indeed the Earth Charter can inspire students and be used in a variety of fields.

Dentistry, as well as other fields of medicine should take into consideration the sustainable development education in the formation of new professionals. Each profession needs to shy away from scientific fragmentation and look to integrate knowledge from different learning fields. This is an important step in the construction of a better life for human beings, and the planet we live in.



At a recycling drive

This case was directly drawn from:

- *La Carta de la Tierra, una experiencia en el nivel educativo superior.*
La Facultad de Odontología de la Universidad Autónoma del Estado de México.

‘Cultivating Good Water’ with the Earth Charter

Itaipu Hydroelectric Power Plant, BRAZIL

Background

The Itaipu Hydroelectric Power Plant, one of the largest power generators in the world, is a bi-national public-sector enterprise jointly developed by the governments of Brazil and Paraguay. Itaipu is committed to a high level of social engagement in the Cuenca of Paraná region, where it operates.

Itaipu has used the Earth Charter as a valuable ethical framework, an educational tool, and as the common thread linking the 70 or more individual projects that are part of its socio-environmental programme *Cultivando Agua Buena (Cultivating Good Water)*, which began in 2003, under the leadership of Nelton Friedrich.

ITAIPU's production of the year 2000 was responsible for the supply of 95% of the electric power consumed in Paraguay and 24% of the total demand in the Brazilian market.

Source: ITAIPU website

Aim

The aim of the *Cultivating Good Water* programme is to help establish conditions to guide socio-environmental action related to the preservation of natural resources in the Cuenca of Paraná, and thereby to improve the quality of people's lives in the region.

Participants

To date, 29 municipalities, 200 NGOs and 370 schools representing over 88,000 students have

been involved in Itaipu's educational work with the Earth Charter.

Timeframe

The project, *Cultivating Good Water*, began in 2003 and was ongoing at the time the case was written in 2005.

Description

The foundation for all actions and projects of the programme is based upon three documents: the Millennium Development Goals, Agenda 21, and especially the Earth Charter. Itaipu is using the Earth Charter as an ethical framework for all of its individual projects and as an educational instrument for selected ones.



Cultivating good water publication

Specifically, the Earth Charter is presented in:

- Conferences of the *Cultivating Good Water* Programme
- Informative and educational materials
- Environmental education actions
- Newspaper articles and media communications
- Discussions and actions to improve socio-economic conditions in the region

In September 2004, the Earth Charter received honourable mention during the 2nd *Cultivating Good Water* Encounter. The event had the participation of more than 2,200 people from the area: politicians, educators, fishermen, small agriculturists, and Indians among others. The ceremony became news in the *Cultivating Good Water* newspaper, January edition, with 20,000 copies including the Earth Charter contents in full.

Itaipu holds numerous training projects with local governments, schools and in communities. To facilitate that, Itaipu has printed over 6,000 copies of the Earth Charter in Portuguese in its efforts to disseminate the document. It has also included the Charter in a number of other publications, including its newsletter. Itaipu sponsored the production of 1,500 videos, 1,000 posters, and 25,000 brochures; it is also helping diffuse the Earth Charter via its web-page.



Cover of Earth Charter Booklet

Funding

The projects are staffed by more than 150 people from Itaipu and account for a budget of US\$ 7.5 million annually.

“Just as we cultivate earth to have the good fruits of our labour, it is necessary to cultivate water, so that it maintains its quality and quantity for everyone, since everyone depends on her.”

*Jorge Samek, Direction General of
ITAIPU, Brazil*

Results

Some results directly related with the actions of the programme include:

- Enhanced awareness in the region of the values on principles for sustainable development
- The formation of an Environmental Educational Network involving 29 municipal districts and 370 schools
- The establishment of a faculty discussion group on the Earth Charter in the Universidade Estadual do Oeste do Parana (West Paraná State University)
- In early 2004, Itaipu published an Environmental Education guide, titled: *EARTH CHARTER – Values and Principles for a Sustainable Future*.

Conclusion

Itaipu presents a unique example of a public bi-national enterprise investing heavily in socio-environmental actions in its region of operation. Given the diversity in the scope of its projects, the Earth Charter allows Itaipu to have a strong philosophical foundation for its work. According to Friedrich, “The ethical framework of the Earth

Charter provides a counterbalance to the prevalent over time.”
utilitarian culture that is becoming more

This case was directly drawn from the following sources:

- <http://www.itaipu.gov.br/> consulted September 29, 2005
- Earth Charter Award application by Nelton Freidrich, Programme Director.
- Earth Charter Annual Report 2004

A Traveling Exhibition Featuring the Earth Charter *Soka Gakkai International, JAPAN*

Background

Soka Gakkai International (SGI) is a lay Buddhist association headquartered in Japan with 12 million members in 190 countries and a strong tradition of social engagement. It is also an NGO actively promoting peace, culture, environmental awareness and education. SGI supports the Earth Charter as a people's movement and as a process of dialogue for change and transformation. It acts internationally through its active network to disseminate and implement the principles of the Charter.

In early 2001, SGI and the Earth Charter Initiative identified the need to feature inspirational stories of how the Earth Charter was being used in different parts of the world, in order to bring the document to a larger audience. This led to the development of *The Seeds of Change: The Earth Charter and Human Potential* exhibition, which was initially created by SGI and the Earth Charter Secretariat for the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) in 2002 in Johannesburg.



SGI exhibition in Italy

Aim

The aim of the mobile exhibition is to promote public awareness about the state of the world and the need for sustainable development, and to inspire hope in the possibility that each individual can make a contribution to positive change in the world. The exhibition also seeks to bring the constructive vision of the Earth Charter to people around the world, and to stimulate discussion on the Charter's educational potential.



An exhibition panel

Participants

SIG chapters around the world have hosted and promoted the Seeds of Change exhibit, often in partnership with other local groups. It has also been shown at conferences related to sustainable development and in university campuses and schools. The target audience is the general public.

Timeframe

The *Seeds of Change* exhibit was launched in 2002 and continues to be exhibited in different locations around the world when this case was written in 2005.

Description

Since its inauguration at the WSSD, the exhibition has been updated with new panels of the Earth Charter in action. It has been translated into many languages, so it can be mounted in regional venues where there is the greatest need for grassroots education and information activities. To date, the exhibition has been translated into French, Italian, Spanish, Japanese, German and Chinese and is being

widely used by SIG and other organizations.

One of the main themes of the exhibit is highlighting stories of individuals who have tackled problems in their local communities and become forces for global change. One example is Earth Charter Commissioner and 2004 Nobel Peace Laureate, Wangari Maathai, who began a movement in Kenya through which women have planted 30 million trees. Other panels of Earth Charter-inspired activities include the story of the Vivim Plegats (Living Together) programme in Spain, the work of the Paulo Freire Institute in Brazil, the U.S. Community Summits movement, the work of Elizabeth Ramírez of National University with communities in Costa Rica, and many more.

The exhibition is sometimes shown in conjunction with other displays such as recycled materials or nature photographs, or activities such as video screenings or exercises related to the concepts introduced in the exhibition.

Funding

The funding for the exhibit has generally been provided by SIG and its national chapters.



SIG exhibition tent at the WSSD

“Ever since it was first shown in Johannesburg, this exhibition has touched the hearts and minds of those who have seen it. The combination of the attractive design, striking graphics, and personal stories draws people in to absorb the message and they leave inspired.”

SIG spokesperson Anthony George

Results

Roughly 15,000 people attended the exhibition when it was first displayed in 2002

during the Johannesburg Summit. It went on to win third prize in the “Independent Exhibits” category at the Ubuntu Village. Since then, the exhibition has been shown in England, Italy, Scotland, France, Austria, Switzerland, U.S.A, Canada, Australia, Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan, Peru, Japan, Taiwan (at over 150 locations) and Hong Kong. While the impact of the exhibition is difficult to quantify beyond numbers, such a

large-scale consciousness-raising activity is a definitive first step towards the more elusive goal of building a more just, sustainable, and peaceful world.



Introductory SGI panel



WSSD exhibit with school children in 2002

Conclusion

The fact that the exhibition has been designed to be mobile, allows it to reach a much broader audience. The visually appealing panels capture the minds and hearts of a wide range of age groups. The translation into different languages allows the key messages to be preserved.

The “*Seeds of Change: The Earth Charter and Human Potential*” is truly an example of how the vision of the Earth Charter can be creatively illustrated and then taken around the world.

This case has been drawn directly from following reports:

- Earth Charter Annual Report 2002-3
- SGI Activity Report 2004

Inclusive Leadership Adventures – Exploring the Earth Charter; *Building Bridges Consulting, CANADA*

Background

Inclusive Leadership Adventures brings diverse people together to explore, share and celebrate differences. The *Inclusive Leadership Adventures* are organized around the *Building Bridges* approach. This was developed by Dr. Linda Hill, a psychologist and educator, based on more than thirty years of work with schools, community groups and other organizations. The concept for *Inclusive Leadership Adventures* began in 2000, when Linda was asked by a Canadian NGO and the Canadian government to apply the *Building Bridges* process to develop a youth oriented diversity education conference. She agreed and since has organized and run several workshops guiding youth to “explore the world of differences,” ranging from a brief hour-long workshop to full week retreats.

In the fall of 2003, Linda volunteered to become a mentor to members of the international Earth Charter Youth Initiative.



The world is in our hands

It was at this point that she decided to adapt the experiential curriculum to develop an experimental exploration of the Earth Charter.

Aim

Inclusive Leadership Adventure – Exploring the Earth Charter is about building bridges across differences. The aim of the *Exploring the Earth Charter* adventure is for all participants and co-facilitators to get beyond the words of the Earth Charter and develop spiritual, emotional, and intellectual connections. The goal of the adventure is to lead participants towards practical actions for implementing the principles and values of the Earth Charter. The goal is to have participants at the end of each Adventure to leave with:

- A deeper understanding of the Earth Charter
- An appreciation of social diversity and biodiversity as gifts that enrich communities
- Inclusive leadership skills for acting in ways and guiding others to act in ways that reflect the Earth Charter's principles
- Plans to implement the principles and values of the Earth Charter at the local level

Overall, it is hoped that participants will join the Earth Charter Initiative.

Participants

The direct stakeholders are the people who participated and co-facilitated. So far over 100 youth and adults have been involved, either as

participants or as co-facilitators. To ensure that participants and facilitators come from many different schools, organizations and communities, there is a rule that a maximum of four people can come from any one school or youth group. Participants and facilitators are expected to develop local action plans for bringing the Earth Charter back to their schools, youth groups and other community organizations.



Cooperative games

Timeframe

The first Earth Charter Youth Leadership Adventure, called 'Exploring the Earth Charter', was held in November 2003. A Training the Trainers week held in spring 2004 was attended by Michael Slaby and Renaud Richard (current and former coordinators of the Earth Charter Youth Initiative). A second "Exploring the Earth Charter" adventure was held in fall 2004 and with a third adventure planned in fall 2005. This has become an annual event.



Not just taking a nap

Description

All activities during the four day exploration of the Earth Charter were developed with and by youth from many different backgrounds and learning styles and leadership experiences. There are two fundamental aspects to the process. The first is to explore the "magnificent diversity of cultures and life forms" through direct interaction. The second fundamental aspect is to develop and practice skills for "forging inclusive solutions" through direct experience.

Participants are guided through a series of indoor and outdoor challenges and creative activities that get everyone involved in sharing leadership to create a community based on the principles of the Earth Charter. They learn to communicate and connect in ways that build bridges across differences and replace prejudice and discrimination with sensitivity, openness, and valuing all living beings. Participants learn to see each other and all living beings as potential role models for putting the principles of the Earth Charter into practice.

Throughout the inclusive exploration of the Earth Charter, the facilitators modelled inclusive leadership skill through the following six Building Bridges steps:

- 1- Networking – reaching out to and welcoming everyone.
- 2- Gathering – being a role model for the ground rules of safety, respect, choice and fun.
- 3- Relationship Building – building relationships with the Earth Charter, with each other and with nature.
- 4- Community Building – sharing leadership in exploring how the Earth Charter applies to our temporary community and the various long term communities we each represent.
- 5- Action Planning – planning what to do with the Earth Charter after the adventure is over.

- 6- Follow-up – keeping in touch and becoming a member in the global Earth Charter Youth Initiative.

Funding

These adventures are sustained through shared leadership. All organizers and facilitators are volunteers. Funding for the costs of food, accommodation, materials and supplies has come from small contributions from dozens of individuals and organizations. Each participant is encouraged to pay what they can and to help out with fund raising.



Beach semi-circle

Results

The short term results have been very positive. Analyses of evaluations completed at the end of each adventure have consistently had eighty percent positive comments and twenty percent suggestions for improvement. Some

positive comments included:

- “Exploring the Earth Charter made us realize how much our lives are connected to the Earth.”
- “Inclusive leadership and the Earth Charter go together.”
- “I deeply value the opportunity to have been able to connect with a diverse group of people interested in community leadership.”

Twenty percent of the evaluation comments made suggestions for improvements or expressed concerns. For example:

- “There is a need to clarify, simplify, and explain the Earth Charter in ways that make it less overwhelming.”
- “A few instances of strong emotions in the group made some people feel uncomfortable.”
- “I believe more time is needed on Local Action Plans, as this shows people (how to) apply what they have learned and make a difference in the world.”

Conclusion

The ‘Exploring the Earth Charter’ leadership adventure is an excellent example of how the core themes of the Earth Charter can be powerfully transmitted through a process of active, experiential learning, where the format of the ‘learning’ makes it a model example of a pedagogical approach which fits the spirit of the Earth Charter.

This case had been directly drawn from the following sources:

- “Exploring the Earth Charter – An inclusive leadership adventure for youth and adults who care about youth” reports by Linda Hill. December 2003, May 2004, December 2004.
- “Exploring the Earth Charter: A series of experiential education adventures for guiding students through the Earth Charter” by Linda Hill. In *Green Teacher: Education for Planet Earth* Issue 75, Winter 2004-2005. pages 33-38.

The Earth Charter and Education for Social Change

The Paulo Freire Institute, BRAZIL

Background

The Paulo Freire Institute (PFI), a non profit civil association based in Brazil, is an international network of persons and institutions with members in 24 countries. Continuing the legacy of Paulo Freire, one of the twentieth century's most influential thinkers on education, the Institute develops new practices in the fields of education, culture and communication toward a more democratic and socially just society.

As a participant in the development process of the Earth Charter since the Rio Earth Summit in 1992, the PFI recognizes the Earth Charter's potential as a powerful tool to inspire positive change in individuals and communities.



An event organized by the PFI on Education and the Earth Charter, August 1999

Aim

The PFI aims to use the Earth Charter as an important educational framework in its projects and approach to education. As a focal point of

the Initiative in Brazil, PFI also helps to stimulate other groups to work with the Earth Charter in Brazil.

Participants

The main participants of the PFI's work with the Earth Charter are the educators, students, and communities they work with, mainly in Brazil, but also internationally.



Panel on Paulo Freire Institute by SGI

Timeframe

As mentioned, the PFI was one of the early participants in the Earth Charter movement, as far back as 1992, when the idea of drafting the Charter was being discussed. Throughout the 1990's, they were active in the Earth Charter consultation process, and since the Charter's launch in 2000, the PFI has been actively implementing the Charter.

Description

Method: Eco-pedagogy

In 1999, the PFI organized the first international symposium to explore the Earth Charter from the perspective of education. This was the first step in a PFI-coordinated movement to develop a pedagogy based on the principles and values of the Charter—a Pedagogy of the Earth. It has since published a book on eco-pedagogy (inspired by the Earth Charter) and formed a network of educators interested in putting into practice the Earth Charter's values and principles.

Eco-pedagogy is an appropriate pedagogy for education in the world that is globalised. Urban life separates the human being from nature. Eco-pedagogy, or pedagogy of the Earth, searches to recover this relation. The fundamental theme of eco-pedagogy is the future. Its goal is to empower people and develop globally-conscious citizens. It is also a pedagogy of affection, that starts from a declaration of love to the planet, and continues with a personal engagement to take care of the planet with tenderness.

"Eco-pedagogy is a pedagogy of affection, that starts from a declaration of love to the planet, and continues with a personal engagement to take care of the planet with tenderness."

Moacir Gadotti

Activities: Selected examples

- a) While continuing to advance the ideas and philosophy of eco-pedagogy, the PFI is using the Earth Charter as a central theme in its social education programs. In the "JOVemPAZ" project (Youth Peace Project), social educators are trained to generate school and community activities that focus on the development of a culture of peace and sustainability. The Earth Charter serves as a key element in this training, to encourage reflection on how a simpler lifestyle can contribute to social change and the common good. In 2002- 2003, over 200 educators were trained through this project in three regions of Sao Paulo. The project is seeking to be extended and has received funding from private sources.



Participants of project JOVemPAZ

- b) With the support of the PFI, Sao Paulo City (2001-2004) used the Earth Charter to train education leaders dedicated to developing educational, cultural, sport, and leisure activities. They were trained on the principles of the culture of peace and sustainability so that they could incorporate them in their educational projects and in their decision-making. The Earth Charter was utilized as an educational tool during this process.

- c) The Citizens School Project is another PFI effort to promote social change. It aims to develop and improve relationships between members of the school community-parents, teachers, students and administrators. It also invites schools to develop democratic management practices and to generate participation in curriculum development and evaluation. The schools use the Earth Charter as a guide. This project involves some 150 schools in Sao Paulo.
- d) PFI's literacy project called "MOVE-Brazil", aims to reach forty thousand young people and adults in six Brazilian states. The Earth Charter is used as a reference document.

Funding

PFI's used the Earth Charter as a framework and educational tool within its ongoing projects, and no external funding was received specially for Earth Charter-related work.

Results

While the short-term impact of PFI's educational work with the Earth Charter are hard to measure, its activities are leading to empowered educators (and citizens) who will have the skills to move forward with an integrated approach to education for sustainable development. The result will be significant in terms of the adoption of practices and principles

that will make social and environmental responsibility more central to educational processes. Over the long-term, the new educational pedagogy will contribute to a more just, sustainable and peaceful world.

Conclusion

The PFI has responded to the Earth Charter, not just as a code of planetary ethics, but also as a call to action. Via the work of PFI, the Earth Charter has contributed to the development of sustainability initiatives in thousands of schools and in communities.

However, PFI still feels the need to broaden the Earth Charter's recognition and acceptance around the world as a mobilizing force toward a culture of peace and sustainability. Moacir Gaddotti, Director-General of the PFI would like to see the Earth Charter in every teacher's hands.



Moacir Gadotti, Director of the PFI

Sources: This case was drawn directly from the following sources

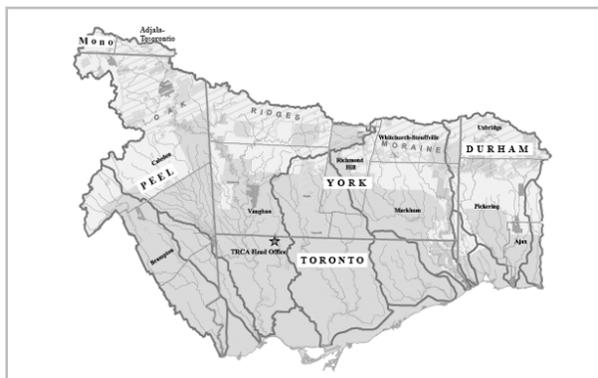
- *SGI Panel on the PFI*
- *Type II Questionnaire submitted by PFI*
- *Earth Charter Annual Report 2002-3*

The Earth Charter as a Guiding Framework *Toronto & Region Conservation Authority, CANADA*

Background

Since its formation in 1946, the Toronto & Region Conservation Authority (TRCA) has become a partnership organization committed to protecting, restoring and celebrating the natural environment in the Toronto region through the development of watershed plans, innovative environmental science and education programs.

One of the most ambitious projects of TRCA is *The Living City Campaign*, a partnership with the Conservation Foundation, a local community-governed charity. Together with the Conservation Foundation, TRCA is committed to making the Toronto region a healthy place to live through the development and implementation of programs that protect and restore the integrity of the environment. TRCA joined thousands of organisations and individuals by endorsing the Earth Charter, a result of this project.



The area administrated by the TRCA

Aim

The main objectives of the project were to:

- Review existing TRCA policies and find ways of incorporating Earth Charter principles most relevant to the work of TRCA;

- Use the Earth Charter as a framework for strategic planning for TRCA activities, and also as a tool for the comprehensive review on challenges and opportunities facing TRCA in the decade ahead.

Participants

The main participants were TRCA staff, member municipalities, local governments and communities of the Greater Toronto Area.

Timeframe

The project was launched in 2002; its review and extensive consultations were carried out through 2003.

Description

In 2002-2003, the cross-organisational TRCA staff team was selected to undertake a process of comparing Earth Charter principles with existing TRCA policies to consider the use of the Earth Charter as a framework for TRCA activities and programs. The process involved a series of facilitated meetings where the team identified, analyzed, interpreted and debated those Earth Charter principles that were most relevant to the work of TRCA. The staff team chose principles that best resonated with, informed and advanced the TRCA's *Living City* programme objectives. The outputs from the process included a table documenting their findings, and two reports provided to the TRCA Board of Directors in preparation for a request to endorse the Earth Charter in time for the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development.

The TRCA Board is made up of local government representatives from each member municipality within the TRCA’s jurisdiction.

It should also be noted that the broader staff body was consulted through “lunch and learn” presentations.

The table below presents an example of how TRCA interpreted specifically relevant principles of the Earth Charter:

Endorsed Earth Charter Principles (Accepted and Especially Relevant to TRCA)	Earth Charter Sub-Principle	TRCA Staff Team Interpretation	TRCA Application
12. Uphold the right of all, without discrimination, to a natural and social environment supportive of human dignity, bodily health, and spiritual well-being, with special attention to the rights of indigenous peoples and minorities.	d. Protect and restore outstanding places of cultural and spiritual significance.	Natural landscapes, land forms and areas nurture and rejuvenate the human spirit, providing sacred space.	Through the TRCA’s archaeological department, historically sacred areas, such as burial grounds, are identified and protected. Natural places, vistas and land forms are protected and restored. Additional spiritual places need to be identified and protected in the rapidly growing Toronto region as part of the population’s spiritual well-being.

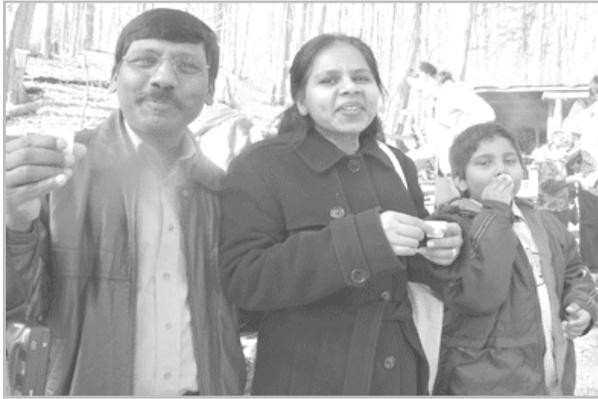
Funding

It is understood that the funding for the project was provided by the Toronto & Region Conservation Authority.

Results

The review that took place between 2002 and 2003 resulted in several achievements. First, it

provided a staff consensus and buy-in to the Earth Charter as a useful tool to better understand sustainability and related ethical issues and challenges in order to recommend endorsement of the document to the Board. Second, the outputs were used to prepare the organizational strategic plan for the years ahead. Third, it laid the foundation for a closer examination and application of the Earth Charter principles within key TRCA programs



Multicultural residents of Toronto at a celebration

(and departments) such as Environmental Education. Finally, it enabled TRCA staff to present and promote the Earth Charter to other local governments in their jurisdiction.

The TRCA Board of Directors endorsed the Earth Charter in June 2002. As part of the endorsement, the Board referred the Earth Charter onto the Association of Municipalities of Ontario and the Federation of Canadian Municipalities. In return, most of the municipalities within the TRCA's area of jurisdiction endorsed or recognized the Earth Charter. A representative from the TRCA attended the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) in Johannesburg to help advocate the applicability of the Earth Charter principles within local governments.

Following the WSSD, the process of designing the strategic plan took into account a summary of consultations and assumptions about the future. It helped to see clearly the challenges to be faced in pursuit of the conservation and sustainable development vision. The plan demonstrated that the Earth Charter would enhance TRCA's vision and the implementation of actions for a sustainable future.

The TRCA Environmental Education Programme was identified as the most appropriate department in which to place and focus the Earth Charter as an educational tool and also to support the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development.

Conclusion

For TRCA, the Earth Charter provides a broad conception of sustainable development and sustainable living. It believes that public understanding of the Earth Charter's principles and values is essential for change towards sustainability. TRCA's process of identification, analysis, interpretation and debate on those Earth Charter principles that were most relevant to the work of TRCA, helped the effective delivery of their conservation mandate.

Sources: This case was directly drawn from the following materials:

- 'Type II partnership Questionnaire' by Lisa King, 2003.-
- Earth Charter Initiative website:
- 'The 2002 TRCA Annual Report', <http://www.trca.on.ca>
- The Earth Charter Initiative 2002-2003 Report.

Strategic Planning with the Earth Charter *City of Joondalup, AUSTRALIA*



Background

The City of Joondalup is the second largest local government authority in Western Australia, representing approximately 161,000 residents. The City's approach towards developing a sustainable future is one based on education and community participation. The City of Joondalup came up with an innovative project of integrating the Earth Charter into its strategic planning process as an important initiative to build the community's capacity to address sustainability issues.

A comparative analysis of the policies of the City Council on one hand, and the values and principles of the Earth Charter on the other hand, demonstrated significant common ground between the two, and demonstrated the value of the Earth Charter as a tool for local government strategic planning.

Aim

The City Council decided to apply the Earth Charter as part of its strategic planning process in order to achieve economically viable, environmentally responsible and socially sound policies for the local community.

Participants

The stakeholders of the project were the staff of the *City's Strategic and Corporate Planning Business Unit* with direct input from community and major stakeholders within the City.



Sustainability advisory council

Timeframe

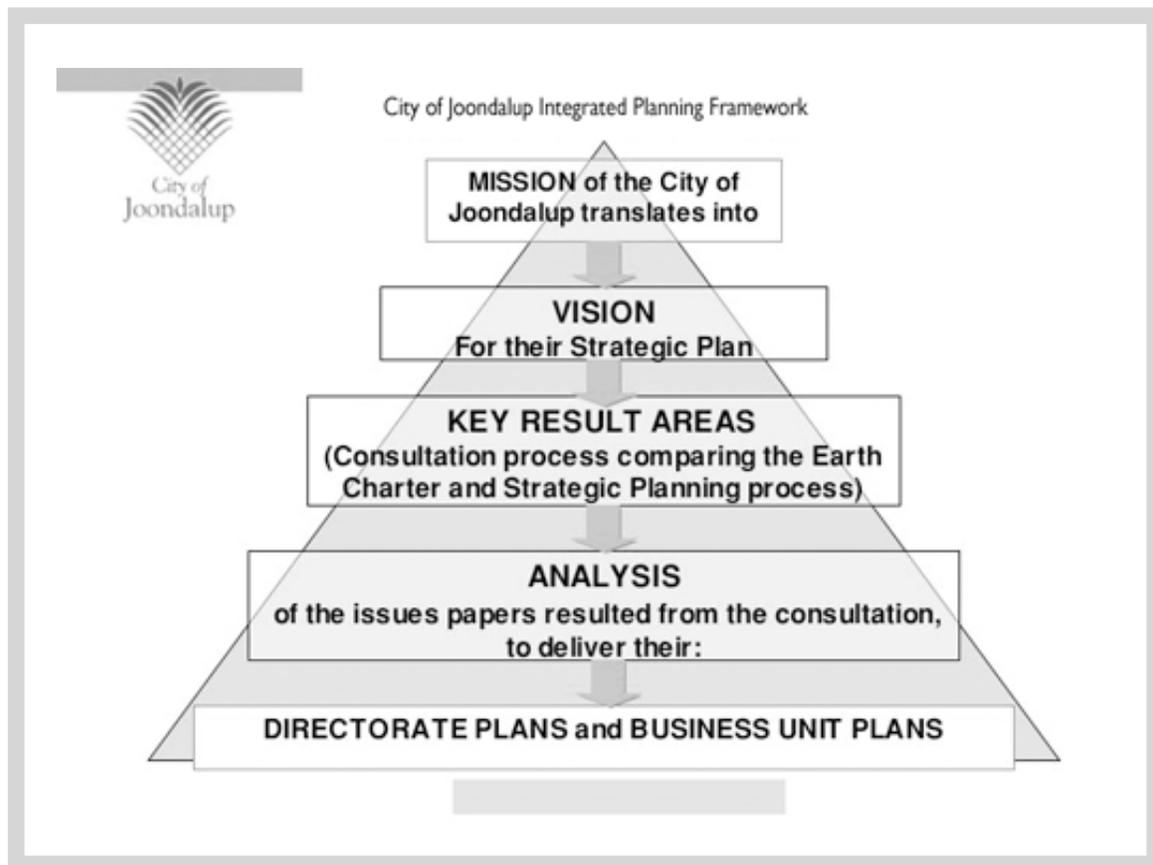
The project was executed by the City of Joondalup during the period of 2001-2002.

Description

The City Strategic Plan needed to be based upon the formulation of a vision, key strategic themes, and values. At the very beginning of the project, a consultation process on the relevance of Earth Charter principles to the existing City's policies occurred through a number of mechanisms, including a survey of four questions provided on-line, advertised through newspaper and hardcopies distributed in the libraries and customer service centres. All these points of entry served as communication inputs for collecting the data required for analysis. Approximately 400 surveys were completed and the results were incorporated to the City's Strategic Plan. After its completion, the City's senior staff then commenced the development

of the City's Corporate Plan, Directorate Plans and Business Unit Plans. The outcome of such exercise was a cascading integrated framework for the City (see diagram).

The staff of the City's Strategic and Corporate Planning Business Unit took an active part in the process, developing and submitting papers, processing multiple inputs from community and stakeholders, and analysing the Earth Charter principles and their coherence with the City's policies. This comparative analysis between the Earth Charter text and the strategic planning process was prepared as an issues paper. Approximately 80 issues papers were analysed to identify the key strategic themes that Council could use as strong guidance for the City's Strategic Plan.



Funding

The funding for the project was provided by the budget of the City of Joondalup.

Results

The results of the comparison between the City policies and the Earth Charter main principles highlighted two Earth Charter principles, 9 and 16, (“Eradicate Poverty” and “Promote a culture of tolerance, nonviolence and peace”) which had not yet been incorporated into the existing City policy. This helped draw attention to existing gaps in the City policy, such as the lack of a focus on poverty alleviation.

Overall, the experience of the City of Joondalup in applying the Earth Charter in its strategic planning process demonstrated numerous benefits, including:

- The Earth Charter helped promote an integrated approach for environmental, social and economic sustainability.
- The Earth Charter was used as educational material for staff and the broader community.

- It helped bring about cultural change within the organisation.
- It presented an opportunity to adopt and endorse the Earth Charter.

Conclusion

By and large, city policies tend to be more specific and relatively narrow in contrast to the broader scope of the Earth Charter principles. However, in the course of the project, it became clear that the Earth Charter could be applied to strategic planning exercises. Other applications included using the Earth Charter as a comprehensive checklist for developing sustainability indicators, as an educational tool for teaching and learning about sustainable development, and as an inspirational set of principles to guide community’s activities.

For local governments, the Earth Charter can play an important role in promoting sustainability. It provides a broad and inclusive concept of sustainable development with its key themes of ecological integrity, social and economic justice, and democracy, non-violence, and peace.

Sources: This case was directly drawn from the following material:

- ‘City of Joondalup Earth Charter case study’, by John Goldstein and Rhonda Hardy.

The Earth Charter as an Organizing Framework for the Republic of Tatarstan, *RUSSIA*

Background

The Republic of Tatarstan is located about 700 km east of Moscow and is one of the largest republics of the Russian Federation. It has a total population of nearly four million people and occupies an area of 68,000 sq. km, about the same as Ireland. It is one of the most advanced regions of the Russian Federation in positively addressing complicated ethical and inter-faith problems.

Modern Tatarstan lies at the northern end of the confluence of three great cultural streams: a Mongol/Asian stream from the east, a Moslem stream from the south, and a Slavic Russian Orthodox Christian stream from the West. Tatarstan's population remains highly diverse, with a mix of about fifty percent Moslem Tartar peoples, forty percent Orthodox Russians, and the remainder a variety of other ethnic groups. A similar mix led to war in Yugoslavia. However, Tatarstan has chosen a different course. One of the projects to help the territory fulfill its vision is *"Tatarstan, the Territory for a Culture of Peace, Sustainable Development and Tolerance"*, which emphasizes the need to protect the natural environment and to create conditions that promote tolerance and social justice.

Aim

The three key aims of the project were to:

- Present the Earth Charter to the Parliament of the Republic and initiate a process to have it endorsed



Local and international participants of the Earth Charter meeting at the parliament, April 2001

- Make the Earth Charter a guiding framework for Tatar policies
- Promote the Earth Charter's endorsement and implementation by various institutions in the Republic

In the face of these challenges, Tatarstan's progressive, yet assertive political leadership saw the Earth Charter as a vital instrument for advancing these aims.

Participants

The Earth Charter's values and principles attracted a number of stakeholders from civil society and found response in all walks of Tartar society. The President of the Republic of Tatarstan, the Parliament, Ministry of Ecology, and various public organizations expressed their support and endorsement for the Earth Charter project.

Timeframe

The first Earth Charter-related activities took place in late 1999, and have been ongoing since then. In the last two years, the Earth Charter project has been furthering educational activities and programmes.

Description

During the launch of the Earth Charter in June 2000 in the Netherlands, a special envoy of the President of Tatarstan announced the readiness of the Republic to implement the Earth Charter in their region. A group consisting of scientific and public organizations as well as parliamentarians was established to develop ways of implementing the values and principles of the Earth Charter in practical life.



The Earth Charter commissioner Kamla Chowdhry (India) at the parliament

In November 2000, senior government officials, ministers, members of Parliament, and foreign experts came to Kazan, the capital of Tatarstan, to hold discussions on the Earth Charter. Along with this conference, the government also held hearings to determine to what extent the values and principles of the Earth Charter were coherent with state laws, policies, traditional multicultural and religious values. The Environmental Committee of the Parliament studied and discussed the Charter for

a period of six months. After thorough considerations at the State Council, its members stated their support for pronouncing Tatarstan as the “experimental territory”, where the Earth Charter principles and a Culture for Peace programme were to be implemented.

Combined efforts of the government, Parliament, and various stakeholders of civil society culminated in the unanimous vote of members of parliament, to endorse the Earth Charter on 27 April 2001. This was a major step both for Tatarstan and for the international Earth Charter Initiative. The Parliament of Tatarstan also voted unanimously to adopt and apply the principles of the Earth Charter as part of Republic’s constitution.

Within the framework of the project *Tatarstan, the Territory for a Culture of Peace, Sustainable Development and Tolerance*, Tatarstan launched a large-scale experiment on implementing the Earth Charter and a Culture of Peace programme. Their agreement is to use the Earth Charter as a roadmap to a new kind of society. This project includes incorporating the Earth Charter in school curricula and in an ‘Earth Charter in Tatarstan’ book that was published in mid-2005 in Russian and English. The book offers an overview of this process. Its preface is authored by the President of the Republic, Mr. Shaimiev.

Funding

The Republic of Tatarstan is funding this project.

Results

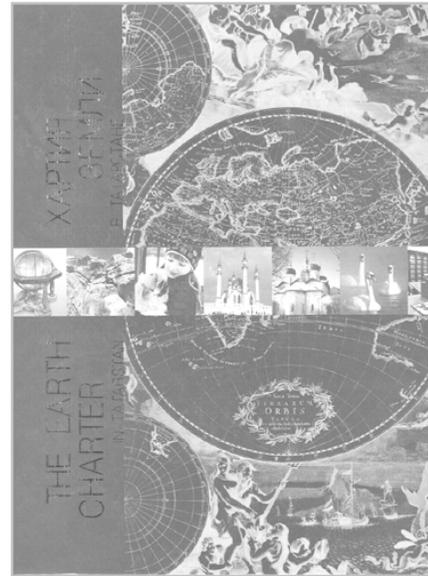
The importance of the Earth Charter in Tatarstan is that it has provided an organizing framework for the new agenda the Republic has set for itself. Clearly the Earth Charter has already made a difference in Tatarstan by helping to stimulate and channel the discussion of what kind of future the Republic wants for itself.

The endorsement has also led to concrete activities with the Earth Charter. Work is being carried out within the framework of a project on Intensive Adaptive-Landscape Farming, on preserving biodiversity. Training seminars for teachers to incorporate the Earth Charter into text books and university curriculum are also being conducted.

Conclusion

In general, Russia has not been a congenial place for assertive environmentalism. Yet the government of Tatarstan has chosen to make a public commitment to sustainable development, which not only flies in the face of prevailing views in Russia, but may ultimately change how key industries in the Republic operate. While the impact on industry remains to be seen, the Earth Charter clearly challenges the status quo. By endorsing the Earth Charter, Tatarstan has taken a courageous stand in favour of changing how things are done in order to build a better future, while confirming its most deeply held values.

Both Tatarstan and the Earth Charter movement now enter an exciting new period in which the challenge is to further embed the principles of the Earth Charter in the daily life of the Republic and its people.



Tatarstan / Earth Charter book cover

Sources: This case study was directly drawn from the following materials:

- Earth Charter Initiative website: <http://www.earthcharter.org/news>
- Stephen Smith, "Earth Charter in Tatarstan"
<http://www.earthcharter.org/files/resources/tatarstan.htm>
- Rustem Khairov: Earth Charter in the Republic of Tatarstan.
- Russia website: <http://www.earthcharter.ru/>

A Tool for Communities to Implement the Earth Charter *Partnership for Sustainable Communities, USA*

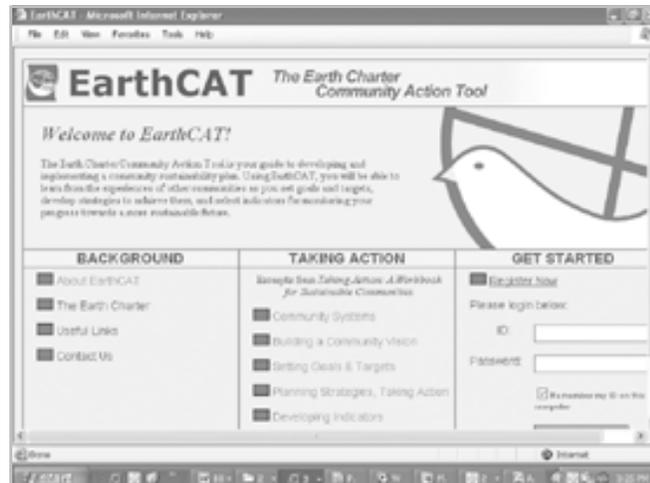
Background

Of the approximately 400 communities that have endorsed the Earth Charter, only a small minority have incorporated its principles into their community governance and social existence. In order to further the development of necessary tools to help local communities use the Earth Charter in the everyday life, an Earth Charter Partnership for Sustainable Communities (ECPSC) was formed in 2003 between the World Resources Institute, Global Communities Initiative, and the Earth Charter Initiative.

Two complimentary resources were developed to help communities undertake sustainability programmes: a methodology workbook and an online management support software. The workbook is titled, *Taking Action for Sustainability*, and the online management support software is called, *EarthCAT: The Earth Charter Community Action Tool*.

Aim

The main objective in developing the EarthCAT software and accompanying workbook is to provide communities with a step-by-step, self-directed guide on how to develop goals, targets and strategies to implement sustainable practices. It also offers a tool to measure their progress using indicators and reporting systems. An additional goal is to connect all communities working with the tool via a shared database.



The home-page of EarthCAT

Partners and participants

As was mentioned, the partners of the project were the World Resources Institute (WRI), Global Community Initiatives (GCI), and the Earth Charter Initiative. Intended participants are local communities who choose to work with the resources.

Timeframe

The project started in 2003. Version 1.0 of the EarthCAT software was released at the Sustainable Communities conference in Vermont, USA, in July 2004. The accompanying methodology workbook, was completed in January 2005 and is under revision after receiving feedback from different groups, municipal associations and their member communities who tested it.

Description

The EarthCAT software helps do the following:

- Create excitement and momentum
- Build a community vision
- Develop skills for community organizing
- Set goals and targets
- Plan strategies and take action
- Develop indicators
- Prepare a community sustainable development plan
- Track and report progress

The software provides the means to effectively store the information that communities generate to develop their action plans. It leads users through the major Earth Charter principles, one by one, helping them set specific goals, targets, strategies, and indicators guided by each principle. There is a built-in database, allowing users to see what goals other communities have set.

Upon setting their priorities and developing plans, communities can add their own data to the database to track progress, assess, and revise their strategies over time. EarthCAT also allows

EarthCAT strives to provide value to communities in three major ways:

- Provides a methodology that gives clear steps to take in defining goals and targets, developing strategies, and measuring progress.
- Shares experiences of other local communities via a database.
- Provides practical instruction and theoretical background for the overall process of developing a community's plan.

communities to generate reports, and citizens to browse the community's plan. Both of these features facilitate transparency and accountability.

Funding

The Philanthropic Collaborative provided seed funding for the initial phase of the project, with matching funds coming from GCI and WRI. However, as of September 2005, ECPSC has not found a source of financial support for training communities in developing countries. North American cities have been paying for the training themselves.

Results

The project's primary outputs were the two resources developed – the software and the workbook. There appear to be three main categories of users for the EarthCAT and the workbook: individual city government and communities, community unions and networks, and international organisations of cities and communities.

Already, there has been significant interest in EarthCAT as a planning methodology. The City of Newburgh, NY, USA, and the City of Calgary, Alberta in Canada are using the test edition of the workbook for two substantial long-range planning projects. Newburgh is in the process of creating their first Sustainable Master Plan, and Calgary has embarked on an ambitious 100 year plan for the city, called Imagine Calgary. Workshops have been delivered to the Calgary Regional Partnership, a coalition of municipalities that surround the city.

Selected efforts include:

- The U.S. National League of Cities offered the very first training workshop on EarthCAT to their members in January 2005, provided by GCI.

- The South African Local Government Association (SALGA), worked with GCI to offer an EarthCAT workshop to the staff of Ekurhuleni, a city outside of Johannesburg, in September 2004.

Possible future international efforts:

The Peruvian Committee of Mayors, the Institute for Community Development in Ukraine, an NGO, and several cities in China are also interested in participating in the training and using EarthCAT to help build local capacity for planning and community development. The main barrier at this point for the communities and organizations in less affluent areas of the world is a lack of funding.

Conclusion

Each community is different, varying in size, composition, and organization. The Earth Charter Action Tool (EarthCAT) has risen to the challenge of providing communities with a general framework that permits them to identify their own priorities and approaches as they work towards a sustainable future.

Once it has been used by more groups, one of EarthCAT's main benefits will be the opportunity it presents for communities to learn from each other. The goals, targets, strategies, and indicators developed by communities become available for future communities to assess and adopt as they create their own sustainable development plan.

Sources: This case was directly drawn from the following materials:

- <http://www.earthcat.org/> accessed on September 29, 2005
- Earth Charter Annual Report 2004
- Earth Charter 5-year Progress Report, Chapter: *"The Earth Charter and Local Communities"*

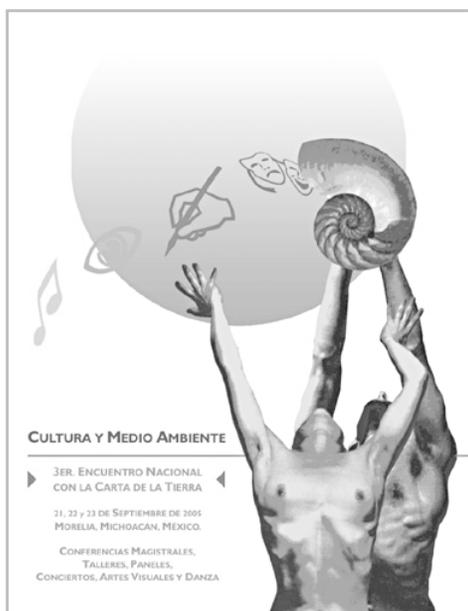
Education for Sustainable Living with the Earth Charter

National Earth Charter Committee, MEXICO

Background

The President of Mexico, Vicente Fox Quesada, during his address at the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) in 2002, expressed his commitment to the Earth Charter and announced that *“Mexico supports and shall make efforts to disseminate the Earth Charter, which contains principles and values that are fundamental to sustainable development.”*

Furthermore, one of the important outcomes of the WSSD was the launching of official partnerships. The Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources (SEMARNAT), along with several other countries and non-governmental agencies joined the partnership, *Educating for Sustainable Living with the Earth Charter*.



Poster of 3rd National Mexican encounter

Aim

The goal of this project in Mexico has been to provide community leaders and the communities themselves with information and training concerning the fundamental principles of sustainable development and how to blend these into decision-making processes. The Earth Charter is being used as a primary teaching instrument in this process.

Partners

A National Committee for the Earth Charter was created especially for implementing this partnership. It is made up of representatives from the five Regional Councils for Sustainable Development, the National Council, the Centre for Education and Training on Sustainable Development, the Ministry of Public Education, and interested non-governmental organizations. To strengthen local work, there are focal points by state, municipality, and educational institutions, among others.

Timeframe

The project began in 2002 and was ongoing in 2005, when this case was written.

Description

Given the commitment of the above mentioned partnership, a National Strategy for disseminating and internalizing the principles and values contained in the Earth Charter was

developed. An Earth Charter National Secretariat was set up inside the Consultative Ecological State Council for Michoacán. The Secretariat is in charge of supporting the agencies and organizations that need assistance in the dissemination of the Earth Charter, recording all the activities developed in Mexico where the Earth Charter is used and promoted, as well as making available the mechanisms for implementation, follow up, and evaluation. The project has been organized keeping in mind the following functions: communication, information and education. Below are selected important processes that have been undertaken.

- An education and training programme has been designed using experiential learning workshops conducive to internalizing the principles and values of the Earth Charter.
- National meetings for educators have been held every two years to stimulate reflection on ethical aspects of sustainable development, taking advantage of experiences and work developed in the country.
- The Ministry of Education's *Citizenship Training and Ethics* programme has been strengthened using the contents of the Earth Charter.
- Evaluation of Mexico's performance on the basis of the four fundamental axes of the Earth Charter is being carried out. The evaluation provides indicators to establish plans for re-orienting and improving the living conditions of the Mexican people.

To respond to the needs of local governments, a project called "Model of the Consistent Pair – Agenda 21 and Earth Charter" has been designed especially for local governments and is taking place in the State of Michoacán. It uses Agenda 21 as an action plan and the Earth Charter as an inspirational tool to motivate, and raise awareness and commitment of the citizens and local government staff. The model consists of four workshops, each one two-



Earth Charter meeting in Apatzigan, Mexico

days long involving 200-300 participants. The first of these workshops is dedicated to the Earth Charter and the other three to elaborating a Local Agenda 21. It also includes the process of evaluating the projects to ensure that they follow Earth Charter principles and are sustainable. The cities of Morelia, Cotija, and Aguacana (in the state of Michoacán) have gone through the training process. Two more cities will be going through the process in late 2005.

Funding

The State of Michoacán provides the office space and staff to coordinate the National Secretariat of the Earth Charter. The Ministry of Environment, among others, has funded the printing of brochures and the Earth Charter adaptation for children and youth.

Results

The Earth Charter has been presented via conferences and workshops in 25 out of 31 states in Mexico. Between 2003 and 2005, 27 conferences were offered with a total of 5,400 participants. In addition, 43 workshops involving over 4,000 participants were held. Over 75,000 general brochures, 40,000 youth



Adaptation for children

adaptations and 10,000 children's adaptations were produced locally with the financial support of SEMARNAT. Sixteen municipalities, 23 educational institutions, three private institutions and over 4,000 individuals have endorsed the Earth Charter in Mexico.

Promoting citizen participation is, and always will be, a necessary factor for achieving objectives aimed at the conservation of the environment and better living standards for the population. For this reason, participation has become one of the fundamental pillars in conducting the dissemination process of the Earth Charter in Mexico. As evidenced by the above numbers, it is worth stating that the Earth Charter is a document highly accepted by the Mexican population.

The Earth Charter National Secretariat has intensified its activities in different institutions nationwide. This has brought about an increase in the number of population sectors that have joined this important project.

One notable example is the commitment taken on by the Michoacán Institute for Educational Sciences, that created a Master's degree in Sustainable Development with the Earth Charter. It is worth underscoring that this professional degree gave rise to close to 30 work projects with the Earth Charter.

Conclusion

In Mexico, the project *Educating for a Sustainable Living with the Earth Charter* has been successful due to the support from federal government and the state of Michoacan. It marked the beginning and inclusion of a new paradigm based on the principles of sustainability that, in the medium and long term, will make plausible a new Mexican lifestyle model. It has brought sustainable development principles to the attention and understanding of many local governments.

The National Committee plans to continue to help implement the vision of the Earth Charter, and build a curricular paradigm so that schools may be able to assist, in helping the new generation move towards a more sustainable lifestyle. It hopes to expand the project with local governments to all states in Mexico.

This case was directly drawn from the following sources:

- Earth Charter Award by Mateo Castillo
- Country Report – The Earth Charter in Mexico 2003-2005, Consejo Estatal de Ecología

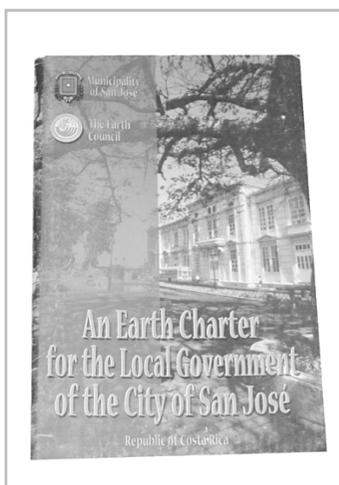
Training Municipal Workers with the Earth Charter

City of San José, COSTA RICA

Background

In early 1999, two municipal representatives from San José requested support from the Earth Council to assist the City in implementing a project aimed at incorporating the principles of sustainable development and Agenda 21 into San José's programs and activities.

Following a joint study by the district council of San José to identify key issues, a representative group of municipal executives attended an initial workshop to discuss sustainable development and to define objectives for a pilot programme. The outcomes of this effort resulted in a project entitled '*The Municipality of San José Toward Sustainable Development*' involving training workshops based on the Earth Charter.



*Publication of process by
city of San Jose*

Aim

The aim of the workshops was to take the municipal workers of San José through a participatory training process in which they would come to an understanding of the meaning of sustainable development. The workshops would also give them space to identify the ethical principles that they needed to embrace in order to ensure a better quality of life for both present and future residents of the municipality. A central output was for municipal workers to create an Earth Charter specifically for the City of San José that would outline common values to be adopted by all staff members.

Participants

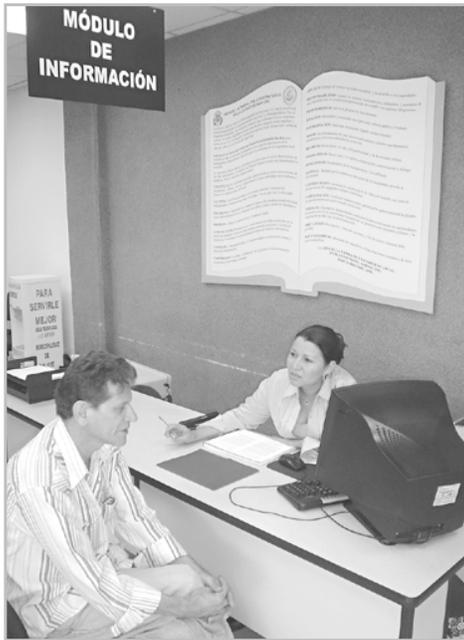
This project engaged some 1800 employees of San José's municipality (involving police, administration, sanitation, infrastructure, and health departments) – this represented about 80% of the total municipal workforce.

Timeframe

The project was executed by the City of San José over a period of 6 months during the year 1999-2000.

Description

The project consisted of a series of 15 training sessions and workshops delivered to the staff of the Municipality of San José. During these workshops, the participants were trained in



The Earth Charter of the local government of the city of San Jose

sustainable development issues, the meaning of the principles of the Earth Charter, and their application within public institutions. A comparative analysis of the Municipality policies against the values and principles of the Earth Charter demonstrated considerable gaps between the two. The democratic nature of the project allowed the municipal workers involved to not only internalize the values of the Earth Charter personally but also to incorporate them into the strategic planning process of the city.

Additionally, an exercise was carried out for participants to express their opinions on what priority values should guide the work of the city government in order to move towards more sustainable practices. Through multiple participatory processes, the participants in the workshops asserted the commitment of San José to implement a strategy for sustainable development within all of its activities. They agreed that, in order to achieve this goal, it was

essential to promote a change of attitude and mentality among all of the municipal staff members. The staff therefore chose a collective set of values for all members of the Municipality. San José municipal officers worked to incorporate this set of values into the document '*An Earth Charter for the Local Government of San José*'.

Funding

The funding for the project was budgeted for by the City of San José.

Results

In the year 2000, the Mayor of San José convened a public meeting to present the results of this Earth Charter process, the Municipality of San José's local version of the Earth Charter, and their commitments to its implementation. A poster of the Earth Charter of San José with its principles was inaugurated at the entrance to the Municipality main public building. The outcomes and future plans of this programme were documented in a publication entitled *The Municipal Community En-route to Sustainable Development*.

Through these training workshops, nearly 80% of municipal staff members acquired understanding of the meaning of sustainable development. Inspired by the Earth Charter and the dialogue among the staff, a code of ethical behaviour based upon twenty-one desirable virtues was adopted by seminar participants in mid-1999. Among the values that received most support to be incorporated into a new ethical code are: moral awareness, courage, tolerance, discipline, responsibility, loyalty and honesty. Naturally, the success of the project depended upon perseverance as well as continued training and orientation.

Conclusion

The project helped to generate a sense of commitment and responsibility among staff in the context of their duties as employees of the city of San José. Ethical values aiming at promoting better conditions for all were

identified and the city's own version of the Earth Charter was elaborated to serve as a guide to its operations. The training workshops provided municipal workers with the theoretical and ethical foundation that they need in order to contribute to the endeavour of building a sustainable city.

This case was directly drawn from the following sources:

- *An Earth Charter for the Local Government of the City of San José*. Publication of the Municipality of San José , Costa Rica, 1999/2000

Developing a Local Earth Charter *Municipality of Alajuela, COSTA RICA*

Background

Alajuela is the second largest region in Costa Rica and is inhabited by approximately 238,000 residents. The city has long been concerned about environmental problems affecting the province and this resulted in the creation of a department of Environmental Management. In 2002, the Municipality, inspired by the Earth Charter, moved forward with an initiative to develop an *Earth Charter version for the Municipality of Alajuela*, as well as its local Agenda 21.

Aim

The project had the following main aims:

- Promote the concept and understanding of sustainable development among staff of the municipality and community members.
- Sensitize communal leaders about the interconnectedness between social, political and economic problems.
- Promote a new paradigm of participation, emphasizing community processes of collaboration.
- Develop the Earth Charter and Local Agenda 21 version of Alajuela.

Partners and participants

Partnering with the Municipality of Alajuela, were the Earth Council and the Colegio Universitario de Alajuela (CUNA). Workshops



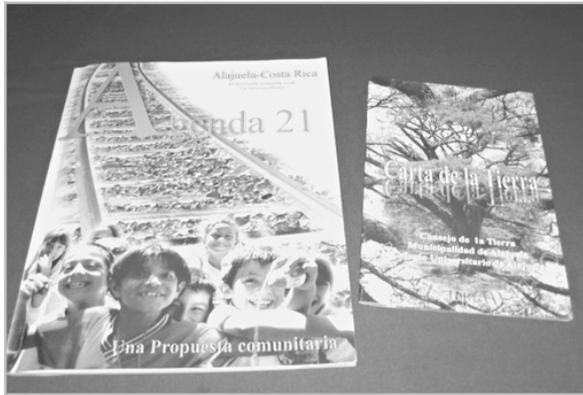
on the topic of sustainable development were provided to 200 municipal employees, representing half the total workforce.

Timeframe

The Municipality of Alajuela executed this project during the last semester of 2002.

Description

The process of developing a local Earth Charter first started with a training session of 200 staff members in order to sensitize participants to the main themes of sustainable development. At the beginning of the training, the term 'sustainable development' was not clearly understood, as participants thought that this term referred to just environmental issues. The Earth Charter was unknown to most



Publication documenting projects

participants and was used to help clarify the meaning of sustainable development. The 3-hour training sessions clarified the concept of sustainable development, raised awareness on the critical need for a new model of development, and presented the Earth Charter. At this point, the Earth Charter and Agenda 21 became the working tools for participants to develop the local versions of both instruments.

During the workshop, participants identified priority principles that should be part of their Earth Charter and agreed that this version would be simple, short and written in a way that would be easy to remember and grasp by a wide public.

The Earth Charter for the Municipality of Alajuela intended to be a declaration of values to inspire a new sense of responsibility for the Municipality. Once the local Earth Charter was developed, the Municipality disseminated it within the province in order to inspire community awareness and action. To accomplish that, over 500 brochures, as well as calendars and posters were produced and widely distributed.

The second phase of this process involved participants from the different sub-regions who had taken an active role in the design of a strategic plan. Participants were first invited to reflect and discuss the current situation of their

city and province, identify the problems they faced and think of possible solutions. The 4 questions below helped guide the process:

- 1- How would you like to view your district in 30 years?
- 2- What, do you believe, are the main problems in the region?
- 3- What might be the possible solutions to identified problems?
- 4- What ethical values are needed to make sustainable development in your community possible?

Participants were requested to answer the questions individually and then collectively. The most significant achievement was the commitment of participants to the agreed-upon new strategies and priorities to work towards a sustainable future. This part of the process helped the Municipality of Alajuela formulate their local Agenda 21 with the participation of all sub-regions.

Values Identified in Alajuela Earth Charter

*Help
Responsibility Communication
Respect
Commitment
Loyalty
Tolerance
Modesty
Sharing
Solidarity
Equality
Honesty
Sensibility
Conscience
Love
Peace and Justice
Discipline*

Funding

The budget for the project came from the municipality of Alajuela and CUNA.

Results

The process of working to develop a local Earth Charter for Alajuela's Local Government allowed participants to acquire a general vision of the meaning of sustainable development. They subsequently decided to work on a Local Agenda 21 process for Alajuela.

The Earth Charter became an important working reference tool for Alajuela's local government plans. As a major result of the democratic participation, Alajuela Community College (CUNA) decided to get involved and promote Agenda 21 as well.

The process resulted in commitment from the local authorities in the region to endorse the Earth Charter and to implement Agenda 21, with the goal of pursuing collective dreams of building a better community and therefore a better world.

Conclusion

This effort shows that one possible way of working with the Earth Charter is to take the international Earth Charter as an inspirational tool and the basis for developing a contextualized adaptation. This process of developing a local version of the Earth Charter kept the main messages of the international Earth Charter and generated a strong sense of ownership among participants. The Municipality of Alajuela recognized that moving towards sustainability calls for some basic changes in attitudes, values and behaviours. However, this must first be undertaken at a local level, in order to take a step towards global sustainability.

Sensitivity and training in sustainable development issues promotes an attitude of transformation, which leads into a positive atmosphere at work and the community. The values identified by the community (see box above) provided momentum to a community committed to social transformation.

This case was directly drawn from the following sources:

- *An Earth Charter for Alajuela*; Publication of the Municipality of Alajuela, Costa Rica.
- *Agenda21 – A community proposal*; Publication of the Municipality of Alajuela, Costa Rica.

An Earth Charter-Based Approach for Local Governments

Fundación Desarrollo y Naturaleza (DEYNA), SPAIN

Background

Local Agenda 21 (LA21) is the process of drawing up and implementing local sustainable development plans. It was first described in Agenda 21 - the global blueprint for sustainability that was agreed at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in 1992 in Rio, Brazil. Chapter 28 of Agenda 21 identifies local authorities as the sphere of governance closest to the people, and calls upon all local authorities to consult with their communities and develop and implement a local plan for sustainability - a 'Local Agenda 21'.



Agenda 21 mascot in Spain

Fundación Desarrollo y Naturaleza (DEYNA) was born in the same year as the Rio Summit in 1992. DEYNA has its official location in Soria and its operational address in Madrid. This foundation has developed a model of LA21, which in a

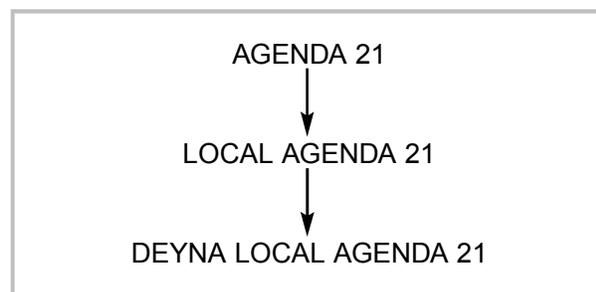
later stage incorporated the Earth Charter. This model is applicable to any municipal organization interested in implementing sustainable development initiatives.

Aim

The main objective of DEYNA's LA21 approach is to provide local communities with an effective tool to achieve sustainability through awareness and active participation from all sectors of society.

Participants

Although local government is the main target audience, throughout the LA21 elaboration process, the participation of citizens (women, youth, associations, private companies, NGOs, indigenous groups, and children) is of major importance. Participatory democracy, consensus and general awareness are central to this project.



Timeframe

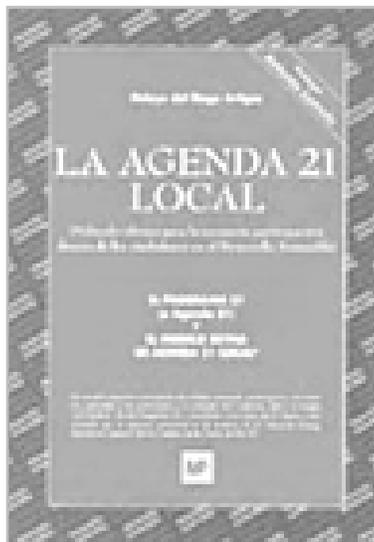
The DEYNA Agenda 21 model was initiated in 1995 and was ongoing at the time when this case was written in 2005.

Description

The DEYNA Agenda 21 model was originally designated to guide local communities towards sustainable development practices. It addresses the importance of engaging local governments in considering issues of sustainable development in decision-making.

The suggested process for developing a local Agenda 21 has three main phases:

- a) A stage where a task force is created. Meetings with local governors and the distribution of information are the basic activities in this stage.
- b) Individuals are distributed by groups (children, youth, retired people, women) where they elaborate their own pre-agenda. Then, the local Agenda 21 commission schedules meetings to select priorities and objectives, which usually takes place after a number of meetings and discussions. As a result, a local agenda is sent to the revision commission in order to be approved.



Cover of local Agenda 21 handbook developed by DEYNA

- c) Once objectives are prioritized in the simplest way for citizens to understand, the final document is transcribed and signed by the municipal authorities.

DEYNA has shared this project with a number of cities in Spain to amplify its scope. In August 2002, DEYNA developed an Earth Charter poster and distributed it to all 8,104 municipalities in Spain, in order to bring the Earth Charter to the attention of local government and to engage them to use the Earth Charter in their local development plans. In 2003, DEYNA distributed the Earth Charter to 2,000 educational institutions in the areas of Castilla and Leon, and invited them to consider endorsing and implementing it.

Funding

The economic resources are the same as those local governments have been using, with the difference that they were used for socioeconomic objectives.

Results

The Earth Charter has been endorsed by more than 200 local governments in Spain. A 200+ page handbook was developed on the Local Agenda 21 process, with a chapter devoted specifically to the Earth Charter. It became a tool awarded with a gold medal in the programme of International Projects at EXPO 2000 in Hanover, Germany. The handbook continues to guide local communities in Spain.

Conclusion

Agenda 21 talks about poverty, excessive consumerism, health and education, cities and agricultures, among other topics. It links all sectors of society in the difficult task of adopting a sustainable way of living. The documented approach developed by DEYNA is a contribution

for all those municipalities that wish to use this model developed by a Spanish foundation. The DEYNA model proposes a series of actions where democracy and participatory action become the

main strategic methods to take part in political-administrative actions, using the Earth Charter as an important ethical framework in this process.

This case was directly drawn from the following source:

- Local Agenda 21 handbook developed by DEYNA

The Earth Charter Local Communities Summits

Earth Charter Community Initiatives, USA

Background

The Earth Charter Community Summits is a grassroots effort to bring people together in cities in the United States to make the Earth Charter's principles a reality in their lives and communities. It started from the "big dream" of its founder, Jan Roberts, and has expanded internationally in the last few years.

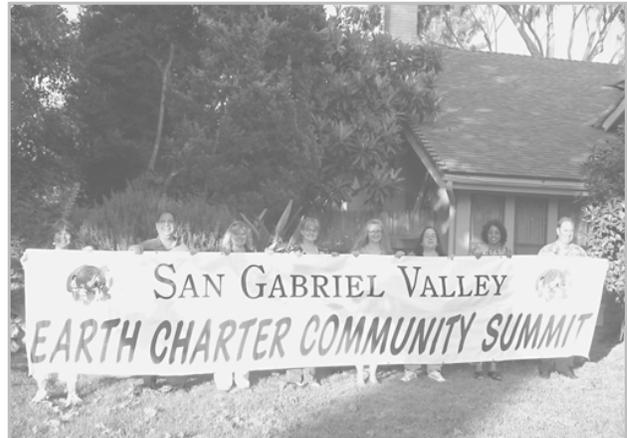
After Jan's first encounter with the Earth Charter in 1999, she decided to make it her quest to help people get inspired by the Earth Charter's "shimmering vision of hope and optimism". Since then, *Earth Charter USA Communities Initiatives, Inc.* (ECUSA CI) has grown out of the *Institute of Ethics and Meaning*, where it was functioning from, and has taken over coordinating the Summits. It has become the international organizer for the annual summits usually held in October each year.

Aim

The central aim of the Community Summits is to inform, educate and engage people of diverse backgrounds with the Earth Charter through music, arts, enlightened speakers and meaningful dialogues. The Summits also seek to mainstream the Earth Charter's holistic vision by reaching people who may not belong to organizations, but whose beliefs are aligned with the principles of the Earth Charter.

Participants

Summit organisers and participants are volunteers from diverse backgrounds who want



San Gabriel Valley Summit

to bring the Earth Charter to their hometowns. Generally, the participants are ordinary people who do not define themselves as activists and are of all ages and ethnicities.

Timeframe

The plan for the Earth Charter Community Summits was presented at the international launch of the Earth Charter in The Hague in June 2000 as a major grassroots initiative in the United States. The first annual Earth Charter Community Summits took place one year later, in September 2001. Since then, three additional Summits have taken place in 2002, 2003, and 2004, and the fourth was recently held on October 8, 2005.

Description

The Earth Charter Community Summits are open, public gatherings that focus on the Earth

Charter. They are dedicated to spawning multi-faceted grassroots efforts to implement the Earth Charter principles through individual action and local community policies and practices. The fact that the Summits are held simultaneously across the United States differentiates Earth Charter Community Summits from other Earth Charter action groups or gatherings. By using web-casting technology, participating communities can share Summit highlights and keynote speeches with other communities in real-time.

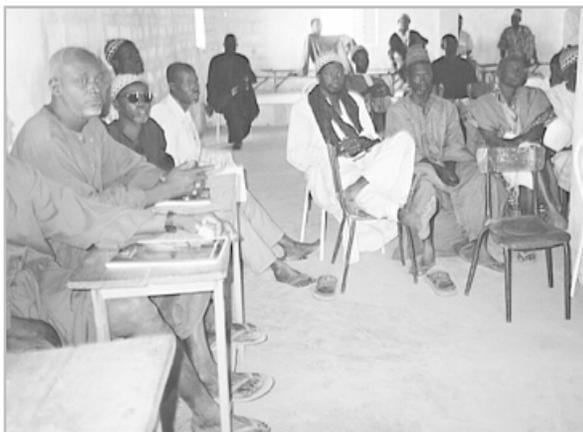
In addition to the web-broadcasts, Summits feature readings from the Earth Charter, keynote speeches by individuals who are familiar with the Earth Charter, interactive discussion groups, and panel discussions. Speakers include: activists, authors, political leaders, academics, founders of NGOs, and a wide array of other people. Dialogues take many forms at the Summits, including open space sessions on applying the Earth Charter in education, business, or in ones personal life. Most Community Summits have also included music and art. Artists and performers usually range from children to local celebrities.

Summit organizers are given freedom in the planning process out of the belief that each local organizer is in the best position to plan an event that will be meaningful for his or her particular

community. It is, however, required that the Summits be flexible so that they are open to everyone.

Funding

Most individual Summits have been supported through large in-kind donations. In-kind items have included space, printing, food, advertisements, equipment, and volunteer time. Individual Summits have also received financial support from NGOs and donors. For example, for the launch of the project in 2001, \$160,000 was raised to cover costs for the Tampa Summit and satellite broadcasting costs, so all cities could see one another. In 2004, the project's estimated in-kind budget raised was \$317,000 (not to mention the volunteers' time and effort).



Senegal Earth Charter local summit



*African group song at the New palts
(New York)*

Results

Fifty cities have organized Earth Charter Community Summits since 2001, and some cities have held one every year for four consecutive years. The participant levels of individual Summits have ranged from 100 to 1200 individuals. The 1st Earth Charter Summit in 2001 featured 12 cities. Since then, the

number of cities organizing Earth Charter Summits has risen to 24 in 2002, 33 in 2003, and 29 in 2004 and 2005.

The Earth Charter Community Summits have generated a wide range of outcomes that demonstrate not only their success in achieving the aim of informing, educating, and engaging people with the Earth Charter, but also their potential for spawning Earth Charter endorsements, projects, and initiatives. The Summits succeeded in their aim of mainstreaming the Earth Charter by attracting a total of approximately 41,600 participants, who generally were of all ages, ethnicities, and

backgrounds. Highlights from the Summits include:

- The endorsement of the Earth Charter by Seattle, Philadelphia, and Berkeley.
- An Earth Charter Eco-Tour to Costa Rica developed by a Boulder city Summit organizer in conjunction with the Sierra Club.
- The creation of Earth Scouts, a programme for children 3 to 15 years of age.
- The creation and launch of an Earth Charter CD by Raffi, an international children's singer.
- In addition, uncounted numbers of collaborations, events, and meetings were arranged and initiated through the Earth Charter Summits.



SGI panel on the community summits

Conclusion

The Earth Charter Community Summits project does not yet have national visibility or funding for its local initiatives. The organisers plan to build a board so that there are nationally known people who can help with both those goals. The aim is to fund local organizers in Summit cities so they can be free to work entirely for the Earth Charter. They also plan to fund the national office with full-time Director, Administrative person, Earth Scouts Coordinator and volunteer coordinator.

Although the project evaluation is generally a self-report by organizers on what is happening in their local Summit, it is appropriate to say that due to the efforts of grassroots organizers the Earth Charter is spreading into lesson plans in classrooms, local governmental policies and practices, university endeavours, youth activities, and other community activities throughout the USA.

This case was directly drawn from the following sources:

- Earth Charter Award Application by Jan Roberts
- <http://www.earthchartersummits.org/> consulted on September 15, 2005
- Earth Charter Annual Report 2002-03

The Vermont Town Meetings Campaign *Global Community Initiative, USA*

Background

Town, cities, and states all over the world are struggling to balance their budgets. Communities need strategies that are sustainable, strategies that will increase their capacity to continue to meet all their needs for economic security, social services, good governance, and environmental health. Sustainable development is no longer an academic exercise or a debate - it is a vision and process that needs to permeate the work of local communities.

In Vermont, the annual Town Meeting has become a democratic forum for the discussion and resolution of issues such as expenditures on roads, fire engines, schools, trash removal, water and sewer services, police, recreation, and social services. It is not uncommon for issues of state, national, or global significance to be considered along with the local concerns. It is only logical that the members of Global Community Initiative (GCI), the local coordinators of the

Earth Charter campaign, saw Town Meetings as a great forum for discussing the Earth Charter principles.

Aim

The chief aim of the Vermont Town Meetings Campaign that took place from September 2001 to March 2002 was to request Vermont town governments to endorse the Earth Charter and recommend that the town, the State of Vermont, the United States of America, and the United Nations use the Earth Charter to guide decision-making on issues of local, state, national, and international importance.

Participants

Town Meetings are very open and democratic events. All registered voters in each town are legally members of the municipal legislatures, which make town meetings truly participatory processes. The activists of GCI, members of the Vermont communities, local press, members of municipal legislature and local coordinators were the main participants in this campaign.

Timeframe

The Town Meeting campaign began in the summer of 2001 when the City Council of Burlington endorsed the Earth Charter. As most Town Meetings are held on the first Tuesday in March, the actual vote in 32 towns with the Earth Charter on the ballots took place from March 5-23, 2002.



*Vermont official Seal - Freedom
and Unity*

Description

In order to include the Earth Charter in the agenda of the each Town Meeting in Vermont, it was necessary to collect the signatures of 5% of registered voters. The first phase of the campaign was therefore to identify volunteers in each community that were willing to ask people to sign petitions in order for the Earth Charter to be included in the agenda. Once an article is on the agenda, then the Town Meeting can discuss it and vote on it. The petitions were circulated over a four to five month period in 2001, and were successfully filed in late January 2002 in 34 towns. Two towns disallowed the article, and, in the end, it appeared on the ballots of 32 towns.

The next phase of the campaign was to assist the local coordinators in an educational process so that by the time the voters came to the Town Meeting, they would know what they were voting on to support and why. GCI produced flyers for the local campaign coordinators and provided Earth Charter brochures so that they could hold educational meetings and talk to the local press about the Earth Charter. The participation of local press contributed considerably to the campaign.



Students played a key role in the Williston town meeting

Finally, all the local coordinators attended their local Town Meeting and spoke on behalf of the endorsement of the Earth Charter when it came up on the agenda. In the town of Williston, third and fourth grade students spoke at the Town Meeting in favour of endorsing the Earth Charter.

Funding

The Vermont Town Meetings campaign did not have external funding; GCI organized it on “a shoestring” budget along with the volunteer support in each community. The campaign did benefit from the Earth Charter brochures being made available for no charge from the Earth Charter Initiative.

Results

As a result, the towns of Andover, Bethel, Bolton, Braintree, Brattleboro, Bristol, Brookfield, Charlotte, Cornwall, Hinesburg, Huntington, Isle La Motte, Lincoln, Londonderry, Marlboro, Marshfield, Middlebury, Monkton, New Haven, Norwich, Panton, Plainfield, Randolph, Ripton, Rochester, Starksboro, Stockbridge, Vershire, Waltham, Weybridge, Weston, and Williston collected all the signatures they needed in time, turned them into the Town Clerk, and voted on them. The endorsement failed in Brookfield, Panton, Londonderry, and, sadly, in Williston, where the students had played such an important role. The cities of Burlington and Montpelier also endorsed the Earth Charter at their City Council meetings.

Overall, despite a fairly organized opposition, 23 cities and towns of Vermont endorsed the Earth Charter! Many towns that participated in the campaign asked for assistance in implementing the principles of the Charter in their community, and several communities used the campaign as a springboard for other



Newspaper article featuring Earth Charter activist Marion

initiatives to get communities to consider energy saving measures and land use changes. This process generated significant awareness of the Earth Charter in the region.

The interest that communities had in implementing the principles of the Earth Charter was one of the key motivations behind a conference that was organized in 2004 in Burlington, called *Sustainable Communities 2004*. The conference featured the Earth Charter and offered communities a set of intensive focus areas that covered issues such as participatory governance, youth engagement, environmental issues, sustainable economic development, the role of higher education, and civic spirit.

Conclusion

Although the endorsement of the Earth Charter in 23 cities and towns of Vermont was not unanimous – very few Town Meeting votes ever are - the majority of the voters in many cities and towns clearly demonstrated their will to choose its values and principles as the ethical background for the municipality. It is also worth mentioning that the project was initially inspired by the endorsement of the Earth Charter by Local Governments for Sustainability (ICLEI), an international coalition of municipal organizations.

Sources: This case was directly drawn from:

- The Earth Charter USA webpage www.earthcharterusa.org.
- Gwendolyn Hallsmith, "The updated Earth Charter article", Resources section, the Earth Charter Initiative webpage, 2002.
- Earth Charter Annual Report 2002-03

Education cases

Cases	Contact
Collaborative project, Costa Rica	Mirian Vilela www.earthcharter.org
Vivim Plegats, Spain	Guillem Ramis http://weib.caib.es/programes/vivimplegats/carta_de_la_terra.htm
The Brink Expedition, Australia	Louise Erbacher www.brinkx.com
Michigan State University, USA	Terry Link www.msu.edu
The University for Peace, Costa Rica	Julia Marton-Lefèvre www.upeace.org
Universidad Autonoma del Estado de Mexico, Mexico	David Eduardo V. Muñoz www.uaemex.mx
Itaipu Power Plant, Brazil	Nelton Friedrich I www.itaipu.gov.br
Soka Gakkai International, Japan	Joan Anderson www.sgi.org
Building Bridges Consulting, Canada	Linda Hill www.island.net/~bridges/Bridges.htm
The Paulo Freire Institute, Brazil	Moacir Gadotti www.paulofreire.org

Local Community Cases

Cases	Contact
The Toronto & Region Conservation Authority, Canada (TRCA)	Lisa King www.trca.on.ca
The City of Joondalup, Australia	Rhonda Hardy http://www.joondalup.wa.gov.au
The Republic of Tatarstan, Russia	Rustem Khairov www.earthcharter.ru
Earth Charter Partnership for Sustainable Communities, USA	Christian Layke www.earthcat.org
National Earth Charter Committee, Mexico	Mateo Castillo http://portal.semarnat.gob.mx/semarnat/portal
City of San José, Costa Rica	Marco Vinicio Corrales, http://www.earthcharter.org/country
Municipality of Alajuela, Costa Rica	Marvin Torres (506)443-1314
Fundación Desarrollo y Naturaleza (DEYNA), Spain	Pelayo del Riego Artigas www.deyna.org
Earth Charter Community Initiatives, USA	Jan Roberts http://www.earthchartersummits.org
The Vermont Town Meeting Campaign, USA	Gwendolyn Hallsmith www.global-community.org/



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