

The Earth Charter Initiative



An Earth Charter Guidebook for Teachers

Produced by: The Earth Charter Initiative International Secretariat

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The cover pictures show children's adaptations and education workbooks of the Earth Charter developed in the following countries Mexico(2), Spain, Brazil and Costa Rica.

Preface

Over the past five years, a number of groups in different parts of the world have approached the Earth Charter Secretariat to seek guidance, examples, and materials to help them integrate the Earth Charter into their teaching. This Guidebook is an attempt to respond to this need. Numerous individuals helped enrich this material by offering their experience and expertise in the development of the Guidebook.

The initial elements that formed the basis of this Guidebook were originated in an on-line forum held in September 2001, which articulated an educational philosophy for the Earth Charter and involved diverse educators from around the world. Further discussions were held in December 2003, with a broader group of individuals involved either in formal or non-formal education, addressing the suggested pedagogies, structure and content of such resource. Building on these rich insights, a draft guidebook was prepared in September 2004, which received feedback from different groups for over a year before it was finalized.

This resource is meant to provide general guidelines with a clear understanding that its adaptation to local context will be essential. It was designed based on the Earth Charter, as *one possible* educational tool that can help develop an understanding of the critical choices facing humanity. Our intention is not to impose the Earth Charter as the only instrument, but one that is useful and helpful in the experience of educating for sustainable development.

The United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development initiated this year with a recognition that for the goals of the Decade to be realized, appropriate teaching resources are needed. This guidebook seeks to be a contribution of the Earth Charter Initiative towards the successful implementation of the Decade's goals of building a more just, equitable and sustainable global society.

Mirian Vilela
Executive Director
Earth Charter International Secretariat
August 2005

Author's Foreword

During the summer of 1998, I decided to leave my corporate job in San Francisco and move into the field of education, an area that I have always seen myself in. I relocated to Ecuador where I taught science, economics and physics to students ranging from 9th to 12th grades. But very soon in my new career, I felt concerned that I was not being able to get beyond teaching content. I struggled with the question, "What values, perspectives and skills are really important for my students to acquire?" I wondered how I could advance my goal of teaching more than facts and bring to the classroom my social and environmental concerns in a professionally ethical way.

Without realizing it, I sorely missed an internationally agreed upon set of values. In fact, unknown to me, a consultation of thousands of individuals and organizations around the world was taking place in order to develop a document called the Earth Charter, representing globally shared values and principles for promoting a just, sustainable and peaceful world. Today, after nearly a decade-long global consultation process, the Earth Charter lies at your disposal and provides the back-bone for this Guidebook.

The Guidebook aims to be a teaching resource to help encourage your students to become more aware of the world around them and take responsibility for the role they play in its future. The Earth Charter International Secretariat hopes that you will find it useful in your teaching practice.

Mohit Mukherjee
Education Programme Manager
Earth Charter Initiative International Secretariat

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Introduction: The Guidebook

The benefits of development are not shared equitably and the gap between rich and poor is widening. Injustice, poverty, ignorance, and violent conflict are widespread and the cause of great suffering.

From the Earth Charter Preamble

This guidebook is written for teachers interested in bringing into the classroom their concerns for building a just and peaceful world. It attempts to respond to the needs of educators who feel that fundamental changes are needed in our teaching and learning processes. It addresses questions such as:

- What skills and perspectives are important for my students to acquire?
- What shared values and principles should be at the heart of education?
- How can I incorporate values for sustainable living into my teaching?

THIS GUIDEBOOK...

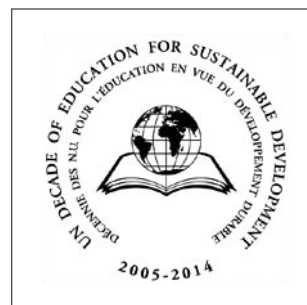
...offers guidelines on approaching the area of education for sustainable living, using the Earth Charter as a guiding framework.

...is written to all teachers, irrespective of their nationality or subject area.

...is not an attempt to produce universal materials that would be applicable to all settings, but does provide general recommendations and 'sample lesson plans'.

International Concern

The United Nations declared the ten-year period beginning in the year 2005 to be the *Decade of Education for Sustainable Development*. The Decade represents an international recognition of education as an indispensable element for achieving sustainable development. However, without appropriate teaching resources, this visionary political decision lacks implementation tools. This Guidebook seeks to contribute to the implementation of the Decade.



The international community now strongly believes that we need to foster - through education - the values, behaviour and lifestyles required for a sustainable future.

UNESCO Draft International Implementation Scheme for the Decade

The Guidebook's Philosophy

Affirm faith in the inherent dignity of all human beings and in the intellectual, artistic, ethical, and spiritual potential of human beings.

Earth Charter Principle 1b

This Guidebook is based on the Earth Charter, as one possible educational tool that can help develop an understanding of the critical choices facing humanity.

The Earth Charter is a synthesis of values, principles and aspirations that are widely shared by growing numbers of men and women in all regions of the world. The principles of the Earth Charter reflect extensive international consultations conducted over a period of many years. The document recognizes that environmental protection, human rights, equitable human development, and peace are interdependent and indivisible. The full text is available in the appendix.

The Guidebook recognizes that education plays an important role in shaping values. It affirms the critical role teachers have in this process. It recognizes that new educational initiatives can be successful if teachers are at the core of the implementation.

Suggested Pedagogies

The Guidebook advocates a pedagogical approach that is fundamentally different from the traditional teaching techniques that most of us were exposed to during our schooling years. It suggests that teachers engage learners in a process where experience, reflection, critical analysis, tolerance, cooperation, compassion, and respect are encouraged and developed.

THE EARTH CHARTER'S MAJOR SECTIONS

- I. Respect and Care for the Community of Life
- II. Ecological Integrity
- III. Social and Economic Justice
- IV. Democracy, Nonviolence, and Peace

THE TEACHING PROCESS BASED ON THE EARTH CHARTER SHOULD:

- be participatory and inclusive
- be inter-disciplinary
- be student-centered
- view students as both learners and teachers
- be contextualized and flexible
- be collaborative
- be transformative

The Guidebook reflects the need to advance the goal of global peace and security for generations to come – in other words, to ensure that our great-grandchildren and their offspring can continue to live on a hospitable planet.

How and why was the Guidebook developed?

Empower every human being with the education and resources to secure a sustainable livelihood...

Earth Charter Principle 9b

Over the past few years, a number of teachers have been approaching the Earth Charter International Secretariat¹ to seek guidance, examples, and materials to help them integrate the Earth Charter into their teaching.

As a first step to developing this Guidebook the Secretariat conducted an online forum to seek advice on the content, structure and target audiences for the Guidebook². This forum brought together over 100 educators from around the world and provided valuable input in developing the Guidebook. The forum expanded on an earlier discussion of a group of leading educators, the Earth Charter Education Advisory Committee, who had helped define the Earth Charter's education philosophy.³

A draft guidebook was prepared in September 2004. Different groups provided feedback on it for over a year before the resource was finalized.

THE NEED

- Many teachers have asked how they can use the Earth Charter.
- Teaching the values underlying sustainable development is a challenge.
- It is the beginning of the Decade of Education for Sustainable Development and resources are needed.

"We must realize that when basic needs have been met, human development is primarily about being more, not having more."

Earth Charter, Preamble

How can you bring this above message to students who are growing up in a consumer-oriented, materialistic world, in which your very identity is defined not by who you are but by what you wear, the house you live in, the car you drive, the holidays you take?

Perhaps teachers have been trying too hard to be neutral and objective, because in education we have been taught that is the professionally ethical thing to do.

Taken from John Fien's 'Leadership and Management in Education'

What is Sustainable Development?

We are at once citizens of different nations and of one world in which the local and global are linked.

From the Earth Charter Preamble

The essence of the concept can be put into just four words: “*Enough for everyone, forever.*”⁴ These words capture the ideas of limited resources, responsible consumption, equality and equity, and a long-term perspective, all important concepts when thinking about sustainable development.

One can gain a deeper understanding of sustainable development through examining the Earth Charter and its four main pillars of sustainable development:

- Respect and Care for the Community of Life
- Ecological Integrity
- Social and Economic Justice
- Democracy, Nonviolence and Peace

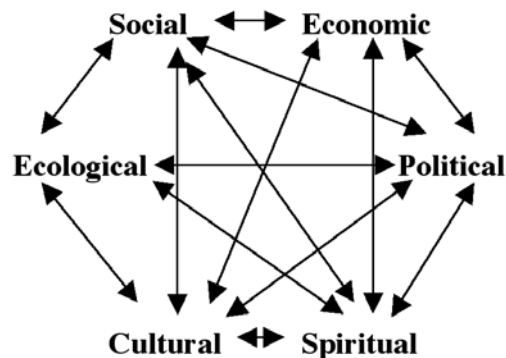
A DEFINITION

An internationally recognized definition of sustainable development states: “*Sustainable development meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.*”

Brundtland Commission Report

A key value central to sustainable development is that of ‘*Universal Responsibility*’, or the sense of responsibility for the role you play and the impact you can have not just on a local scale, but a global one too. This links closely with another key theme in sustainable development, ‘*Interconnectedness*’. It is the understanding that every action has a multitude of reactions in other areas. Therefore, when one thinks about ‘development’, one cannot treat the social, economic, ecological, cultural, political and spiritual aspects in isolation from one-another.

The Dimensions and interactions of Sustainable Development



Why is Sustainable Development so Difficult to Teach?

Our biggest challenge in this new century is to take an idea that sounds abstract – sustainable development – and turn it into a reality for all the world’s people.

Kofi Annan, United Nations Secretary General

In order to convey to your students the values and guiding principles underlying ‘sustainable development’ you may need to adopt pedagogical approaches that you have not experienced before during your own school days.

The structure schooling does not make the task of education for sustainable development any easier. For example, experience-based learning activities can become a challenge when one is confined inside the classroom, and passive learning can become the norm. Educational systems in most countries compartmentalize different subject areas making ‘interdisciplinary’ learning more difficult. Moreover, assessment systems are often based on a competitive model with individual grades becoming the most important motivation for students.

This is certainly a difficult environment to promote values such as ‘*participation*’ or ‘*cooperation*’, both of which are very important to the notion of sustainable development.

So, where does one start?

Bringing sustainable development to the classroom requires you to initially go through three cognitive processes:

- a) First, examine how current patterns of human behavior are threatening the security of our planet.
- b) Reflect on how existing economic development most often ignores its impact on the ecology of the planet, on social relationships, economic justice, and on furthering democratic processes.
- c) The third step is more daunting. Ask yourself the question, “*What knowledge and skills will help our students to make ethical decisions that advance social justice, environmental protection, and peace?*”

TEACHING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT BRINGS UP QUESTIONS SUCH AS:

- How can we teach students about the value of ‘cooperation’ if individual achievement is their main motivation?
- How can we explain the concept of ‘Interconnectedness’ when different subjects are so compartmentalized?
- How can experiential learning take place when we are confined to a classroom?

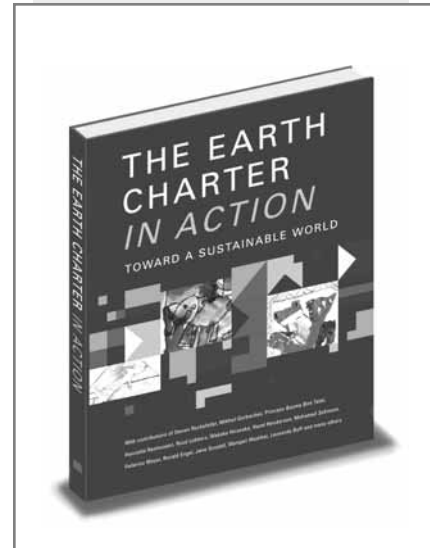
What is the Earth Charter?

The Earth Charter is a declaration of fundamental principles for building a just, sustainable, and peaceful global society in the 21st century.

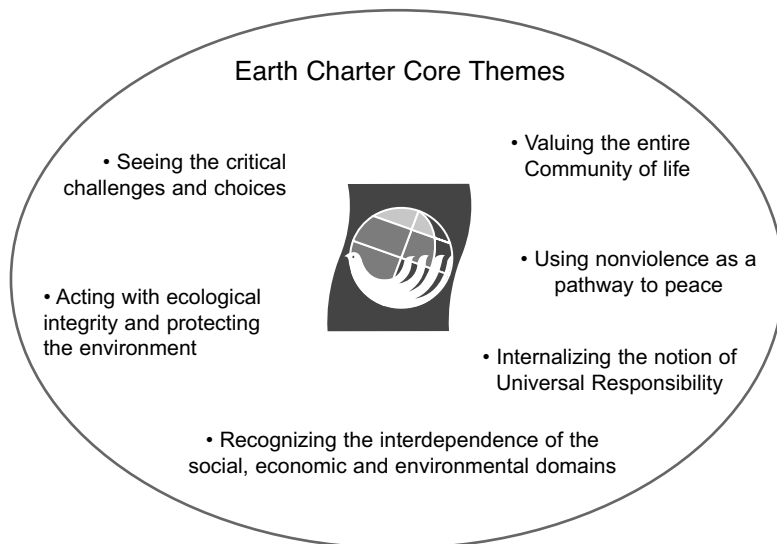
The Earth Charter is the product of a decade-long, worldwide, cross-cultural conversation about common goals and shared values involving thousands of individuals and hundreds of organizations from all different cultures.

The drafting process included experts from different fields and built upon previous international declarations and reports. A major shaping influence was the voice of individuals and civil society organizations around the world. The Earth Charter was finalized in the year 2000.

At a time when major changes in how we think and live are urgently needed, the Earth Charter challenges us to examine our values and choose a better way.⁵



The Earth Charter in Action book is a collection of thematic and descriptive essays inspired by the Earth Charter, illustrating how the document can be put into practice.



"Recognizing that sustainable development, democracy and peace are indivisible is an idea whose time has come."

Wangari Maathai, Earth Charter Commissioner and Noble Peace Laureate

The Earth Charter – Main Principles

I. RESPECT AND CARE FOR THE COMMUNITY OF LIFE

1. Respect Earth and life in all its diversity.
2. Care for the community of life with understanding, compassion, and love.
3. Build democratic societies that are just, participatory, sustainable, and peaceful.
4. Secure Earth's bounty and beauty for present and future generations.

In order to fulfill these four broad commitments, it is necessary to:

II. ECOLOGICAL INTEGRITY

5. Protect and restore the integrity of Earth's ecological systems, with special concern for biological diversity and the natural processes that sustain life.
6. Prevent harm as the best method of environmental protection and, when knowledge is limited, apply a precautionary approach.
7. Adopt patterns of production, consumption, and reproduction that safeguard Earth's regenerative capacities, human rights, and community well-being.
8. Advance the study of ecological sustainability and promote the open exchange and wide application of the knowledge acquired.

III. SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC JUSTICE

9. Eradicate poverty as an ethical, social, and environmental imperative.
10. Ensure that economic activities and institutions at all levels promote human development in an equitable and sustainable manner.
11. Affirm gender equality and equity as prerequisites to sustainable development and ensure universal access to education, health care, and economic opportunity.
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.

IV. DEMOCRACY, NONVIOLENCE, AND PEACE

13. Strengthen democratic institutions at all levels, and provide transparency and accountability in governance, inclusive participation in decision making, and access to justice.
14. Integrate into formal education and life-long learning the knowledge, values, and skills needed for a sustainable way of life.
15. Treat all living beings with respect and consideration.
16. Promote a culture of tolerance, non-violence, and peace.

The Educational Potential of the Earth Charter

The educational potential of the Earth Charter was clear from its inception. It conveys a sense of the seriousness and urgency of Earth's problems, lays down principles that address all the dimensions of sustainability, and motivates us with an inspirational call to action.

The document's participatory drafting process ensured that it is inclusive, respects diversity, and promotes widely shared values that are both life affirming and consistent with those of major cultures around the world.

The Earth Charter provides a unique and relevant educational framework that can guide the development of programs aimed at transformative learning for a more just, sustainable and peaceful world.⁶



In 2003, UNESCO adopted a resolution "recognizing the Earth Charter as an important ethical framework for sustainable development." The resolution affirms member states' intention "to utilize the Earth Charter as an educational instrument, particularly in the framework of the United Nations Decade for Education for Sustainable Development".

THE CHARTER PROVIDES A UNIQUE EDUCATIONAL FRAMEWORK

1. It is the result of a decade-long, multicultural, global dialogue.
2. It helps explain the interconnectedness of economic, social and environmental spheres.
3. It conveys a sense of universal responsibility.
4. It articulates the principles for promoting a sustainable future.

TEACHING RESOURCE DATABASE

Throughout the world, an increasing number of educators are using the Earth Charter in their teaching and learning.

Many of the educational materials that have been developed by teachers in the Earth Charter network are available via an online Teaching Resource Database at www.earthcharter.org/resources.

The database brings together educational materials, such as lesson plans, activities, and examples that have been developed in different parts of the world using the Earth Charter as a guiding framework.

Using the Earth Charter in Your Teaching

A little introspection to begin with:

- *Try to remember one of your most satisfying teaching experiences. What made it memorable?*
- *Who is someone you particularly admire? Which of their qualities stand out?*
- *What would you most like to be able to leave your students with as they continue their life journey?*

The goal of this section of the Guidebook is to help you to design and carry out learning activities inspired by the values and principles of the Earth Charter.

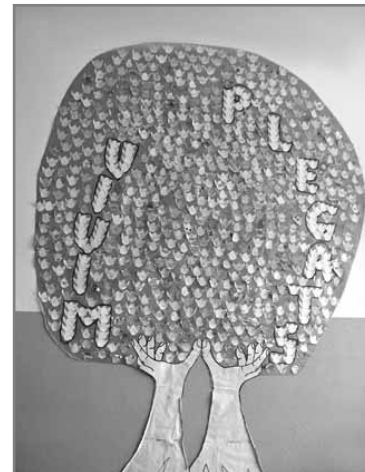
Getting Started:

Each principle of the Earth Charter can be applied to the subject that you teach. For example, let us pick principle 7, which states:

“Adopt patterns of production, consumption, and reproduction that safeguard Earth’s regenerative capacities, human rights, and community well-being.”

The above principle could be the starting point for activities in any subject (*this is true of other principles too*). How?

- A **science** teacher can *analyze* the assimilative capacities of a body of water local to the region.
- A **3rd grade teacher** can adopt the principle as the inspiration of a year-long theme on ‘Global Citizenship’.
- A **history teacher** can look at how industrial production and human consumption rates have changed over the last 2 centuries.
- A **foreign language teacher** can explore the meanings of the main words of the principle or have their students write an essay on the topic.
- A **gym teacher** could lead a class where students use recycled materials for games and activities.
- A **mathematics teacher** can design numerical problems based on the concept of ‘regenerative capacities’.
- An **art teacher** could use the principle to inspire artistic expression.



Tree of Life collage created by students in Mallorca, Spain

How would you use this principle as a basis for a lesson plan for your students?

Using the Earth Charter in Your Teaching - *continued*

A 5- step Approach:

1. At this point, carefully read through the Earth Charter (see Appendix A). Give yourself enough time to read through each principle closely.

“In the hands of a good teacher, the Earth Charter is its own best educational resource.”

1st Online Forum

2. The Earth Charter’s language is not directed towards children, which makes it difficult for them to grasp it. You may re-word the 16 major principles of the Earth Charter in a way that *your* students would understand. Another option is for your students to re-write them, with your help. Table 2 on the next page is provided to assist that exercise.

3. Now pick **one** principle from each for the four major areas of the Earth Charter. Pick principles that you feel are most applicable to your subject, students, and the community you live in. Give yourself one month per principle to incorporate it into your classroom teaching, projects and assignments, assessment of students’ work, and behaviour.

4. After four months, pick two new principles each month for the next 6 months. In ten months, you will have covered the 16 major principles. (See Table 1)

5. If possible, share your feedback on the Guidebook and this process with the Earth Charter Secretariat at info@earthcharter.org as we would like to revise the resource.

Table 1: Integrating the Principles of the Earth Charter into your Teaching

Month

Earth Charter	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Total
Area 1: Respect...	x				x x				x		4
Area 2: Ecological...		x				x x			x		4
Area 3: Social and...			x				x x			x	4
Area 4: Democracy...				x				x x		x	4
# of principles	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	16

Table 2: The Earth Charter in your words

Earth Charter Major Principles	Your Wording
<p>I. RESPECT AND CARE FOR THE COMMUNITY OF LIFE</p>	
<p>1. Respect Earth and life in all its diversity.</p>	
<p>2. Care for the community of life with understanding, compassion, and love.</p>	
<p>3. Build democratic societies that are just, participatory, sustainable, and peaceful.</p>	
<p>4. Secure Earth's bounty and beauty for present and future generations.</p>	
<p>II. ECOLOGICAL INTEGRITY</p>	
<p>5. Protect and restore the integrity of Earth's ecological systems, with special concern for biological diversity and the natural processes that sustain life.</p>	
<p>6. Prevent harm as the best method of environmental protection and, when knowledge is limited, apply a precautionary approach.</p>	
<p>7. Adopt patterns of production, consumption, and reproduction that safeguard Earth's regenerative capacities, human rights, and community well-being.</p>	
<p>8. Advance the study of ecological sustainability and promote the open exchange and wide application of the knowledge acquired.</p>	
<p>III. SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC JUSTICE</p>	
<p>9. Eradicate poverty as an ethical, social, and environmental imperative.</p>	
<p>10. Ensure that economic activities and institutions at all levels promote human development in an equitable and sustainable manner.</p>	
<p>11. Affirm gender equality and equity as prerequisites to sustainable development and ensure universal access to education, health care, and economic opportunity.</p>	
<p>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.</p>	
<p>IV. DEMOCRACY, NONVIOLENCE, AND PEACE</p>	
<p>13. Strengthen democratic institutions at all levels, and provide transparency and accountability in governance, inclusive participation in decision making, and access to justice.</p>	
<p>14. Integrate into formal education and life-long learning the knowledge, values, and skills needed for a sustainable way of life.</p>	
<p>15. Treat all living beings with respect and consideration.</p>	
<p>16. Promote a culture of tolerance, non-violence, and peace.</p>	

Working with Earth Charter Adaptations for Children

You have now joined a group of teachers who have rephrased the Earth Charter in order to make it more accessible to the students they work with. Many teachers have sent-in their 'children's version' of the Earth Charter which can be seen on the Earth Charter web-site. The Secretariat encourages you to do the same. On the next page is one example that was developed in Australia. As you look through it, here are a few questions to think about:

- What age group do you think this version is aimed at?
- Do you feel it captures the main messages of the Earth Charter?
- What are some potential problems with using 'adaptations' of the Earth Charter?
- What are the benefits of using your own adaptation?
- Would it be feasible for your students to develop an adaptation?

Earth Charter adaptations are available for the following age levels (in several languages) via the Earth Charter web-site:

- 3-5 yr. olds
- primary school level
- secondary school
- young people

Educational Resources based on the Earth Charter



Cover of "Teacher's Guide" developed in Costa Rica



Cover of an illustrated children's adaptation developed in Brazil

Working in the field of education, I am also continually searching for ways to encourage my students to become more aware of the world around them and for them to understand that they have a role to play in the future. The Earth Charter is a very valuable tool that helps people to see that we are all part of a much bigger picture and we all need to work together.

Louise Erbacher, Australian teacher working with adaptation on next page.

Earth Charter for Children – an adaptation

We are living at a very important moment in Earth's history. Every day, the people of the world are moving closer together. We need to unite across cultures to choose our future: to protect nature, to respect human rights and to create a world where all can live together in peace and justice. We have a responsibility to care for life – both at present and into the future.

The Earth is our home: The Earth is only a small part of the immense universe in which we live. The Earth itself is full of life, with a rich variety of plants, animals and peoples. In order to survive, we as human beings need the soil, the water, the air, the plants and the animals. It is our duty to take care of life on Earth.

The global situation: Today, our way of living often harms the environment. The way that we produce and consume goods depletes the Earth of its supplies of water, air and soil, endangering the lives of many plant and animal species. The growing world population continues to drain the Earth of its natural resources. At the same time, we are faced with war, famine, misery, ignorance, disease, and injustice.

What can we do? The choice is ours: We can start making changes so that we can build a better future for everyone. The **Earth Charter** gives us a path to follow.

Everybody is responsible. To change our world we need to be responsible for our actions, because everything that we do is interconnected – everything on our planet is woven together into the fabric of life. We need to think about the way that we use resources and the way that we care for plants and animals. We need to think about the way that we treat other people. If we all take responsibility for our own actions, we can start to work together to care for the present and future well being of the human family and of all the living things on this planet. All of us can share in the hope for the future.

RESPECT AND CARE FOR ALL LIVING THINGS⁷

1. Respect the Earth and all living things: people, animals and plants

- a. Understand the importance and the interconnectedness of all living things.
- b. Accept all people as living treasures with their own beliefs and opinions.

2. Care for all living things, with understanding, compassion and love

- a. Use natural resources wisely, taking care not to cause harm to the Earth.
- b. Protect the rights of people and accept their differences.

3. Form groups of people who act justly, treat others equally and work together peacefully

- a. Recognise everyone's right to be free and the right to choose how they will develop and grow.
- b. Include all people and work towards safe, peaceful and fair communities.

4. Co-operate so that all people can enjoy the beauty and the fruits of the Earth

- a. Act responsibly for the present, making sure not to neglect the needs of future generations.
- b. Pass on knowledge and encourage future generations to be caretakers of the Earth.

Your Classroom

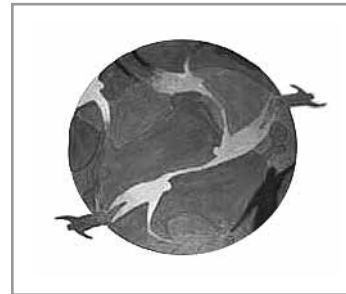
How can the way you run your classroom reflect the core values of the Earth Charter?

Decorating your Classroom

What posters, pictures, or other visuals do you have up on the class wall? What messages do these convey?

For example, if you are a science teacher, you could consider having a poster of a female scientist on your classroom wall, affirming Earth Charter Principle 11: *“Affirm gender equality and equity as a prerequisite to sustainable development...”*. Unfortunately, there exists an old gender bias that encourages men more than women in the sciences. The reality is, how you decorate your classroom can provide a very effective opportunity to visually display the values of the Earth Charter.

The manner in which you organize and run your classroom can provide a very good opportunity to bring alive the values of the Earth Charter.



A drawing by a student in a 'Sketch and Illustration' class for the Dept. of Community Development and Applied Economics at the University of Vermont, USA. The assignment was to develop image(s) that represent the intent of the Earth Charter.

Classroom Rules

Let us also talk about 'Classroom Rules'. If you do not have these defined, this may present a good occasion for building them, using the Earth Charter as a framework. Some teachers have chosen to combine principles 15 and 16 as the overarching guidelines for their classroom management rules.

How could 'Democracy', an important value of the Earth Charter, be built into the process of developing classroom rules?

One option is allowing your students to put together the classroom rules, guided by the four major components of the Earth Charter.

The international community now strongly believes that we need to foster - through education - the values, behaviour and lifestyles required for a sustainable future.

UNESCO Draft International Implementation Scheme for the Decade

Living Cases: The Earth Charter in Action

Explore three examples of how teachers around the world are working with the Earth Charter.

1. Spain	2. Mexico	3. Australia
A 3rd grade teacher in Mallorca, whose work in his classroom with the Earth Charter eventually attracted the Ministry of Education's attention.	Two teachers developed a methodology based on the Earth Charter which they are spreading to other schools in their region.	An Australian cycling expedition that is taking the Earth Charter to schools around the world.

Living Case 1: Education for Peace and Cooperation - SPAIN

Guillem Ramis was an elementary-school teacher on the Mediterranean island of Mallorca, Spain for most of his life. Over the years, he saw that the Island's ethnic composition was changing, due to increasing immigration. He noticed racism and growing xenophobia and realized that there was a need for 'multicultural education'. When he came upon the Earth Charter, he felt he held the blueprint to address these issues, as well as many more.

Guillem initially worked on a children's adaptation of the Earth Charter in order to make the language accessible to his young learners. He coordinated several translations of the adaptation, helped by foreign immigrants in Mallorca. The childrens' adaptations of the Earth Charter became the starting point for a number of activities for his class.

Guillem's work in his classroom and school attracted the attention of the Ministry of Education of the Balearic Islands, that requested him to set up the 'Vivim Plegats' (*Living Together*) programme in the year 2000. Under his guidance, there are about 70 schools in the Baleric Islands that have incorporated this multicultural education philosophy based upon the Earth Charter. Even though a change in government has meant that the programme is no longer supported by the government, the participating schools continue their commitment to the vision of the programme.

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

Guillem Ramis



The Vivim Plegats Team

Each school creates its own activities based on a children's rights workbook and 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.



An intercultural session

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!"*

QUOTES FROM CHILDREN IN THE PROGRAMME

"The Earth Charter helps us connect with the world."

José Manuel, 11 years.

"With the Earth Charter we learn that we all are equal. It is very important to say no to war."

Javi, 9 years.

"The Earth Charter teaches us to care for and love the Earth. We must love the people and give them happiness and joy. We are all people and should have what we need."

Teresa from China. (age not known)

"To learn the Earth Charter we do activities, we write letters to people around the world, we meet people from other countries and we develop photographs that we have done on the things that explain the Earth Charter."

David Alvarez, 11 years.

Living Case 2: Secondary School Experience in Aguascalientes - MEXICO

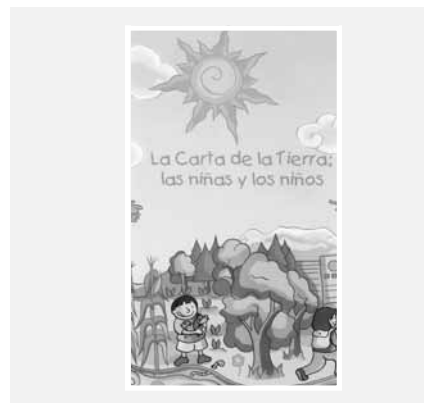
'Educating for a sustainable development with the Earth Charter' is a programme that was initiated and is being carried out by two teachers, Gina Ramírez and Ana Lilia Martínez, in the Secondary General School NO. 15 of Aguascalientes.

They first put together a curricular proposal using the main principles of the Earth Charter, with the purpose of stimulating a change in attitude in the students and school community. The goal was to turn teachers, students, and school staff into agents for change, with a deep sense of caring for the Earth and the larger living world. The proposal was accepted by the school board.

It was agreed that engaging the whole school community was very important in order to ensure an integral process of change and have the whole school committed to the Earth Charter vision. Therefore, before the 2002 school year began, the teachers, administration and support personnel received a workshop about the Earth Charter, its history, its content, and how it related to their work. The teachers were encouraged to start relating their lesson topics to the principles of the Earth Charter.

The more the students became aware of the Earth Charter, the easier it was for teachers to make linkages between Earth Charter principles and class topics. This process helped students acquire and consolidate knowledge, abilities, attitudes and values needed for a responsible relationship with the environment. Subsequently, both teachers and students adopted an active and participatory role in working towards solutions to the problems that might affect their community.

Given the success of this Earth Charter-based education programme, the founding teachers have planned to share their experience and spread the Charter and their methodology to other schools in the Morelia and Zacatecas regions in Mexico.



A children's adaptation was developed for the programme.



Celebrating traditional dances

Living Case 3: The Brink Expedition – AUSTRALIA

The Brink Expedition, an Australian initiative, began in May 2003 and will be finished during 2006. The expedition is travelling through 30 countries using human energy and the natural elements, such as wind and sun. The aim of the Brink Expedition is to bring social and environmental issues into mainstream awareness – through technology (internet), media (radio, documentary), schools (curriculum) and sport (cricket).



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



Using human power to travel around the world

As the Brink Expedition Team visits a community, they communicate the message of the Earth Charter and spend time in schools to discuss the Earth Charter and the Brink hotspots. 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 the 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 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. For more information about the Expedition, see www.brinkx.org

Developing Perspectives, Knowledge and Skills

Integrate into formal education and lifelong learning the knowledge, values, and skills needed for a sustainable way of life.

Earth Charter, Principle 14

What critical capacities would we like children to develop? These are some thoughts by educators who have worked with the Earth Charter.

The ability to:

- *think critically*
- *make choices*
- *resolve conflicts in non-violent ways*
- *recognize our responsibility as consumers*
- *be life-long learners*
- *find information*
- *understand how different fields relate to one another and interact*

“The ultimate goal of education for sustainable development is to empower people with the perspectives, knowledge, and skills for helping them live in peaceful, sustainable societies”.

UNESCO Draft Implementation
Scheme for DESD

Are there other points that you feel should be on this list above? Here are a few additional possibilities.⁸

The ability to:

- *communicate effectively (both orally and in writing)*
- *think in time - to forecast, to think ahead, and to plan*
- *distinguish between quantity, quality, and value*
- *move from awareness to knowledge to action*
- *work cooperatively with other people*

The Earth Charter’s introduction (Preamble), principles, and conclusion (The Way Forward) provide us with some agreed-on perspectives. The table on the next page is for you to select the facts that you can present in order to help foster the perspectives derived from the Earth Charter. Alternatively, you could use your adaptation of the Earth Charter instead of Table 3.

To be successful, Education for Sustainable Development...must give people practical skills that will enable them to continue learning after they leave school, to have a sustainable livelihood, and to live sustainable lives.

Education for Sustainable Development Toolkit, Rosalyn McKeown

Working Table 3: Facts to Help Foster Perspectives for Sustainability

Perspectives derived from the Earth Charter	Facts to help bring these perspectives to students
PREAMBLE	
We are at a critical moment in Earth's history.	Example: Population growth curve over last thousand years.
We must live with a sense of universal responsibility.	Example: Figures on illegal immigration from developing world to developed.
Earth has provided the conditions essential to life's evolution.	
The dominant patterns of production and consumption are unsustainable.	
We urgently need a common standard of consumption are unsustainable.	
RESPECT AND CARE FOR THE COMMUNITY OF LIFE	
All beings are interdependent.	Example: The effect that the extinction of a pollinating insect could cause.
With increased knowledge and power comes increased responsibility.	Example: A small percentage of the population (the powerful) control a large % of the world's wealth.
Everyone should have the opportunity to reach his or her full potential.	
The needs of future generations cannot be ignored.	
ECOLOGICAL INTEGRITY	
Earth's ecological systems are fragile and need to be protected.	Example: The potential long-term effects of clearing areas of the Amazon to extract oil.
A precautionary approach must be applied to all new initiatives.	
Patterns of production, consumption, and reproduction should not exceed Earth's regenerative capacities.	
The study of ecological sustainability should be promoted.	

SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC JUSTICE	
Poverty represents a social, ethical and environmental injustice.	Example: A few images of poverty in the country you live in.
Institutions at all levels should be responsible for promoting equitable human development.	
Everyone should have access to education, health care, and paid work.	
Gender equality and equity is a prerequisite to sustainable development.	
DEMOCRACY, NONVIOLENCE, AND PEACE	
Democratic institutions and processes need to be upheld and strengthened.	Example: A recent example of political corruption in your country.
Education for sustainable living should be available to all.	
All living beings are deserving of our respect and consideration.	
It is essential that a culture of tolerance, non-violence and peace be promoted.	
THE WAY FORWARD	
A commitment towards sustainability is imperative.	Example: The Kyoto protocol and countries that are not signing it.
A change of mind and heart is needed to achieve sustainability.	
Everyone has a vital role to play.	
National governments must renew their commitment to the United Nations.	
Our future holds lot of promise.	

Designing Learning Activities Using the Earth Charter

“In formal education it can be very difficult to make room for new content. Therefore, wherever possible, opportunities should be explored to use the Earth Charter within existing educational programmes.”

1st Education Online Forum

This section illustrates how teachers can make use of the Charter in their existing curricula and courses. To facilitate this process, here is an illustrative set of activities using the Earth Charter as a framework.

An Approach to Designing Learning Activities based on the Charter

1. Go through the major principles 5 – 16 of the Earth Charter selecting the ones that relate more directly to your subject area. (See Table 4 on next page)
2. For each principle you select, decide on a lesson plan (or several lesson plans) with a clear objective in mind. For example, principle 6e says, “*Avoid military activities damaging to the environment*”. If you are a history teacher, you may decide to discuss the effect of the military on the environment over time in order to raise awareness of its impact.
3. Once you have run through these first two steps outlined above and taught the various lessons you planned, pick a few different additional principles to work with. (See Table 4 on next page) This ‘2nd time’, the relationship of Earth Charter principles with the subject you teach may be less direct, but you should be still able to select a few new principles.
4. Now you are left with the remaining Earth Charter principles that you did not select, but should still try to incorporate into your teaching. “*How can I relate them back to my subject?*” you may ask. With a little creativity... (See box above).
5. Congratulations! You now may want to work further with principles that you feel need more emphasis.

TACKLING DIFFICULT PRINCIPLES...

Let's say you are a 6th grade mathematics teacher and you are looking at principle 9, “Eradicate poverty as an ethical, social, and environmental imperative”. You could plan exercises that are based on numbers that highlight the existing poverty levels in your country of how they have changed over a certain period of time.

Typically, most curriculums have many years of math, languages and science, but not even one course on ‘Ethics and Values’. You cannot overdo activities based on the principles of the Earth Charter.

Working Table 4: Designing Learning Activities

Go through this table, checking those principles that relate directly to your subject area in the table below – this is your ‘1st time’. Refer to the guidelines in the previous page for the ‘2nd time.’

Earth Charter Major Principles	1st time	2nd time	3rd time
5. Protect and restore the integrity of Earth's ecological systems, with special concern for biological diversity and the natural processes that sustain life.			
6. Prevent harm as the best method of environmental protection and, when knowledge is limited, apply a precautionary approach.			
7. Adopt patterns of production, consumption, and reproduction that safeguard Earth's regenerative capacities, human rights, and community well-being.			
8. Advance the study of ecological sustainability and promote the open exchange and wide application of the knowledge acquired.			
9. Eradicate poverty as an ethical, social, and environmental imperative.			
10. Ensure that economic activities and institutions at all levels promote human development in an equitable and sustainable manner.			
11. Affirm gender equality and equity as prerequisites to sustainable development and ensure universal access to education, health care, and economic opportunity.			
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.			
13. Strengthen democratic institutions at all levels, and provide transparency and accountability in governance, inclusive participation in decision making, and access to justice.			
14. Integrate into formal education and life-long learning the knowledge, values, and skills needed for a sustainable way of life.			
15. Treat all living beings with respect and consideration.			
16. Promote a culture of tolerance, non-violence, and peace.			

Sample Lesson Plans

The following pages present sample lesson plans in order to give you a sense of the range of activities you could develop using the Earth Charter.⁹

Given the diversity of educational settings and contexts that exist (different cultures, different age-groups, different national curricula...) the Guidebook has not attempted to develop universal materials that would be applicable to all settings.

Given the crowded character of modern formal education curricula, particularly in primary and high schools, opportunities should be explored to use the Earth Charter within existing educational programmes.

Synthesis Document

However, with some creativity and adaptation, you can apply the ideas listed in this section and can tailor them for your students and your local context.

Subject	Learning Activity
Creative Arts	Students create a poster (or other artistic response) inspired by Earth Charter document or specific principles.
Language and Literature	Students reflect and respond in writing to the content and language of the Earth Charter.
Foreign Languages	Students use the content and rich vocabulary of the Earth Charter to enhance their language skills.
History	Students understand the world's changing priorities over the last 50 years.
Social Sciences	Students discuss the relevance of 'universal principles' given the diversity of beliefs that exist.
Mathematics	Students measure, quantify, compare, and analyse numbers and trends that highlight environmental impact and social injustices.
Economics	Students recognize the importance of the environmental and social costs of goods and services.
Science	Students appreciate Earth as a "complex system" and discuss whether it is "alive".
Environmental Science/Technology	Students explore the extent to which technology can replace ecosystems.

Creative Arts

Objective:

Students create a poster (or other artistic response) inspired by Earth Charter document or specific principles.

“Promote the contribution of the arts and humanities as well as the sciences in sustainability education.”

Principle 14b

Background:

Creative arts, like all other areas of learning, have a contribution to make in addressing our global, environmental and social problems. With the creative arts, students can express their interest in, and concern for, the Earth in ways that engage the intellect and emotions.

Suggested Activities:

In this activity, you would begin with a group discussion on selected principles of the Earth Charter, guiding your students to understand the principle(s), to think about what it means for the world around them. They would then choose one particular principle (or the overall document) to portray on a poster. The posters they make can be displayed around the classroom. This may be done as a group or individual project. Suggested principles and questions for the discussion are listed below. *Optionally, they could respond through another medium, such as drama or music.*

Group discussion questions:

- How does the selected principle affect you, your family, your school, your community, and the rest of the world?
- Think of one specific instance where this principle is important.
- How could this principle be shown in a visual form?
- Draw a picture of that situation or choose another way to illustrate the principle.

Suggested Principles

Primary School	Secondary School
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Prevent cruelty to animals and protect them from suffering. (15a) - Strengthen families and ensure the safety and loving nurture of all family members. (11c) - Eliminate nuclear, biological, and toxic weapons and other weapons of mass destruction (16d) - Promote the equitable distribution of wealth within nations and among nations (10a) - Respect and care for the community of life. (1) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - We must realize that when basic needs have been met, human development is primarily about being more, not having more. (Preamble) - Encourage and support mutual understanding, solidarity, and cooperation among all peoples and within and among nations. (16a) - Use collaborative problem solving to manage and resolve environmental conflicts and other disputes. (16b) - Convert military resources to peaceful purposes.(16c)

Language and Literature

Objective:

Students reflect and respond in writing to the content and language of the Earth Charter.

Background:

- The written word has played a powerful role throughout history in both informing people and motivating action to bring about change; declarations, novels, and poems have been used as instruments of social change.
- There has been much debate over the actual format and style of the Earth Charter, including issues such as whether it should be: long or short; written in a declaratory style, or in the form of imperatives; written in formal (legal) or poetic language.

The Earth Charter concludes with the following inspirational call: *“Let ours be a time remembered for the awakening of a new reverence for life, the firm resolve to achieve sustainability, the quickening of the struggle for justice and peace, and the joyful celebration of life.”*

Suggested Activities:

Primary School	Secondary School
<p>Students write a poem or essay that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Is inspired by a principle of the Earth Charter. - Describes what they believe the Earth will be like in 25 years time. - Explains what they feel their role is in making Earth a better place. <p>Students choose their favourite principle from the Charter and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Write an essay explaining their choice and what they understand by that principle. - Discuss their favourite principle, in small groups. - Can the class agree on one most important principle? 	<p>Identify examples of documents that have sought to inspire and motivate people, and that are considered landmark documents or statements.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How does the language compare with the text of the Earth Charter? - Are they written for different audiences? <p>Write an essay, poem, short story, play, lyric, or speech, that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Explains or illustrates one or more principles of the Earth Charter. - Reflects environmental or social concerns.

Group exercise (applicable to primary and secondary school students)

This activity is best done with six groups. Each group receives a paragraph of the Preamble of the Earth Charter. They discuss and rewrite it in their own words. When finished, the entire Preamble is put together in the right order, ideally on a poster or a visible place. The joint effort leads to an adaptation of the Preamble in the children’s own words.

Foreign Languages

Objective:

Students use the content and rich vocabulary of the Earth Charter to enhance their language skills.

“Encourage and support mutual understanding, solidarity, and cooperation among all peoples and within and among nations.”

Principle 16a

Background:

The Earth Charter is available in over 30 different languages. You can access this via <http://www.earthcharter.org>. Each of the words of the Earth Charter was carefully selected, and many were the source of prolonged international debates. Once you have the Earth Charter in the language you are teaching, understanding the vocabulary and content of the Charter can be an important learning activity for your students. Depending on the age-group that you are teaching, you may also start with a children’s adaptation of the Earth Charter, available in about a dozen languages.

Suggested Activities:

Primary School	Secondary School
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Give students a children’s adaptation of the Preamble in the language being taught. Vocabulary, reading comprehension, and grammar exercised can be based on this content. - Students compare a children’s version of the Preamble with a translation in the language being taught, with words/sentences left out for students to fill in. - What does it mean to have a document like the Earth Charter in your ‘mother tongue’ vs. in a 2nd language? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are there some words/expressions that exist in one language, but not another? why do you think that is? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Give students a youth adaptation of the Preamble (or the original version) in the language being taught. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are some problems with the translation? • Can you ever have a perfect translation? • Are there some words/expressions that exist in one language, but not another? Why do you think that is? - Use the Preamble of the Earth Charter as a basis for Vocabulary, reading comprehension, and grammar exercises.

History

Objective:

Students understand the world's changing priorities over the last 50 years.

Background:

- The Earth Charter's own history began in 1987, when the United Nations World Commission on Environment and Development issued a call for creation of a new charter that would set forth fundamental principles for sustainable development. The drafting of an Earth Charter was part of the unfinished business of the 1992 Rio Earth Summit. In 1994 Maurice Strong, the Secretary General of the Rio Earth Summit, and Mikhail Gorbachev launched a new Earth Charter initiative. After years of intense consultation and dialogue, the Earth Charter was finalized in the year 2000.
- Throughout history, Charters and Declarations have inspired and guided people's actions. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights is one well-know example that can be leveraged in the activity below.

“We stand at a critical moment in Earth's history, a time when humanity must choose its future. As the world becomes increasingly interdependent and fragile, the future at once holds great peril and great promise.”

Opening sentence of Preamble

Suggested Activities:

Primary and Secondary School

Introduce students to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and its historical context.

- What events in history set the stage for the Declaration?
- What was the process of putting it together?
- What changes in the world made it necessary to have a new Charter?
- What was the Rio Earth Summit in 1992 about?

You could relate the Earth Charter to any period and group in history. For example, if you are focusing on Indian history during the British colonization, activities could be:

- Which principles of the Earth Charter might the Indian freedom fighters adopt?
- How about the British colonists?
- Did the Indians have a document that helped guide their values and actions?
- How about the British?
- Are there some principles from the Earth Charter that both groups would have difficulties with?

Social Sciences - Philosophy/Society/Ethics/Religion

Objective:

Students discuss the relevance of universal principles given the diversity of beliefs that exists:

Background:

- Many feel that the Earth Charter has captured the common ground of the world’s major cultures and religions.
- However, there is an ongoing debate as to whether it is possible to express principles in a way that can apply to everyone.

“We urgently need a shared vision of basic values to provide an ethical foundation for the emerging world community. Therefore, together in hope we affirm the following interdependent principles for a sustainable way of life as a common standard by which the conduct of all individuals, organizations, businesses, governments, and transnational institutions is to be guided and assessed”.

Concluding sentence of Preamble

Suggested Activities:

Primary School	Secondary School
<p>Do you think people in the different regions of Earth have different beliefs?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What do they all share in common? (Could draw on the cultural diversity in the classroom) - Could the Earth Charter be accepted by everyone? <p>What comes to mind when you think of ‘peace’?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What is the opposite of peace and how does this happen? - How can you help in promoting peace in your classroom, family, and/or community? - Do you remember the last time you felt very peaceful? What made you feel this way? 	<p>Can there really be a set of ‘universal ethical principles’ that could be applicable to one and all, given the diversity of beliefs that exist in our world?</p> <p>Principle 16f states, <i>“Recognize that peace is the wholeness created by right relationships with oneself, other persons, other cultures, other life, Earth, and the larger whole of which we all are a part.”</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Why does ‘oneself’ come first in this principle? - What do you think is meant by “right relationships”? - Do you know of any belief system that would disagree with this principle? - What is opposite of peace? - How is this against all the “right relationships” that the principle above mentions.

Mathematics

Objective:

Students measure, quantify, compare, and analyse numbers and trends that highlight environmental impact and social injustices.

Background:

- Human consumption of energy continues to increase; renewable natural resources are being used at rates faster than their rate of recovery; the chemical composition of the atmosphere has changed dramatically over the last 100 years.
- Accurate and quantitative measurement of the state of the environment is critical to understanding global change.
- Looking at various indexes of development can serve to highlight the social disparities between different countries and within countries.
- Exercises can also be designed to work with numbers relating to species in extinction, deforestation, and trends in these numbers over time.

“The dominant patterns of production and consumption are causing environmental devastation, the depletion of resources...The benefits of development are not shared equitably and the gap between the rich and poor is widening”.

Earth Charter Preamble.

Suggested Activities:

Primary School	Secondary School
<p>Check your last month’s electricity bill:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How much was the total cost? - How much electricity was consumed? - What is the price of electricity? - How could you help your family save money each month? - If your house used 10% less electricity each month, how much would it save in one year? <p>Pick three countries – one from Asia, one from South America and one from Europe. For each, find the literacy level (<i>could be life expectancy or another indicator</i>)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In which country is it highest. Why do you think this is? - In which country is it lowest. Why do you think this is? - What is the difference between the highest and lowest country. - Now, find the indicator for your country. - Show how it compares with the other 3 countries with a graph. 	<p><i>This exercise strives to highlight regional disparities in the world and the problems of such differences. The last question also leads to a discussion of internal disparities.</i></p> <p>Pick three countries from each major region of the world. Find each country’s average annual income/person.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Where does your country rank? - What is meant by ‘Average annual income/person’? - Are there regionally trends? Is there a graph that could best help show this? - Why do you think the ‘average’ number could be misleading? Is there a better mathematical measure for this?

Economics

Objective:

Students recognize the importance of environmental and social costs of goods and services.

Background:

Environmental impact assessments require measurement of the costs and benefits associated with an activity or project; however many of the things we value are difficult if not impossible to measure in monetary terms.

Earth Charter Principle 7d argues that we should *“Internalize the full environmental and social costs of goods and services in the selling price, and enable consumers to identify products that meet the highest social and environmental standards.”*

An externality occurs in economics when a decision causes costs or benefits to individuals or groups other than the decision-maker. In other words, the decision-maker does not bear all of the costs or benefits from his or her action. Because the producers of externalities do not have an incentive to take into account the effect of their actions on others, many activities cause negative externalities such as pollution, and not enough activity that creates positive externalities.

Suggested Activities:

Secondary School

Natural ecosystems provide many goods and services.

- List some goods and services produced which we do not have to pay for.
- Given that these are free, how valuable do people feel these are?
- Why is it that air is free, while you would die without it, while gold is so expensive, and you can live perfectly without it?
- What's the problem with clear air being free? Is anyone abusing that?
- How can we prevent the abuse of naturally occurring “free” good and services?

Choose an industry with a high number of both good and bad externalities, as well as an industry with low externalities. Relate the theme of externalities to the Earth Charter.

In small groups, write a short television “commercial” in order to tell people about the importance of companies assuming the social and environmental costs of the products they produce.

- Who would pay for such a commercial?
- Why are there not more of such commercials on TV?

Science - Biology

Objective:

To appreciate Earth as a “complex system” and discuss whether it is “alive” or not.

Background:

- While science is now comfortable with the concept of Earth as a “system”, there is still considerable debate as to exactly what type of system the Earth constitutes. Some argue that Earth is like a living organism. Others say that it is sufficient to simply view Earth as being “full of life”.
- The British scientist Lovelock proposed the Gaia hypothesis which suggests that life functions as an active control system, maintaining Earth's environment in a state that is optimal for the persistence of life.

The Earth Charter Preamble states that *“The resilience of the community of life and the well-being of humanity depend upon preserving a healthy biosphere with all its ecological systems, a rich variety of plants and animals, fertile soils, pure waters, and clean air.”*

Suggested Activities:

Primary School	Secondary School
<p>Find examples of ecological systems in the school and home environment (e.g. ant nests, termite mounds).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What makes them a “system”? - Build an ecosystem (e.g. soil, compost and worms). - What external inputs does this ecosystem need to function (e.g. water, solar energy)? - Are there “emergent” properties (i.e. is the sum greater than the parts)? 	<p>Examine to what extent the proposition 'Earth is alive' is supported by science.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What are the characteristics of a living organism? - Is the global carbon cycle a metabolic process similar to blood circulation in an animal? Does Earth have a life cycle consisting of birth, growth, death? - Does something have to be capable of reproduction in order to be alive? - Can we reach a firm conclusion as to whether Earth is “alive” or more simply “full of life”? <p>Consider how different scientific understandings of Earth influence how we value the non-human world.</p>

Environmental Science/Technology

Objective:

Students explore the extent to which technology can replace ecosystems.

Background:

- Natural “goods and services” are generated by ecosystems that are “self-regulating” and “self-sustaining”. Humans can interfere in these systems such that they collapse or cease to function, e.g. when wood is extracted from a forest at a faster rate than it can re-grow.
- In order to have ongoing access to these natural goods and services, human activity cannot exceed the capacity of natural ecosystems to absorb the disturbances and impacts of resource use.
- “Technological optimists” argue that technological solutions can be engineered in substitution for any of the goods and services generated by natural ecosystems. Others argue that certain ecosystem functions cannot be substituted by technology, especially those that operate at the global scale such as atmospheric processes.

Principle 5e argues the need to *“Manage the use of renewable resources such as water, soil, forest products, and marine life in ways that do not exceed rates of regeneration and that protect the health of ecosystems.”*

Suggested Activities:

Primary School	Secondary School
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What are some examples of technology being used to make things that can be produced naturally? - What are some good things about this? - What are some problems? - Now imagine a country (your country!) where all humans live in domed cities – a country where there were no wild populations of plants and animals. Would you want to live in this country? - What role can you play in preventing such a future? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify examples where technology has been used to provide goods and services that were once produced by local ecosystems (e.g. plantations; fish farms; and water purification). Could technology ever replace global ecosystem services such as maintaining the protective functions of the atmosphere? - How much fiber, fuel and food are harvested from natural ecosystems? Could technology provide all of these resources if natural ecosystems no longer functioned? When is technology part of the problem and when is it part of the solution? - Imagine a world where the atmosphere no longer existed, and all humans lived under domed cities – a world where there were no wild populations of plants and animals. Is this kind of world for humans technologically possible?

Earth Charter Educational Tools for All

The following is a short list of resources that you may find useful in your teaching.

1. Earth Charter Online Resource Center

This is a remarkable database of over 600 Earth Charter related resources in digital format, which can be freely downloaded from the Earth Charter web-site. The materials include documentation on the drafting process, power point presentations, annual reports, educational materials, brochures, case studies, workshop guides, newsflashes, essays, speeches, personal commentaries, and much more.

Snapshot of Database Categories & Contents

1) General Information

- [1.1 EC Brochure](#) *(In English, Spanish, French, Portuguese, German, Hungarian and Danish)*
- [1.2 EC Handbook](#) *(In English and Spanish)*
- [1.3 Power Point Presentations](#) *(Over 10 different presentations of the Earth Charter Initiative)*
- [1.4 Annual Reports & Bulletins](#) *(Earth Charter Bulletins and Annual reports - '97 onwards)*
- [1.5 Newsflashes](#) *(From June 2000 onwards)*
- [1.6 Speeches](#) *(Over 70 full-text speeches relating to the Earth Charter)*
- [1.7 Essays, Papers and Articles](#) *(Over 30 non-published documents on the Charter)*
- [1.8 Publications](#) *(Over 30 publications, starting with a 16-page Earth Charter Bibliography)*
- [1.9 Reports of Events](#) *(Selected reports of events, including the Summit in Johannesburg)*
- [2.0 Consultation Process](#) *(Over a dozen reports from the extensive consultation process)*
- [2.1 Endorsement Resolutions](#) *(Text of selected endorsement statements)*
- [2.2 Interviews: EC in Action](#) *(Six interviews of individuals implementing the Charter)*

3) Education: Earth Charter *(over 50 educational resources developed using the Earth Charter, classified according to the three levels below. See page 15 of report for more details)*

- [3.1 Primary and Secondary School](#)
- [3.2 Tertiary Education](#)
- [3.3 Nonformal Education](#)

4) Local Communities *(A dozen cases of how local communities are implementing the Earth Charter)and many more categories.*

2. Comprehensive Study on the Earth Charter

This is a handbook of over 100 pages titled, The Earth Charter: A Study Book of Reflection for Action. It covers an overview of the Earth Charter drafting process and has a detailed explanation of each principle. It was co-authored by Elisabeth Ferrero & Joe Holland, from St. Thomas University, Florida, USA. The English version can be viewed electronically at www.ecreflection4action.org. It is also available in Portuguese and Italian.

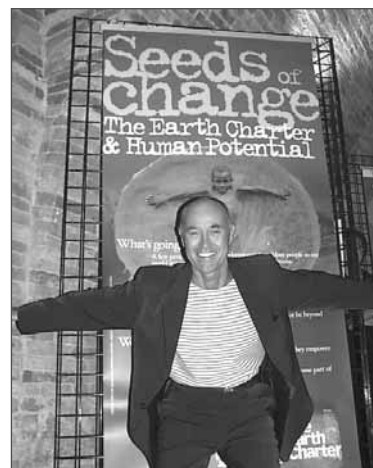
3. CD/DVD to promote Earth Charter principles in progress

Pour la Terre, a non-profit French environmental association, has taken the lead on this project of developing a music CD and accompanying school kit geared towards children aged 5 to 13. The song tracks were contributed by singers from throughout the world, each reflecting one or more of the principles of the Charter. The product is to be freely distributed and made available via the internet to educational facilities throughout the world by UNESCO, WWF and the Earth Charter Initiative.

4. A Book on the Earth Charter in Action

Toward a Sustainable World: The Earth Charter in Action, is a book that was edited by Peter Blaze Corcoran, Senior Advisor to the Initiative, in partnership with the Secretariat, the NCDO and Kit Publishers in the Netherlands. It demonstrates the rich diversity of uses of the Earth Charter and points towards the many possibilities of future utilization. The book celebrates five years of accomplishments by Earth Charter activists since the Charter was launched at the start of the new millennium.

This publication shows the utility of the Earth Charter in diverse cultural and geographical contexts, including its ability to bridge the Islamic and Christian worlds, and work across the divide between the northern and southern hemispheres. The book follows the structure of the Earth Charter's principles and shows their efficacy in meeting the challenges of a globalizing world.

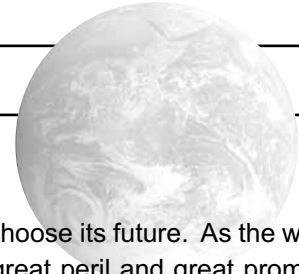


Peter Blaze Corcoran,
Chief Editor

5. UNESCO - Multimedia Teacher Education Programme, International

As part of its programme, 'Educating for a Sustainable Future', UNESCO led the development of a multimedia teacher education programme entitled, *Teaching and Learning for a Sustainable Future*. In 2002, a third version of this online module was launched. The programme contains over 100-hours of professional development modules for teachers, curriculum developers, education policy makers, and authors of educational materials. It provides a valuable overview of the holistic and interdisciplinary concept of sustainability, its implications for teaching across the curriculum, its emphasis on values and ethics, and teaching methods that can be used for such subjects. The multimedia format of these modules means that they can be used by teachers either independently or in small self-study groups – even in isolated locations – thus avoiding traditional barriers of access to training and new information. This material includes a substantial section on the Earth Charter and also suggests ways to be involved in the Earth Charter process. It is available at: <http://www.unesco.org/education/tlsf/>

Appendix A: *The Earth Charter*



PREAMBLE

We stand at a critical moment in Earth's history, a time when humanity must choose its future. As the world becomes increasingly interdependent and fragile, the future at once holds great peril and great promise. To move forward we must recognize that in the midst of a magnificent diversity of cultures and life forms we are one human family and one Earth community with a common destiny. We must join together to bring forth a sustainable global society founded on respect for nature, universal human rights, economic justice, and a culture of peace. Towards this end, it is imperative that we, the peoples of Earth, declare our responsibility to one another, to the greater community of life, and to future generations.

Earth, Our Home

Humanity is part of a vast evolving universe. Earth, our home, is alive with a unique community of life. The forces of nature make existence a demanding and uncertain adventure, but Earth has provided the conditions essential to life's evolution. The resilience of the community of life and the well-being of humanity depend upon preserving a healthy biosphere with all its ecological systems, a rich variety of plants and animals, fertile soils, pure waters, and clean air. The global environment with its finite resources is a common concern of all peoples. The protection of Earth's vitality, diversity, and beauty is a sacred trust.

The Global Situation

The dominant patterns of production and consumption are causing environmental devastation, the depletion of resources, and a massive extinction of species. Communities are being undermined. The benefits of development are not shared equitably and the gap between rich and poor is widening. Injustice, poverty, ignorance, and violent conflict are widespread and the cause of great suffering. An unprecedented rise in human population has overburdened ecological and social systems. The foundations of global security are threatened. These trends are perilous—but not inevitable.

The Challenges Ahead

The choice is ours: form a global partnership to care for Earth and one another or risk the destruction of ourselves and the diversity of life. Fundamental changes are needed in our values, institutions, and ways of living. We must realize that when basic needs have been met, human development is primarily about being more, not having more. We have the knowledge and technology to provide for all and to reduce our impacts on the environment. The emergence of a global civil society is creating new opportunities to build a democratic and humane world. Our environmental, economic, political, social, and spiritual challenges are interconnected, and together we can forge inclusive solutions.

Universal Responsibility

To realize these aspirations, we must decide to live with a sense of universal responsibility, identifying ourselves with the whole Earth community as well as our local communities. We are at once citizens of different nations and of one world in which the local and global are linked. Everyone shares responsibility for the present and future well-being of the human family and the larger living world. The spirit of human solidarity and kinship with all life is strengthened when we live with reverence for the mystery of being, gratitude for the gift of life, and humility regarding the human place in nature.

We urgently need a shared vision of basic values to provide an ethical foundation for the emerging world community. Therefore, together in hope we affirm the following interdependent principles for a sustainable way of life as a common standard by which the conduct of all individuals, organizations, businesses, governments, and transnational institutions is to be guided and assessed.

PRINCIPLES

I. RESPECT AND CARE FOR THE COMMUNITY OF LIFE

1. *Respect Earth and life in all its diversity.*

- a. Recognize that all beings are interdependent and every form of life has value regardless of its worth to human beings.
- b. Affirm faith in the inherent dignity of all human beings and in the intellectual, artistic, ethical, and spiritual potential of humanity.

2. *Care for the community of life with understanding, compassion, and love.*

- a. Accept that with the right to own, manage, and use natural resources comes the duty to prevent environmental harm and to protect the rights of people.
- b. Affirm that with increased freedom, knowledge, and power comes increased responsibility to promote the common good.

3. *Build democratic societies that are just, participatory, sustainable, and peaceful.*

- a. Ensure that communities at all levels guarantee human rights and fundamental freedoms and provide everyone an opportunity to realize his or her full potential.
- b. Promote social and economic justice, enabling all to achieve a secure and meaningful livelihood that is ecologically responsible.

4. *Secure Earth's bounty and beauty for present and future generations.*

- a. Recognize that the freedom of action of each generation is qualified by the needs of future generations.
- b. Transmit to future generations values, traditions, and institutions that support the long-term flourishing of Earth's human and ecological communities.

In order to fulfill these four broad commitments, it is necessary to:

II. ECOLOGICAL INTEGRITY

5. *Protect and restore the integrity of Earth's ecological systems, with special concern for biological diversity and the natural processes that sustain life.*

- a. Adopt at all levels sustainable development plans and regulations that make environmental conservation and rehabilitation integral to all development initiatives.
- b. Establish and safeguard viable nature and biosphere reserves, including wild lands and marine areas, to protect Earth's life support systems, maintain biodiversity, and preserve our natural heritage.
- c. Promote the recovery of endangered species and ecosystems.
- d. Control and eradicate non-native or genetically modified organisms harmful to native species and the environment, and prevent introduction of such harmful organisms.
- e. Manage the use of renewable resources such as water, soil, forest products, and marine life in ways that do not exceed rates of regeneration and that protect the health of ecosystems.

- f. Manage the extraction and use of non-renewable resources such as minerals and fossil fuels in ways that minimize depletion and cause no serious environmental damage.

6. Prevent harm as the best method of environmental protection and, when knowledge is limited, apply a precautionary approach.

- a. Take action to avoid the possibility of serious or irreversible environmental harm even when scientific knowledge is incomplete or inconclusive.
- b. Place the burden of proof on those who argue that a proposed activity will not cause significant harm, and make the responsible parties liable for environmental harm.
- c. Ensure that decision making addresses the cumulative, long-term, indirect, long distance, and global consequences of human activities.
- d. Prevent pollution of any part of the environment and allow no build-up of radioactive, toxic, or other hazardous substances.
- e. Avoid military activities damaging to the environment.

7. Adopt patterns of production, consumption, and reproduction that safeguard Earth's regenerative capacities, human rights, and community well-being.

- a. Reduce, reuse, and recycle the materials used in production and consumption systems, and ensure that residual waste can be assimilated by ecological systems.
- b. Act with restraint and efficiency when using energy, and rely increasingly on renewable energy sources such as solar and wind.
- c. Promote the development, adoption, and equitable transfer of environmentally sound technologies.
- d. Internalize the full environmental and social costs of goods and services in the selling price, and enable consumers to identify products that meet the highest social and environmental standards.
- e. Ensure universal access to health care that fosters reproductive health and responsible reproduction.
- f. Adopt lifestyles that emphasize the quality of life and material sufficiency in a finite world.

8. Advance the study of ecological sustainability and promote the open exchange and wide application of the knowledge acquired.

- a. Support international scientific and technical cooperation on sustainability, with special attention to the needs of developing nations.
- b. Recognize and preserve the traditional knowledge and spiritual wisdom in all cultures that contribute to environmental protection and human well-being.
- c. Ensure that information of vital importance to human health and environmental protection, including genetic information, remains available in the public domain.

III. SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC JUSTICE

9. Eradicate poverty as an ethical, social, and environmental imperative.

- a. Guarantee the right to potable water, clean air, food security, uncontaminated soil, shelter, and safe sanitation, allocating the national and international resources required.
- b. Empower every human being with the education and resources to secure a sustainable livelihood, and provide social security and safety nets for those who are unable to support themselves.
- c. Recognize the ignored, protect the vulnerable, serve those who suffer, and enable them to develop their capacities and to pursue their aspirations.

10. Ensure that economic activities and institutions at all levels promote human development in an equitable and sustainable manner.

- a. Promote the equitable distribution of wealth within nations and among nations.
- b. Enhance the intellectual, financial, technical, and social resources of developing nations, and relieve them of onerous international debt.
- c. Ensure that all trade supports sustainable resource use, environmental protection, and progressive labor standards.
- d. Require multinational corporations and international financial organizations to act transparently in the public good, and hold them accountable for the consequences of their activities.

11. Affirm gender equality and equity as prerequisites to sustainable development and ensure universal access to education, health care, and economic opportunity.

- a. Secure the human rights of women and girls and end all violence against them.
- b. Promote the active participation of women in all aspects of economic, political, civil, social, and cultural life as full and equal partners, decision makers, leaders, and beneficiaries.
- c. Strengthen families and ensure the safety and loving nurture of all family members.

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.

- a. Eliminate discrimination in all its forms, such as that based on race, color, sex, sexual orientation, religion, language, and national, ethnic or social origin.
- b. Affirm the right of indigenous peoples to their spirituality, knowledge, lands and resources and to their related practice of sustainable livelihoods.
- c. Honor and support the young people of our communities, enabling them to fulfill their essential role in creating sustainable societies.
- d. Protect and restore outstanding places of cultural and spiritual significance.

IV. DEMOCRACY, NONVIOLENCE, AND PEACE

13. Strengthen democratic institutions at all levels, and provide transparency and accountability in governance, inclusive participation in decision making, and access to justice.

- a. Uphold the right of everyone to receive clear and timely information on environmental matters and all development plans and activities which are likely to affect them or in which they have an interest.
- b. Support local, regional and global civil society, and promote the meaningful participation of all interested individuals and organizations in decision making.
- c. Protect the rights to freedom of opinion, expression, peaceful assembly, association, and dissent.
- d. Institute effective and efficient access to administrative and independent judicial procedures, including remedies and redress for environmental harm and the threat of such harm.
- e. Eliminate corruption in all public and private institutions.
- f. Strengthen local communities, enabling them to care for their environments, and assign environmental responsibilities to the levels of government where they can be carried out most effectively.

14. Integrate into formal education and life-long learning the knowledge, values, and skills needed for a sustainable way of life.

- a. Provide all, especially children and youth, with educational opportunities that empower them to contribute actively to sustainable development.
- b. Promote the contribution of the arts and humanities as well as the sciences in sustainability education.
- c. Enhance the role of the mass media in raising awareness of ecological and social challenges.
- d. Recognize the importance of moral and spiritual education for sustainable living.

15. Treat all living beings with respect and consideration.

- a. Prevent cruelty to animals kept in human societies and protect them from suffering.
- b. Protect wild animals from methods of hunting, trapping, and fishing that cause extreme, prolonged, or avoidable suffering.
- c. Avoid or eliminate to the full extent possible the taking or destruction of non-targeted species.

16. Promote a culture of tolerance, nonviolence, and peace.

- a. Encourage and support mutual understanding, solidarity, and cooperation among all peoples and within and among nations.
- b. Implement comprehensive strategies to prevent violent conflict and use collaborative problem solving to manage and resolve environmental conflicts and other disputes.
- c. Demilitarize national security systems to the level of a non-provocative defense posture, and convert military resources to peaceful purposes, including ecological restoration.
- d. Eliminate nuclear, biological, and toxic weapons and other weapons of mass destruction.
- e. Ensure that the use of orbital and outer space supports environmental protection and peace.
- f. Recognize that peace is the wholeness created by right relationships with oneself, other persons, other cultures, other life, Earth, and the larger whole of which all are a part.

THE WAY FORWARD

As never before in history, common destiny beckons us to seek a new beginning. Such renewal is the promise of these Earth Charter principles. To fulfill this promise, we must commit ourselves to adopt and promote the values and objectives of the Charter.

This requires a change of mind and heart. It requires a new sense of global interdependence and universal responsibility. We must imaginatively develop and apply the vision of a sustainable way of life locally, nationally, regionally, and globally. Our cultural diversity is a precious heritage and different cultures will find their own distinctive ways to realize the vision. We must deepen and expand the global dialogue that generated the Earth Charter, for we have much to learn from the ongoing collaborative search for truth and wisdom.

Life often involves tensions between important values. This can mean difficult choices. However, we must find ways to harmonize diversity with unity, the exercise of freedom with the common good, short-term objectives with long-term goals. Every individual, family, organization, and community has a vital role to play. The arts, sciences, religions, educational institutions, media, businesses, nongovernmental organizations, and governments are all called to offer creative leadership. The partnership of government, civil society, and business is essential for effective governance.

In order to build a sustainable global community, the nations of the world must renew their commitment to the United Nations, fulfill their obligations under existing international agreements, and support the implementation of Earth Charter principles with an international legally binding instrument on environment and development.

Let ours be a time remembered for the awakening of a new reverence for life, the firm resolve to achieve sustainability, the quickening of the struggle for justice and peace, and the joyful celebration of life.

Appendix B: Glossary of Key Terms

Sustainable Development: Meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Sustainable Living: Is a lifestyle that harmonizes both human and environmental ecologies through appropriate technologies, cooperative economics, and individual resourcefulness. It is a deliberate lifestyle that is characterized by personal responsibility, self-reliance, service to others, and a mindful spiritual life. In addition, sustainable living is an ethic of stewardship for the environment and the economy where today's needs are balanced with the needs of future generations of life on the Earth.

The UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (2005-2014): Aims to see Education for Sustainable Development implemented in thousands of local situations on the ground, involving the integration of the principles of Sustainable Development into a multitude of different learning situations. It was adopted in December 2002, by the United Nations General Assembly. UNESCO was designated as lead agency for the promotion of the Decade.

Education for Sustainable Development: Seeks to develop the knowledge, skills, perspectives and values which will empower people of all ages to assume responsibility for creating and enjoying a sustainable future.

Values: In general, this is the departure point which motivates individuals to take decisions. Culture, family, religion and time all directly influence values. Examples of values are: justice, equality and respect.

Principles: These are generated by values and establish norms of behaviour. Often, values and principles are talked about together, almost like synonyms.

The Earth Charter: Is a declaration of fundamental principles of building a just, sustainable, and peaceful global society in the 21st century. It seeks to inspire in all peoples a new sense of global interdependence and shared responsibility for the well-being of the human family and the larger living world. It is an expression of hope and a call to help create a global partnership at a crucial juncture in history.

Sources: This glossary has been compiled with the help of the following web-sites/sources: UNESCO web-site, Ways of Wisdom web-site, Earth Charter Handbook, and Earth Charter educational materials developed for Costa Rica.

Appendix C: Frequently Asked Questions

How can I link with the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development?

The Earth Charter has been recognized by UNESCO as an important educational instrument for the upcoming Decade, which started in 2005. Therefore, all UN member states have a responsibility to advance the broad area of Education for Sustainable Development. However, most national governments have not yet put together a programme on Education for Sustainable Development in response to the Decade. This guidebook offers the first steps for teachers to address Education for Sustainable Development and seeks to stimulate further elaboration of teacher training materials.

Your Ministry of Education office and UNESCO national committee should be lobbied to create a more comprehensive 'nationalized' version of this guidebook with in-service training to accompany its implementation.

How can I connect with other Earth Charter Educators?

The Earth Charter International Secretariat has set up an informal network of educators working with the Earth Charter. The primary objective of this network is to propose and develop projects and activities consistent with the goals, values and principles of the Earth Charter. The network communicates via e-mail. To join this network, please e-mail us at: info@earthcharter.org.

How can I contribute to the Earth Charter Education Programme?

If you have used the Earth Charter in education, your experience could be very valuable for other teachers. In order for us to share your work via the Earth Charter Teaching Resources Database, we would be grateful if you could e-mail us a description of how you have made use of the Earth Charter within your educational activities or programs (e.g. a description of the syllabus, including learning activities and readings). Please provide as much detail as you can in terms of the:

- intended learning-outcomes of the exercise;
- activities used to engage the learners;
- specific uses made of the Earth Charter.

Please send your e-mail to: info@earthcharter.org

Is the Earth Charter primarily concerned about the environment?

In the Earth Charter there is a special emphasis on the world's environmental challenges. However, the document's inclusive ethical vision recognizes that environmental protection, human rights, equitable human development, and peace are interdependent and indivisible.

It provides a new framework for thinking about and addressing these issues. The result is a fresh, broad conception of what constitutes a sustainable community and sustainable development.

What is the origin and history of the Earth Charter?

In 1987 the United Nations World Commission on Environment and Development issued a call for creation of a new charter that would set forth fundamental principles for sustainable development. The drafting of an Earth Charter was part of the unfinished business of the 1992 Rio Earth Summit. In 1994 Maurice Strong, the secretary general of the Earth Summit and chairman of the Earth Council, and Mikhail Gorbachev, president of Green Cross International, launched a new Earth Charter initiative with support from the Dutch government. An Earth Charter Commission was formed in 1997 to oversee the project and an Earth Charter Secretariat was established at the Earth Council in Costa Rica.

What are the sources of Earth Charter values?

Together with the Earth Charter consultation process, the most important influences shaping the ideas and values in the Earth Charter are contemporary science, international law, the wisdom of the world's great religions and philosophical traditions, the declarations and reports of the seven UN summit conferences held during the 1990s, the global ethics movement, numerous nongovernmental declarations and people's treaties issued over the past thirty years, and best practices for building sustainable communities.

What is the mission of the international Earth Charter Initiative?

A new phase in the Initiative began with the official launching of the Earth Charter at the Peace Palace in The Hague on June 29, 2000. The mission of the Initiative going forward is to establish a sound ethical foundation for the emerging global society and to help build a sustainable world based on respect for nature, universal human rights, economic justice, and a culture of peace.

What are the objectives of the Earth Charter Initiative?

- To promote the dissemination and implementation of the Earth Charter by civil society, business, and government.
- To encourage and support the educational use of the Earth Charter.
- To seek endorsement of the Earth Charter by the UN.

Endnotes

¹ The Earth Charter Initiative International Secretariat is based on the campus of the University for Peace in San José, Costa Rica. The role of the Secretariat is to facilitate collaborative efforts to advance the implementation of the mission and objectives of the Earth Charter Initiative. The Secretariat coordinates a vast network to help disseminate and promote the Earth Charter, to facilitate its usage in educational settings, and to seek political support for the Charter to be further used as a framework to guide global governance. Additionally, the Secretariat is responsible for the web-site in three languages, puts out a monthly online newsletter, manages all external communication, and organizes international events.

² This online forum was held in December 2003 and the outcomes were summarized in 'Synthesis II' available via the Earth Charter web-site, on the 'Education Philosophy' link. To view the Online Forum, please view: <http://www.earthcharter.org/edu2003/>

³ The summary of the 1st education online forum, 'Synthesis Report', is also available via the Earth Charter web-site at: http://www.earthcharter.org/innerpg.cfm?id_page=29

⁴ Seen on a billboard during the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg, 2002.

⁵ Taken directly from, 'The Earth Charter Initiative Handbook' produced by the Earth Charter International Secretariat in 2000.

⁶ Drawn from the summary of the 1st Education Online Forum, 'Synthesis', held in Aug-Sept. 2001.

⁷ Adapted from the first 4 Principles of the Earth Charter. by Alison Steel & Louise Erbacher, Queensland Earth Charter Committee, Australia with assistance from the students of St Anthony's Primary School.

⁸ McKeown, Rosalyn. 2002. Education for Sustainable Development Toolkit. www.esdtoolkit.org

⁹ The Sample Lesson Plans are an expansion and extension of the 'Curriculum Stimulus Materials' produced by Dr. Brendan Mackey, Australian National University, and Chair of the Earth Charter Education Advisory Committee.



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