



Local Endorsement Kit
&
Activities Guidebook

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For the



EARTH CHARTER
Community Network



www.earthchartercommunity.org

Under



License

[see last page of guidebook for info]



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Introduction

So you've endorsed the Earth Charter...now what? The answer to that may be found in this easy to use local endorsement kit and activities guidebook.

The values and principles of a sustainable future cannot simply be given lip service – they must be lived and the Earth Charter is not supposed to be a dictator or rule book. If you have downloaded this tool kit and have not yet read the full text of the Earth Charter fast forward to the end of the book and take a few minutes to read it before you proceed.

A brief [history of the Earth Charter](#) can be found here and it is a good idea to familiarize yourself a bit with it because it was the [process of how the final document came into existence](#) that holds the most valuable clues as to how we as a species shall succeed in making this global transition to a peaceful and sustainable culture – by working together collectively in small creative ways that end up outweighing the growing minority of unconscious destructive acts.

This toolkit/guidebook was created for Earth Charter supporters who want to engage in local actions that not only help share the Earth Charter and build the ever growing community of endorsers, but to also engage in meaningful community actions that bring people together to learn about sustainable living and what that means.

Each community is going to be different and the initial contents of this guidebook are simply starting places. This guidebook can be continually updated because it is published in digital form and will be growing as members of the Earth Charter Community submit their ideas and experiences.



How to Use this Guidebook

This guidebook has been created as a simple starting place that will hopefully trigger your own creative ideas. Your passion will do the rest of the work.

Chapter 4 gives a list of resources that are available for download and examples of how each resource can be utilized. This list will be growing as members engage in actively contributing so please don't be shy – if you create an image, flyer, or other multi-media upload it onto the community network in the "[Resource Sharing](#)" category of the [Forums](#)

Chapter 5 gives onLine and onGround instructions for how to start an Earth Charter 'group' (you can of course give your group any name you desire) and more useful tools and templates for your endeavors.

Chapter 6 is a list of links for further resources that may be helpful in your efforts.

It is the goal of this guidebook to be super easy (not overly cumbersome in text – who has time to read tons of text these days) and easily expanded upon and evolved.

If anything is not clear or you have questions please post it as a discussion in the [Resource Sharing](#) category of the Forum.

All links within this guidebook are hyperlinks and to save pdf files right click and choose 'Save As' to your computer. The word docs simply give a download/save prompt.



Resources

Earth Charter Brochure

This simple brochure gives a brief overview of the Earth Charter and is formatted for a tri-fold brochure. Print page one then flip over and on the back side print page 2. There is a blank box on the back where you can write your own contact info so that folks you share it with can contact you directly. The original Word doc file can be downloaded and you can type your name/email in the space (or write it in). Once you made the changes click the 'save as' pdf option for your files and then print. Download the Earth Charter Brochure here.

[Earth Charter Brochure PDF](#)
[Earth Charter Brochure Word Doc](#)



Earth Charter Endorsement Form

This form is made for a clipboard that can be used at events or gatherings. Collect signatures/emails and then invite them to your Earth Charter group that you created on the Earth Charter Community network (instructions on page....) Blank values are name, email, city/state, and biz/organization. 6 signatures per page and you can print front and back to save paper 😊 At the bottom of the form it states that a confirmation email will be sent – that is the invitation email that is generated by within the Earth Charter Community network when you 'invite' people into your group or into the network – be sure to tell people they will need to sign up to join. Download Earth Charter Endorsement Form here:

[Earth Charter Endorsement Form PDF](#)
[Earth Charter Endorsement Form Word Doc](#)

ENDORSE THE EARTH CHARTER TODAY!

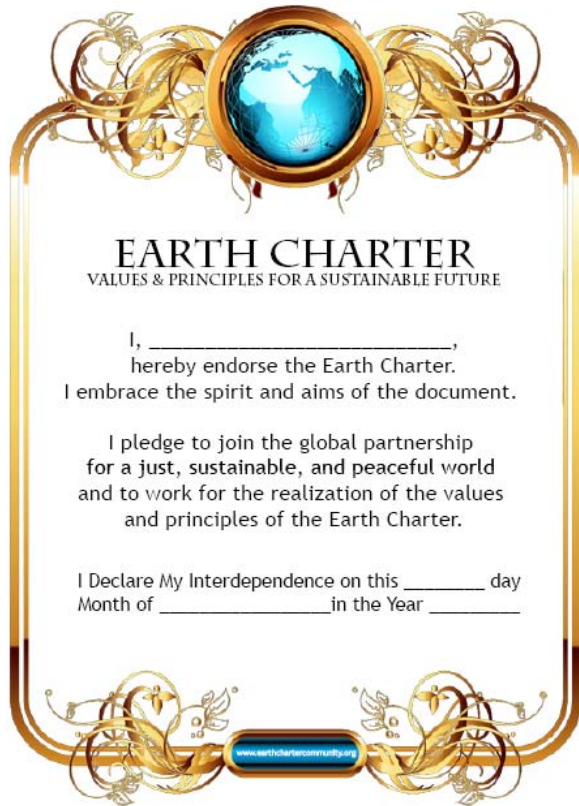
Endorsement of the Earth Charter is open to anyone and any institution. Over 4,000 organizations worldwide, representing millions of people, have formally endorsed the Earth Charter. Many prominent world leaders, towns, organizations, universities, and heads of state, have publicly supported its inclusive vision of a just, participatory, sustainable, and peaceful future.

Endorsement of the Earth Charter by individuals or organizations signifies a commitment to the spirit and aims of the document. It indicates an intention to use the Earth Charter in ways that are appropriate given your situation and to cooperate with others in working for the implementation of its principles. Endorsement builds support for the Earth Charter Initiative and social change. You will receive an email confirmation of your endorsement along with further information and invitation into the Earth Charter Community Network (optional to join).

Full Name	City, State
Email	Org/Biz
Full Name	City, State
Email	Org/Biz
Full Name	City, State
Email	Org/Biz
Full Name	City, State
Email	Org/Biz
Full Name	City, State
Email	Org/Biz
Full Name	City, State
Email	Org/Biz

Thank you for endorsing the Earth Charter. You will receive an email to confirm your endorsement.
www.earthchartercommunity.org

Earth Charter Endorsement Certificate



When people endorse the Earth Charter it is great that their names are being entered into a data base - but isn't it even greater when they can receive a beautiful certificate that they can display? This beautiful Certificate of Endorsement can be printed easily and given to people who you share the Earth Charter with that want to endorse! Download the Endorsement Certificate here.

[Earth Charter Endorsement Certificate PDF](#)

Earth Charter Flyer

This simple flyer can be printed as is in pdf format or edited in the word doc format and then you convert to your own final pdf for printing. Rearrange the images and edit text to create a great flyer to promote your Earth Charter activity/event and/or the Earth Charter Community network.

Many people these days do 4x5 cards for easy hand out and sharing. We will add a template for this if it is requested. Download Earth Charter Flyer here:

[Earth Charter Flyer pdf](#)
[Earth Charter Flyer Word Doc](#)

Earth Charter Poster

This beautiful poster can be downloaded and printed for your wall or as a great gift to special endorsers in your community! This poster gives the full text of the Earth Charter including preamble and 'The Way Forward'. Download the file and take to your local printer. Be sure to compare prices on the Earth Charter Community Store because some print shops might charge more than the one in the community store and proceeds go to administrating the network ☺

There are a few different file sizes – a big one for full size poster and a smaller one if you are printing on 11x17 or smaller.

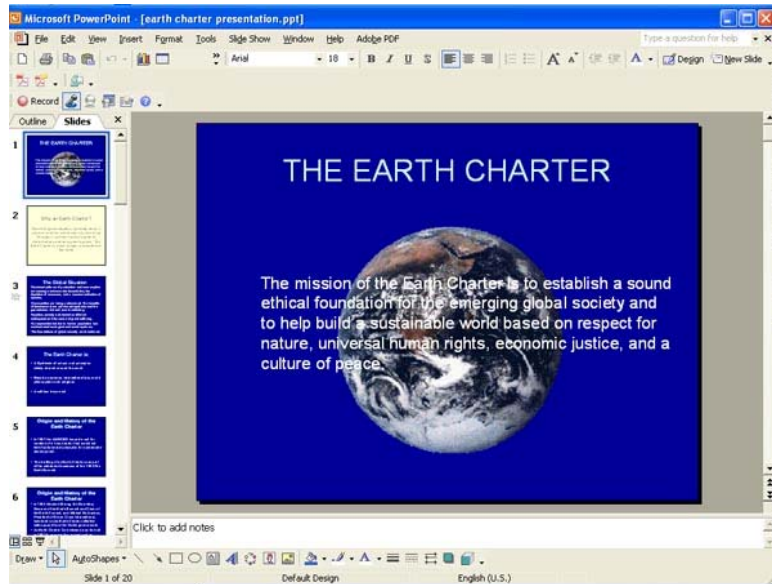
[Go to download page here](#)



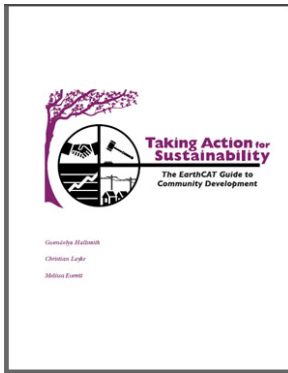
Earth Charter Power Point Presentation

Yep – the old faithful Power Point presentation. This file is a very super basic version that can be easily expanded, edited, and evolved to fit your needs. If you have never used Power Point there are many tutorials available online. Download the Earth Charter Power Point Presentation here:

[Earth Charter Power Point Presentation](#)



Earth Charter Community Action Tool – EarthCAT



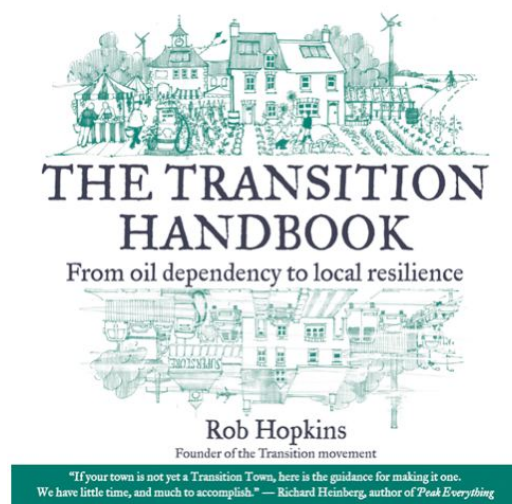
This is a pretty good publication put out awhile back that gives an overview for community organizing and sustainable community development. There is a website that goes along with the publication for those interested in delving deeper but when we signed up to see what kind of platform and resources they had set up it was pretty outdated. Regardless the information in the publication is a good resource. Download EarthCAT here:

[Earth Charter Community Action Tool – EarthCAT](http://www.earthchartercommunity.org/EarthCAT_Workbook.pdf)

http://www.earthchartercommunity.org/EarthCAT_Workbook.pdf

The Transition Handbook - Transition Towns Workbook

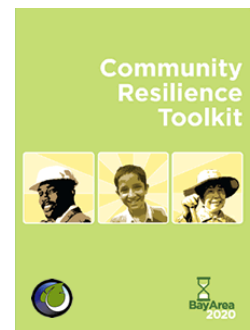
Another great resource for sustainable community organizing – The Transition Handbook. The Transition Handbook shows how the inevitable and profound changes ahead can have a positive outcome. These changes can lead to the rebirth of local communities, which will grow more of their own food, generate their own power, and build their own houses using local materials. They can also encourage the development of local currencies, to keep money in the local area. There are Transition Towns popping up all over the planet with more joining as the idea takes off. With little proactivity at government level, communities are taking matters into their own hands and acting locally. If your town is not a Transition Town, this upbeat guide offers you the tools for starting the process. Download The Transition Handbook here:



[The Transition Handbook pdf](#)

Community Resilience Toolkit

This publication was released by the Bay Localize organization and although it gives Bay Area (California) info the information could be adapted and applied to any city/town/community. Download the Community Resilience Toolkit here: [Community Resilience Toolkit](#)



Earth Charter Store – Member Merchandise

Earth Charter merchandise has been created in the Interdependent Project's storefront for members who would like to purchase Earth Charter products like mugs, organic T-shirts, organic tote bag, bumpers stickers and other fun stuff. Proceeds go towards the networks administration costs and all images are available for download for members who want to make their own iron on's or buttons © Some of the graphic fonts on some merchandise are only available through the stores in-house production editors so some of the items are not available for download as you see them (images only) [Visit the Earth Charter Store here](#)



*MORE RESOURCES WILL BE ADDED AS MEMBERS CONTRIBUTE TO THIS GUIDEBOOK. WE WILL SEND A BROADCAST TO MEMBERS WHEN NEW RESOURCES ARE ADDED.

If you would like to contribute something please go to the "[Resource Sharing](#)" category of the [Forums](#)

Please continue reading for further information and ideas for OnLine and OnGround activities and actions...



How to Start OnLine and OnGround Earth Charter Groups

OnLine – Linking Up - Earth Charter Community Network Quick Guide

The Earth Charter Community Network is hosted on a [Ning](#) Network platform and it was built/created and is sponsored by [SeThInk Media](#), a digital publishing company establishing itself as a '[B Corporation](#)' (Benefit Company). The company's CEO, Darlene Cavallaro (C.E.O.=Conscious Earth Organism) has been an Earth Charter activist since the Earth Charter Initiative launched and after failed attempts to form 'interdependent partnerships' with the official Earth Charter U.S. and Earth Charter International (ECI) non-profit organizations the SeThInk Media team decided to commit company resources to ensure that Earth Charter activists and advocates had easy access to information, education, news, and resources about the Earth Charter that went beyond 'academia' circles and 'official' boxes. The team also felt that many of the Earth Charter resources that were online were often hard to find/use and sometimes outdated, stale, or copyrighted. The Earth Charter Community Network was launched to serve/promote Earth Charter activists both seasoned and new. It is not 'officially' affiliated with Earth Charter International, but the Earth Charter is a civil society document owned by the people of the world and intended to serve the future. The next generation of Earth Charter activists will be best served 'outside of the box' and in an *Open Source¹ and *Creative Commons² environment.



¹ Open Source http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Open_source

² Creative Commons http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Creative_commons



The Earth Charter Community Network has the following main features:

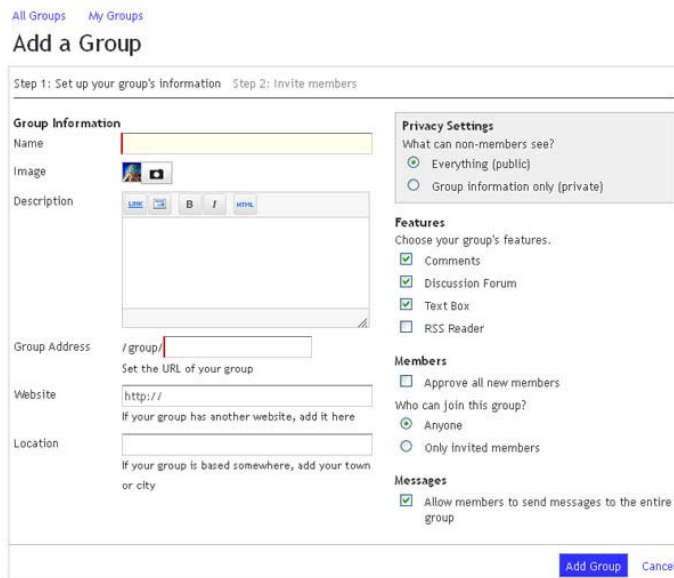
- Member/Personal Profile Pages
- Member Directory
- Member Blogs
- Groups (member created)
- Discussion Forum
- Events (members can post)
- Videos
- Photos

Starting a Group

The nice thing about the network is that you can use it to start a 'group' which then you can invite people to join. It is super easy to set up a group – just click the 'EC Group' tab on the navbar and you will go to this page. Then click the little '+ Add' button.



The 'Add a Group' page will load and from there you can name your group, upload a picture/logo, describe your group, add a website/blog url, set your privacy settings, add feature that you want in your group, set your moderation (you can approve new members or allow anyone to join), and set up a 'location'. Be sure to click the 'Allow members to send messages to entire group' at the bottom right so that everyone in your group can freely send messages to everyone else. You can also give 'admin' permissions to members of your



group so that they can create 'pages' and help you with content. Also click the 'RSS Reader' under 'Features' so that you can add an RSS feed from a blog if that is relevant to your activities. Then click the 'Add Group' at the bottom right and you will be then directed to another page where you can 'invite' people into your group. You can use the address book importer or enter email addresses manually.

Your group page will have a text box that you can add information, photos, videos, etc like a main page of a website. You can also add pages to your group that will be displayed in the right sidebar below your members box. If you add an RSS address you can choose the 'Detail View' in the 'Display' box and it will import the entire blog post for viewing in your group.

Having an online group has many advantages:

- When doing a local campaign/event/project you don't have to go through all the costs/trouble of setting up your own website.
- Members of your project have a place to connect, communicate, and share important information.
- Your group has access to other Earth Charter Community members (there are some very amazing people in the network)
- Your group has a way to send messages to the entire group (be sure to enable that feature when setting your group up)



When planning and organizing this group feature allows you creative freedom and control of your online presence. There are plans to create a simple video tutorial on how to use all the features on the platform, but until then if you need any assistance contact admin@earthchartercommunity.org for help or answers to your questions.



Earth Charter & Sustainable Community Development OnGround – Tools and templates

All over the world people everywhere are engaged in efforts to steer us towards a sustainable future. The ways in which that can be done are only limited by our own fears or lack of imagination. The advent of the internet is what made the writing/drafting of the Earth Charter possible and that was when the technology was still young...it is still in its infancy really. At its present state it has enabled major social movements and political overhauls a reality that cannot be ignored. But regardless of what kind of attention something gets or how much approval it is up to those who chop wood/carry water to bring those changes into manifest reality in our day to day world. We call the 'OnGround Reality' and that is where the changes can be seen first hand.

Some of the resources that you downloaded provided some basic starting tools and templates to begin your OnGround efforts. Just sharing and endorsing the Earth Charter is valuable but if you also have an initiative that folks can become involved in that makes it all the more powerful. Here is a brief overview of some of the resources and more that can be explored.

Local Government Endorsement

Many cities and towns have endorsed the Earth Charter. If you would like to get your own town/city to officially endorse the Earth Charter the following steps will be helpful in that process:



How to Pass A Community Resolution

1. Know Your Community

- Understand your local administration and how decisions are made To access this information contact a local government office or a former municipal official.
- Collect information about the members of the City or County Council. Get informed about which members of the Council may be most interested in the Earth Charter and may be willing to support, if not sponsor, the resolution.

Also, figure out what people or groups have leverage over council members who may not initially lend support for the resolution.

- Consider what organizations and activists in your community may be particularly interested in joining the resolution effort.
- Review the example resolutions (presented next) of communities that have passed resolutions - see if a resolutions(s) have been passed in your state. You can contact organizers from those cities and counties to learn their strategies for success.

TIP: Stay organized by keeping records of your contacts. Knowing this information will help you complete the coalition building process.

2. Build a Coalition:

- Identify organizations or businesses in your community that you think may wish to work on the resolution effort. Know that a number of national organizations have pledged their support for this community resolution effort. [You may also find allies by contacting organizations who have endorsed the Earth Charter here.](#) Remember that you can and should draw on a broad array of organizations to support.
- Contact the organizations that you feel may be interested in working on this project.



TIP: The coalition you assemble should be balanced and representative of the diversity in your community. And know that building a strong, broad grassroots coalition will create a better outcome.

3. Host an Organizing Meeting:

- Having discussed the initiative individually with some of your key organizational partners, you should convene a coalition meeting to discuss this project as a group.
- Establish roles and responsibilities for leadership.
- See 'Town Hall Meeting' below for more details

TIP: You may want to involve sympathetic City Council members in the drafting process.

4. Build Public Awareness

- Some suggested methods are to start a letter writing campaign, draft an op-ed piece in the local newspaper, engage in a public petition drive or set-up information tables in public places. In addition, with your coalition partners,

you can organize 'teach-ins' with your members and/or forums with the general public invited. Any information given to the public needs to be accurate and concise.

5. Implement a Strategy for Passing the Resolution

- Schedule informal meeting(s) with your local council members. Present evidence of public support to the council members. Identify most persuasive council member(s) to introduce the resolution to the city or county council.
- Have influential people or groups call or visit members that need to be moved to support the resolution
- Identify key people to testify in support of the resolution at the meeting when the council will be debating the resolution.

TIP: Members of the coalition should be prepared to attend City or County Council meetings and testify publicly on behalf of the resolution. And remember to keep the media informed about your activities, about council votes and certainly about your success!

Download these example resolutions that were passed:



[US Conference of Mayors Official Resolution](#)

[Berkeley City Council Resolution](#)

[Burlington Vermont Resolution](#)

[Seattle Washington Resolution](#)

1. **Host a 'Town Hall' event** where you share the Earth Charter with local community members.

~ Purpose of meeting

1. Provide overview of Earth Charter and examples of how it can be a valuable tool for general planning.
2. Propose to citizens that they endorse the Earth Charter and sign a petition to urge the city/town to endorse as well.
3. Gather signatures and contacts
4. Form online EC group to invite attendees to join so they can stay involved.
5. Provide brochures and other media to participants



II. Gathering signatures for petition

~ Purpose

Many city councils require a percentage of voters to be behind proposed initiative resolutions. Gathering the signatures prior to contacting your council is important to ensure success and each person who signs the petition can be invited to join the online group so that you have a verifiable constituency. Be sure to obtain local businesses, religious organizations, education institutions and other influential individuals endorsements that can be featured in your press releases.



III. Contact City Council to get put on meeting Agenda

~ Purpose

Every City Council meeting has a pre-arranged agenda that you must be officially added to. Ask your county clerk what the specific process is so that you can cover all the bases and get put on the calendar.



IV. Contact City/Town Mayor

~ Purpose

You will want to have a meeting with the Mayor prior to the official meeting with the city council to share with him/her your purpose and intentions. Bring Earth Charter resources (brochure etc) to give to him/her and show the signed petition to demonstrate the support. Also bring a copy of the U.S. Mayors Conference Resolution and other city/town resolutions for review. Urge him/her to support the resolution at the upcoming meeting.



V. Issue press releases

~ Purpose

This is key to bringing more attention to your initiative and a well written press release can make all the difference in the world. If your community has a local radio station issue a press release to them and get a news spot interview.



VI. Prepare your Presentation

~ Purpose

At the City Council meeting you will be allotted a certain amount of time to present your resolution proposal so write your speech and any other visual aids for your success. Be sure to lightly address potential objections and reassure the council that their endorsement does not bind them to rules and regulations but merely provides a statement of intent to work with the local community to build and develop sustainable strategies custom tailored to the communities desires and needs. The Earth Charter is a guide – not a rule book.



VII. Invite all members of your group to attend the presentation

~ Purpose

By now you will have an email list of all those who have endorsed the Earth Charter and many of them will have joined your online group. Be sure to issue broadcasts of the date/time of the council meeting that you will be doing your presentation. Invite also friends/relatives who are supportive of your teams work so that the council chamber is packed with as many supporters as possible.



VIII. Celebrate!

~ Purpose

No matter what the outcome of the effort there needs to be a big celebration built into your strategy where everyone can come together as a community and continue to share ideas, create more strategies for sustainable development in your community, and deepen your bonds and relationships.



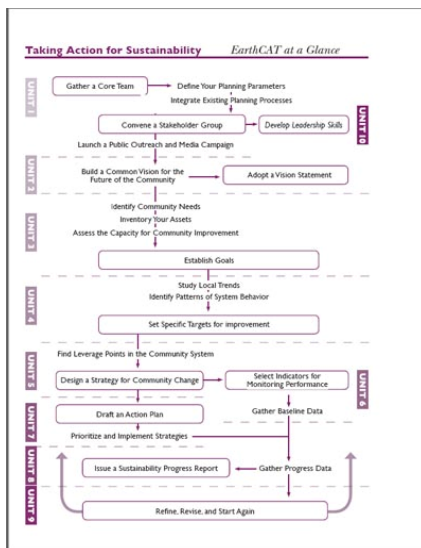


Guidebooks, Toolkits, and Handbooks Overview & Links

This section covers a bit more about the guidebooks but in future updates to this manual the goal is to have member contribution about their experiences working with them so the content is also a 'placeholder'. There are links to the resources main websites as well.

Earth Charter Community Action Tool – EarthCAT

Taking Action for Sustainability:
The EarthCAT Guide to Community Development



This guide book has some valuable resources, diagrams, and content that can be very helpful for anyone wanting to engage in sustainable community development projects. EarthCAT was developed by the Earth Charter Partnership for Sustainable Communities (ECPSC). ECPSC is a partnership consisting of the Earth Charter Secretariat, Global Community Initiatives, the World Resources Institute and communities and organizations around the world. The EarthCAT online software tool is a bit outdated and clunky, but the pdf guide is sufficient for those of you who are mining for systems and approaches to

consider when you embark upon your local efforts. If you use this guide please share with the community a review of what information you found most helpful and it will be published in updates of this manual. If you want more information you can visit their website at www.earthcat.org but like platforms these days it appears that the website is not very updated or active.

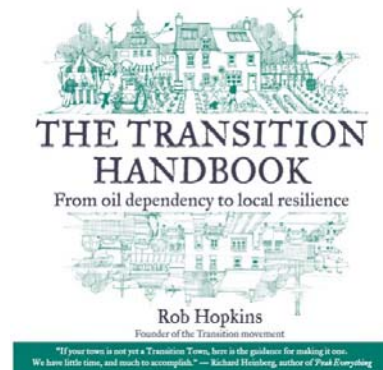
Community Resilience Tool Kit



A great organization called 'Bay Localize' produced and published this tool kit that provides resources to evaluate a communities relative strengths and vulnerabilities so that action can be taken to build economic and environmental resilience. It covers the topics of food, water, energy, transportation/housing, jobs/economy, civic preparedness, and social services. Their main website can be visited at www.baylocalize.org

Transition Towns & the Transition Towns Handbook

'Transition Towns' are a grassroots network of communities that are working to build resilience and sustainability in response to peak oil, climate destruction, and economic instability. Transition Towns were "founded (in part) upon the principles of [permaculture](#)", based originally on Bill Mollison's seminal "*Permaculture, a Designers Manual*" published in 1988. The Transition Towns brand of permaculture uses David Holmgren's 2003 book, "*Permaculture: Principles and Pathways Beyond Sustainability*". These techniques were included in a student project overseen by permaculture teacher Rob Hopkins at the Kinsale Further Education College in Ireland. The term *transition town* was coined by Louise Rooney and Catherine Dunne. Following its start in Kinsale, Ireland it then spread to Totnes, England where Rob Hopkins and Naresh Giangrande developed the concept during 2005 and 2006.



Resilience

key area.

The main aim of the project generally, and echoed by the towns locally, is to raise awareness of sustainable living and build local ecological resilience in the near future. Communities are encouraged to seek out methods for reducing energy usage as well as reducing their reliance on long supply chains that are totally dependent on fossil fuels for essential items. Food is a

The official Transition Towns network and Transition Towns USA are non-profit organizations that grant 'official' status and a registry for a 'Transition Town' and of course offer programs and workshops for 'leaders' who wish to 'unleash' a Transition initiative in their community. None of this is necessary

however to be a 'Transition Town' and there are many websites and networks where resources and information can be accessed including the Transition Towns Handbook.

SeThInk Media (sponsor of the Earth Charter Community) also sponsors the Transition California Communities Network and has seen among the member communities a myriad of initiatives that folks are pioneering in their communities that are helping cities/towns to reprioritize their direction of development into sustainable models. Read the handbook for a basic overview and check out the other networks for information that will help you to formulate a 'Transition' initiative in your own community. Feel free to contact transition@sethink.com if you need any assistance finding more information.



EcoVillage Agenda

A new sustainable community model is emerging called an 'EcoVillage' and an agenda has been developed around the necessity for changes in building codes and zoning laws on a local level that allows for these new models to be developed.

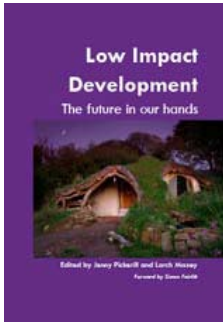


The Lammas EcoVillage in Wales (UK) has established a precedent by successfully getting planning permission from the local planning department in Pembrokeshire. The process that the Lammas community went through was epic in terms of developing criteria and protocol that would be approved in the UK which has some of the strictest building and land use



laws in the world due to its high density population.

If you live in a rural community and would like to become involved in the process of importing the EcoVillage community model into your area contact admin@globalecovillages.org for more information. Here are some more information links:



- [Global EcoVillage & Sustainable Communities Network](#)
- [Lammas EcoVillage](#)
- [Low Impact Sustainable Development Agency](#)
- [Low Impact Development](#)

Planet Earth Scouts

Planet Earth Scouts is an all age Earth Stewardship community network where people can learn, participate, and discover sustainable Earth Stewardship principles, tools, and activities. The program has community developed 'badges' that are based on the Interdependent Tree of Sustainability, the Earth Charter, and members own creative endeavors. All resources are published under 'Creative Commons' license in an open source environment.. Visit www.planeteearthscouts.org



The Earth Charter – Schools & Colleges

The Earth Charter is being used in education for all ages and within formal and non-formal contexts. It has proved to be an especially valuable teaching instrument in the evolving field of environmental education, and its principles are in accord with UNESCO's early definitions of environmental education found in the Belgrade Charter (1975) and the Tbilisi Declaration (1977). It has been utilized in human rights and peace education and has been

taken up in new educational endeavors aimed at sustainability designated variously as education for sustainable development, education for sustainability, and, even, environmental education for sustainable development. In these various arenas, the Earth Charter is contributing to the ongoing critical conceptualization of education processes that aim to develop understanding of and promote justice, sustainability and peace. The

Earth Charter can be used to support a variety of educational goals including the following:

1. Raising awareness and understanding of critical global problems – The Earth Charter can be used to develop the capacity for critical thinking and to raise teachers and students awareness and understanding of the environmental, social, and economic problems facing the world, the interdependent nature of these problems, and the need to live with a sense of global responsibility, especially at a time when we face crises of unprecedented magnitude.



2. Promoting dialogue on the values and principles for a sustainable way of life – Common goals and shared values are the foundation of a strong and healthy community. The Earth Charter is a valuable resource for promoting dialogue on the common goals and shared values needed to build just, sustainable, and peaceful communities both locally and globally. Dialogue requires respect for cultural diversity and the opinions of others, careful listening, and the open-minded search for common ground.

3. Promoting individual development – By using the Earth Charter to raise awareness, develop understanding of critical global problems, and promote dialogue on common goals and shared values, the Earth Charter can become an instrument for expanding a person’s awareness and commitments. It can also assist individuals in learning how to make sound choices that involve thinking imaginatively with both the head and the heart.



4. Inspiring a spirit of collaboration, cooperation, and action – The Earth Charter concludes with a call for action through, among other things, new partnerships between civil society, business, and government at all levels. The challenges of sustainability are so large and complex that they can only be meaningfully addressed through cooperation. The educational challenge here is to provide students with the skills and opportunities for cooperative actions that express their ideas for more sustainable ways of living.

5. Encouraging an ‘interdependent’ outlook – Many of the Earth Charter’s principles can be used to help teachers and students become more aware of and better understand the importance of biodiversity, natural processes, and the ecosystem services they provide to all living beings, the needs of other species and individual animals, and the environmental conditions necessary for a healthy life. Students can define ‘interdependence’ in relationship to the overall web of life and projects can have themes of ‘interdependence’.

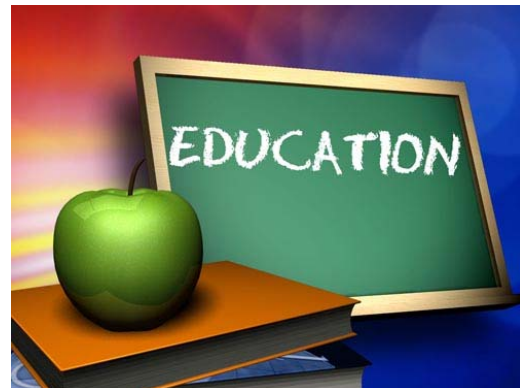


6. Applying values and principles – The main body of the Earth Charter is action-oriented and functions as a guide to more sustainable ways of living. The Earth Charter can serve as a framework for people and organizations to critically compare their reality with their ideals. This kind of analysis in turn provides the basis for identifying strategies for bringing about constructive change.



7. Facilitating an understanding of the relationship between the Earth Charter, public policy, and international law – While the Earth Charter is a “people’s charter” it can also be understood as an international “soft law” document. Soft law is important as it provides the values and principles to support and direct the development of “hard law” such as new international treaties. The Earth Charter can be used to explore the status of public policy and law regarding problems of environment and development.

8. Assisting educational institutions and systems in reorienting their teaching and operations towards sustainable ways of living. The Earth Charter has inspired many educational resources for teaching and learning for a sustainable future, and for assessing the sustainability practices of educational institutions. These Earth Charter based resources can be used to deepen our understanding of, and practice of, justice, sustainability and peace in educational settings.



GUIDELINES FOR DEVELOPING EARTH CHARTER EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMES, ACTIVITIES, AND MATERIALS

There are many ways that the Earth Charter can be used in education, depending on the context, and on the educator’s and student’s interests. Formal and non-formal educational settings offer different opportunities for using the Earth Charter, and the appropriateness of an approach will vary in different cultural settings. There is not a single “best way” to use the Earth Charter in education. However, based on the experiences of educators from diverse settings, the following general guidelines are offered:

1. Be consistent with the Earth Charter's values and principles. The process by which Earth Charter educational materials and programs are developed and used should be consistent with the spirit of the document, respecting diversity, emphasizing participation, and learning from locally-based knowledge and activities. Such processes involve learning through dialogue and the exchange of different perspectives as a practice that will enrich critical thinking.



2. Use the Earth Charter within existing educational programs and textbooks. In formal education, it can be very difficult to make room for new content. Opportunities should be explored to use the Earth Charter within existing educational programs. Educational systems, curricula and materials can be examined in order to identify opportunities for making use of the Earth Charter, for re-organizing existing material, and for informing curriculum development in light of the Earth Charter.



3. Avoid preaching or proselytizing. Values education requires that teachers and learners remain aware of the need to avoid proselytizing, respect the right of individual learners to independently hold or reject values, and understand that within the search for common ground, respect for cultural diversity is a central value.

4. Use the integrated, interdisciplinary vision of the Earth Charter. Education programs and activities using the Earth Charter should try and consider all parts and main themes of the Charter, thereby promoting an integrated, holistic approach. Often, one of the parts or themes of the Charter may serve as the entry into reflecting or analyzing a topic. However, the activity or program should seek as much as possible to work with the integrated vision of the Charter. This will require reflecting on the effects and implications of one part on another, such as the linkages between humanity's social, environmental, political, and economic challenges. Educational materials and programs based on the Earth Charter should reflect its multidisciplinary character, integrating the sciences, the humanities and the creative arts.



The Earth Charter provides a bridge between science and the humanities that can help to enhance the role of trans-disciplinary studies in our educational systems.

5. Provide opportunities for “learning by doing.” Earth Charter-based educational programs should use experiential learning activities that involve action-oriented learning or “learning by doing”, such as community outreach activities; a field trip to experience a specific context or situation addressed in class; learning activities that model real life situations, such as role-playing; and, “hands on” education experiences with research-oriented activities. Secondary and university students might consider forming a youth group and carrying out sustainability and peace-building projects. Experiential learning is essential to bridging the gap between espoused values and real-life actions. It also provides opportunities to experience what it means to implement sustainable living principles within one’s community and personal life. Experiential learning is particularly important for it is when we are engaged in action that our values are applied and tested.



6. Use flexible and contextualized educational processes. Earth Charter educational programs should wherever possible offer experiences and reflections closely related to, and rooted in, the contextual reality of the learners. Such processes should directly involve the learners and address their priorities as much as possible according to their context.



Earth Charter Film Events



One of the best and fastest way to introduce your family and community to sustainable living practices, principles, and practicalities is through film. There are a multitude of excellent movies out on DVD that are informative and in many cases doorways to individual/collective action. From food to green building all you need to do is go online and do a google search...here are some basic key word searches – type in ‘DVD’ after each one:



- Organic Food
- Permaculture
- Green Building

- Alternative Economies
- Green Energy
- EcoVillage
- Sustainable Communities
- Straw Bale homes
- Cob homes

Hosting a regular 'movie night' is an awesome way to bring together 'community' and begin working together on whatever projects or agendas that spontaneously and organically grow out of the gathering. You can create a 'Movie Night' group on the Earth Charter Community network and post the movies with reviews for other members to check out and perhaps do a showing within their own community or circle of friends.



More Resources and Links:

We envision this part of this guidebook growing as members contribute. If you have downloaded this guidebook and wish to add a resource, link, or suggest edits please email admin@earthchartercommunity.org

The following page begins the full text of the Earth Charter.





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.



EARTH CHARTER Community Network

Remember this book is just a starting place and with each new update a broadcast will go out and you will be able to download the newest version. That is the beauty of digital publishing – zero waste with ebooks!

**Thank you for endorsing the Earth Charter and being a part of
the Earth Charter Community Network!**

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