



**Ecosystem Human Health Consciousness,  
*An Earth Charter* based social learning  
strategy**

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## ***The Significance of the Earth Charter***

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“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” (*Preamble*)

# The Earth Charter' Rationale

We are in a critical moment  
in Earth's History





**“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

A culture of peace

“Let us work together”

*Youth of Rincón Grande de Pavas*





**“Dominant patterns of production and consumption are causing environmental devastation...”**





**Communities are being undermined.**



**“The benefits of development are not shared equitably and the gap between rich and poor is widening...violent conflict is widespread...”**





**“These trends are perilous—but not inevitable”**

**“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”**



**“Public institutions exist to benefit us, we should care for them”**  
*Youth of Rincón Grande de Pavas*

**“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.”**






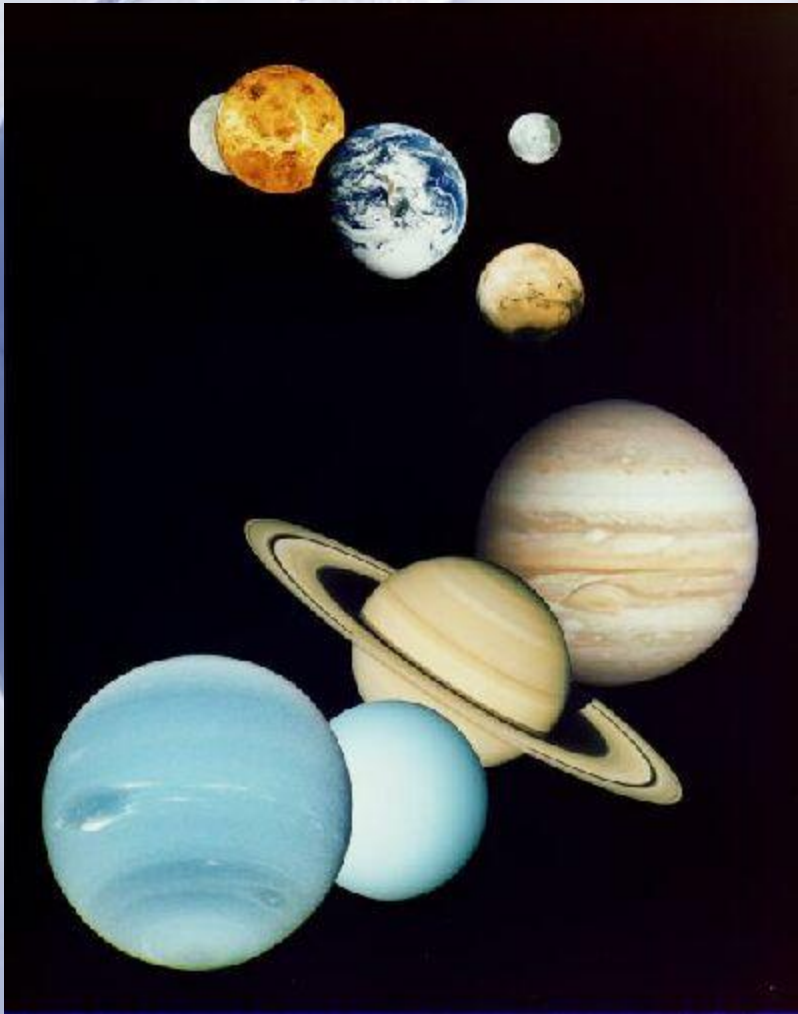
# The Earth Charter: Four basic principles



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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.

## Earth, within the solar system, is a community



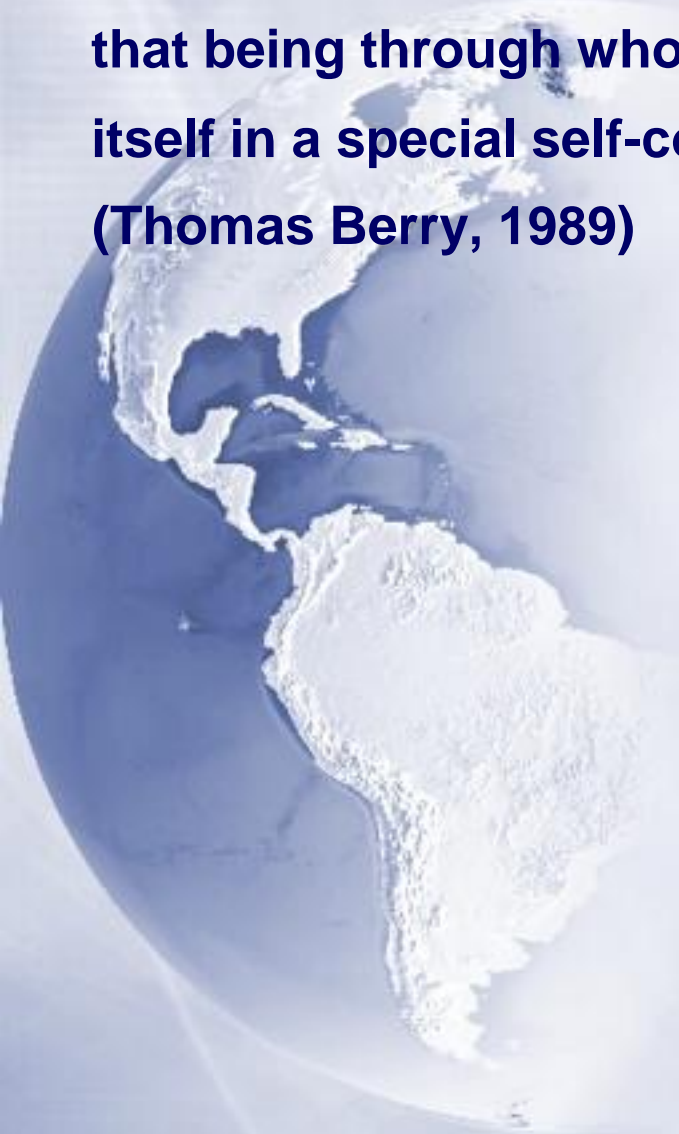
- Self-emergent,
- Self-propagating,
- Self-nourishing,
- Self-educating,
- Self-governing,
- Self-curing and
- Self-realizing.

*“All particular life systems must integrate their functioning within the larger complex of mutually dependent Earth systems”.* (Thomas Berry, 1989)



**“The human being emerges within the life systems of Earth as that being through whom the universe reflects and celebrates itself in a special self-consciousness”.**

**(Thomas Berry, 1989)**



**“In reality there is one single integral Earth Community which includes all of its human and non human members.”**



“In this community each being has its own role to play, its own integrity, its own spontaneity.

Each being has its own voice.

Each being declares itself before the whole universe.

Each being enters into communion with other beings.”  
(Thomas Berry, 1999)





## The Charter's fundamental ethical principles: *Universal and differentiated responsibility*



*“...we must take the decision to live according to a sense of **universal responsibility**, identifying ourselves with the whole Earth community as well as our local communities...Everyone shares responsibility for the present and future well-being of the human family and the larger living world. ...”*  
*(Preamble, prg.4)*



**“The sun shines equally for all, therefore we should treat one another as equals”**

*Youth of Rincón Grande de Pavas*

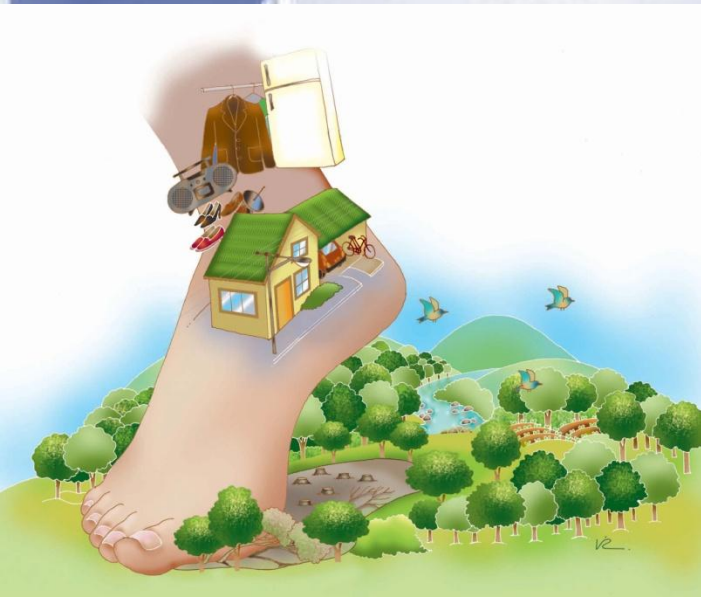
# Differential responsibility



**A shared ethic which aspires to universality is only applicable in our inequitable world, if it is complemented by the principle of differentiated responsibility:**

**“Affirm that with increased freedom, knowledge, and power comes increased responsibility to promote the common good”  
(2.b)**

**It requires a transmutation of power as dominance to generative power.**





# The *Earth Charter*—its view of human development



The development of virtues and altruistic motivations is the path to the exercise of universal responsibility in a differential manner:

*“We must realise that when basic needs have been met, human development is primarily about being more, not having more.”* (Preamble, prg. 4).



# Virtues, freedom and responsibility



- Virtues are “*strengths of character which enable persons to achieve their goals and ideals and to flourish as human beings*” (Fowers, 2005).
- To the degree in which the core values which integrate our being are motivated to the common good of all the community of life, an ethic of virtues harmonizes freedom with responsibility.

# Liberating potential of the Earth Charter's 'peace' concept



- The *Charter* presents an integral and positive peace concept, based on the Self-realization of persons and communities oriented towards by principles of generosity and joyful harmony:
- “Recognize that peace is the integrity created by right relationships with oneself, other people, other cultures, other forms of life, Earth and the whole of which we are all a part.” (16f).





# The United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (2005-2014) and the *Earth Charter*



In 2003 UNESCO resolved:

**“To confirm the intention of Member States to use the *Earth Charter* as an educational instrument, specially within the framework of the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development”**

**<http://portal.unesco.org/education/es>**

# **The 7 strategies of the *International Implementation Plan of the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development***

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1. Vision building and advocacy
2. Consultation and ownership
3. Partnerships and networks
4. Capacity-building and training
5. Research, development and innovation
6. Use of Information and Communication Technologies
7. Monitoring and evaluation



# **Educational uses of the *Earth Charter* for promoting sustainable living**

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- 1. Conscientization**
- 2. Personal development**
- 3. Application of values and principles**
- 4. A call to action**



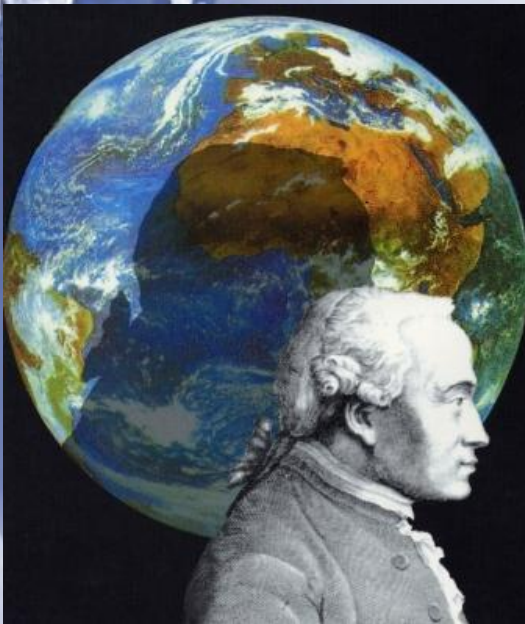
# The 7 Decade strategies & the educational uses of the *Charter*

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***Conscientization* is required to:**

- 1. Generate personal and shared visions of preferred, possible, and probable worlds.**
- 2. Conduct consultations to forge consensus and local cultural appropriations**

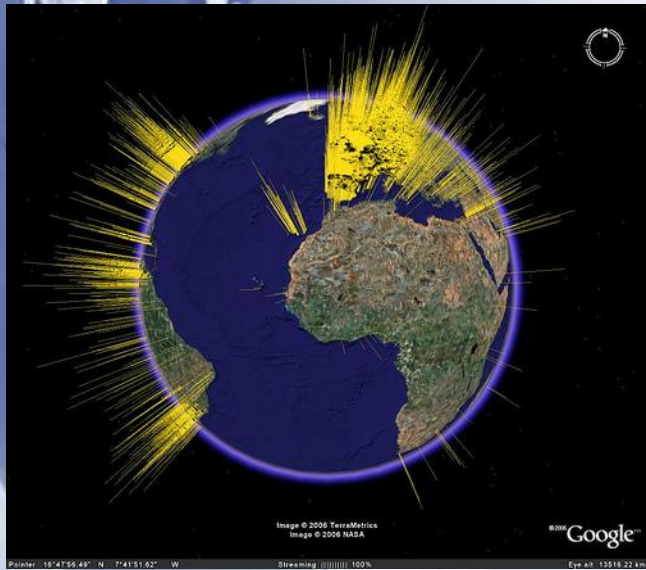


# The 7 Decade strategies & the educational uses of the *Charter*



## The pedagogic rationale:

1. Clarify and develop values to generate shared visions of preferred and possible worlds;
2. Design and plan critical paths to maximize their probability.





# Pedagogic principle for cultivating universal and differential responsibility



Principle 2 of the *Charter indicates:*

The kind of virtues and competencies we need to nurture to realize the following vision of human development:

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



# Application of values & principles

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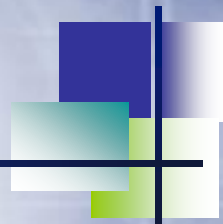


A **pedagogy for sustainable development** requires 3

interdependent transformations of consciousness and praxis:

1. Consciousness that we are facing survival issues
2. Critical capacity
3. Capacity to create the new that is needed

# Need for an Earth Eco-Social Learning System



## The EarthCharter as a living document



Citizens need to understand the relationship between

**Their ethical principles**



The **multilateral policy frameworks** of the U.N, regional organizations, national and local laws (foundation for human rights & duties, and ecological imperatives).



# Need for an Earth Eco-Social Learning System



Necessity of creating networks of cooperation between diverse civil society organizations, governments at all levels, the private sector and the academy.

# Need for an Earth Eco-Social Learning System



## Citizens and learners need:

- **Current information on the status of legislation**
- **To have an opportunity to participate in live and virtual forums**
- **To share educational resources and experiences and to learn how to value groups who model sustainable ways of living**

**This path can lead to strengthening multi-stakeholder governance, at all levels, through democratic participation and social learning**

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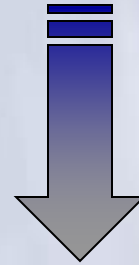
# Core component of a model of eco-social Earth learning

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- Strategic networks of citizen movements
- Virtual geographies of educational transformation
- Overcoming the digital gap in the world



**The *Earth Charter* can be used as:**



**An architecture to create a mega portal to provide citizens and learners with a dynamic space to share visions, monitor, and evaluate the state of Earth, the status of human and non-human governance processes, and sharing of learning resources for sustainable development.**

Example of [www.wiserearth.org](http://www.wiserearth.org)

