

THE EARTH CHARTER



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. 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.

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– Rio de Janeiro Earth Summit, 1992

● 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.

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, nonviolence, and peace.



Environmental Resolution

Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate, U.S. Province

In an effort to promote the Integrity of Creation, we seek to demonstrate a serious effort toward simplifying lifestyles and further committing to environmental stewardship.

WHEREAS:

The Vade Mecum on Justice Peace and the Integrity of Creation states, “Creation is gifted with all kinds of resources that are entrusted to the stewardship of the human family. As they are not unlimited, we have to preserve them for ourselves and for future generations. Competition for scarce resources creates conflicts, whilst the conservation of nature and natural resources contributes to justice and the maintenance of peace. These are three interlocking elements in the journey of the human family: justice, peace, integrity of creation. We have to work on all three levels.”

It further states, we “begin to realize that there can be no genuine justice and peace in our world unless we begin to act as true stewards of creation, thus safeguarding the survival and integrity of the planet.”

In The Ecological Crisis: A Common Responsibility, Pope John Paul II asserts, “Faced with the widespread destruction of the environment, people everywhere are coming to understand that we cannot continue to use the goods of the Earth as we have in the past ... The ecological crisis is a moral issue.”

Recycling decreases harm to the environment through reducing air and water pollution, limiting the demand for raw materials, and diverting waste from scarce landfill space.

The purchase and use of environmentally-friendly and organic products supports socially and ecologically responsible companies and prevents hazardous chemicals and emissions from polluting local communities and the natural world.

Environmental assessments of buildings enable communities to transform properties into examples of good ecological demonstration and cost efficiency, through implementing technologies and programs that are environmentally benign.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

The Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate endeavor to establish an internal environmental policy and principles to conserve energy and natural resources, to encourage the consumption of socially and ecologically responsible products, and to provide environmental health and safety to all Oblates and staff.