

Earth & Peace Education International



Transitions

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Transitions, the electronic educational resource of Earth and Peace Education International (EPE), focuses on our global community's progress towards a culture of peace—a society of institutions and norms based on nonviolence, ecological sustainability, social justice, intergenerational equity and participatory decision-making. It provides you with resources that highlight the relationship between social and ecological peace—an understanding of which is essential to effectively responding to social peacelessness and ecological degradation. *Anita Wenden, Editor*
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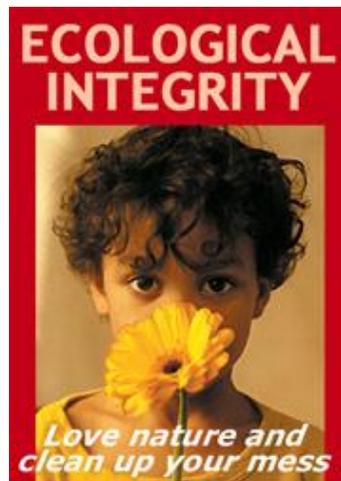
Editorial Notes

In this issue of *Transitions*, Frans Verhagen introduces us to the term ‘aviation justice’ another dimension essential to **Building Sustainable Communities**. He provides examples of aviation injustice and explains how aviation justice would remedy the situation. May East, our **Guest Columnist**, introduces us to the function of eco villages and to organizations that promote this model of a sustainable community.

Resources for integrated and value-based learning includes an account of the threat posed by global warming on the Earth’s oceans and weather systems, and as a result, on the life of the residents of the Cook Islands who must plan to adapt to these threats. You are also introduced to two sets of online courses one offered by the National Peace Academy and the other by Earth and Peace Education International.

The section on **Civil Society Organizations** (CSOs) brings news about Human Wrongs Watch and Children of the Earth Foundation.

The issue’s concluding section brings a **Plea and a Challenge** for openness and transparency in government from the Open Government Partnership.



Indeed, it has never been more important to heed the evidence of science that time is running out on our ability to manage successfully our impacts on the Earth’s environment, biodiversity, resource and life-support systems on which human life as we know it depends.
Maurice Strong, 2011

Creating Sustainable Communities

Aviation Justice

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Social justice is a value which focuses on how power, wealth, and resources in a society are distributed and used. In a just society, these social goods are used for the benefit of all groups; they are not used by any particular group to control other groups. Social justice opposes the violence on quality of life that is inflicted by unjust and inequitable social institutions and practices, a notion referred to as structural violence. The spotlight of social justice can be focused on conditions, events, and social actions in specific sectors of society to determine whether relationships among groups within these sectors can be characterized as just, e.g. gender justice, climate justice... This essay shines that spotlight on the transportation sector, specifically aviation, to determine whether there is aviation justice.

In fact, there are many injustices in the aviation industry. Listed below are but a few examples.

One major manifestation of aviation injustice consists of the fact that 5% of the world population flies while 95%, particularly in the developing countries, pay the costs in a changing climate and its consequences on their quality of life. Clearly there is an imbalance, here, in the distribution of benefits to the wealthy few and costs to the less economically privileged.

Aviation justice would require that efforts within the transportation industry be made to reduce global warming by promoting ecologically sustainable modes of surface transportation and to establish a climate fund for adaptation in the developing world.

Imbalance can also be found in the distribution of benefits among industries. Because of its political power and lobbying acumen, the aviation industry is able to acquire government exemptions from taxes on fuel; civil and military manufacturers receive government subsidies. These are privileges other industries do not have .

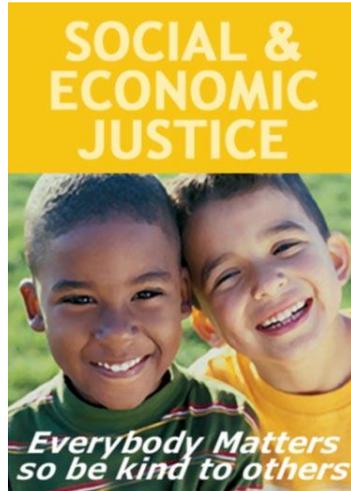
Aviation justice would require the industry to internalize its ecological costs e.g. the fact that it emits 5% of all CO2 emissions and social costs, e.g. the detrimental health effects of these emissions. .

Another major injustice is perpetrated on people and communities near airports. Many of these communities were there before the airport arrived and they are most often insufficiently compensated for the noise and pollution that is rained upon them in the normal course of an airport's operations. In unusual situations they have to accept fuel dumping. Nor is consideration given to the fact that the incidence of asthma and other respiratory diseases together with incidence of cancer are significantly higher around airports.

Aviation justice would require that a fund be established to compensate those who have suffered the consequences of an airport's operations.

The industry's greatest injustice towards people and planet results from its expansion syndrome, the theoretical underpinning of which is growthism an ideology that prevents the emergence of sustainable production and consumption patterns. Manifested in its plans to expand airports, build more runways, increase air flights, such expansionist views lead to an unjust appropriation of more than their fair share of Earth's resources which will diminish the quality of life of Earth citizens in the present.

In a manner similar to electric load management by utilities, aviation justice would require that the efficient management of flight demands be a substitute for more runways and flights.



Critical social justice recognizes inequality as deeply embedded in the fabric of society and actively seeks to change this.

Ozlem Sensoy & Robin DiAngelo 2012

Gaia Education: Designing for Sustainability

MAY EAST is the Ecovillage Project Education Coordinator at the Findhorn Foundation ecovillage in Scotland and Director of International Relations between the Foundation, the Global Ecovillage Network and the United Nations. May is a teacher of the International Holistic University and works internationally as an ecovillage consultant and educator.

Some day, after we have mastered the winds, the waves, the tides and gravity, we shall harness the energies of love.

Teilhard de Chardin

Ecovillages are laboratories of new human relations, laboratories where we test the power of the new systemic thinking required to bring about the necessary changes in the local and global economic, social and ecological environments. Ecovillages provide conditions for cutting-edge sustainability experiments. In these living and learning laboratories, we swiftly learn from mistakes and advances. Both are held in a complex framework of dream and vision, earth and cosmos, technology and spirit, intention and love, dance and chant, cycle and balance, death and renewal.

What is sustained in an ecovillage is not economic growth or development but rather the entire web of life on which our long term survival depends. A sustainable community is designed in such a way that its ways of life, businesses, economy, social activities, physical structures and technologies, rather than interfering with, integrate with Nature's inherent ability to sustain life.

As laboratories of sustainable living, ecovillages offer widely applicable insights for the planning and reorganisation of our societies. They combine a supportive socio-cultural environment with a low-impact, high-quality lifestyle. When we look at the ecovillage model developed on 5 continents, it is clear that ecovillages are creating a sustainable middle ground between rich and poor while designing interdependent and life-enhancing bio-physical and psycho-social processes. In these experiments we find no sign of the deprivation that seems, in the popular media, to be the necessary price for reducing resource consumption.

Established in 1995, the *Global Village Network* (GEN - gen.ecovillage.org) is a worldwide association of communities, organisations and individuals working to create a

sustainable planetary culture. In 1998 the first ecovillages were officially named among the UN Habitat top 100 listing of Best Practices, as excellent models of sustainable living. GEN is convinced that the most promising way to move the sustainability agenda is through education. As life conditions change rapidly, the body of knowledge needs refreshing constantly and it takes the organic nature of a network to own and refresh it with new experiences.

Gaia Education www.gaiaeducation.net, officially founded in July 2005 as an offshoot of GEN, is a consortium of experienced ecovillage educators from around the globe, united in the effort to make accessible to a wide audience the valuable lessons learned from ecovillage design and development over the past several years.

The main achievement of this group is the far reaching Ecovillage Design Education curriculum, or EDE. The EDE curriculum is systemically organized as a mandala of what is perceived to be the four primary, intrinsic dimensions of human experience: Ecological, Social, Economic and Worldview. Each of these four dimensions, in turn, contains five modules – thus twenty subject areas in total. It serves the purpose of educating for the transition to a comprehensively sustainable culture – broadly global in scope yet determinedly local in application. It focuses on fundamental principles, themes and aspects needing to be addressed in any comprehensive introduction to sustainability design and development.

What sets this education as being distinct from the numerous other 'sustainability educations' appearing at this time is that the context for this education – the setting or active campus – is right here in the world's quintessential, prototypical, sustainable community models: ecovillages.

The curriculum draws on the experience and expertise developed in the network of some of the most successful ecovillages and community projects across the Earth. The EDE was introduced in 2005 to complement, correspond with, and assist in setting a standard for the United Nations' "Decade of Education for Sustainable Development – 2005-2014."

From the village council to the negotiating table, this moment in history is calling forth the best and the strongest in each one of us. Together, we are reversing current trends of an unsustainable world. We are transcending and including the good, beautiful and truth of all ages. We are crafting systemic strategies that are most likely to change the world for the better as quickly and in as integrated a manner as possible.

In this process the power of community is giving us growing evidence that substantial reductions in footprints are possible in ways that are easily achievable and will improve our quality of life. Community-led initiatives are developing models that have been proven to work and that hold an important key in our transition towards more sustainable societies.

In this journey we remember Gandhi's living message and aspire not to elevate the goals above the means. The route we travel to reach the goal determines what life will be like once we get there. The route must mirror the goal. Our actions today embody and enact the sustainable world we want to live tomorrow.

You never change things by fighting the existing reality. To change something, build a new model that makes the existing model obsolete.
Buckminster Fuller



Resources for integrative value-based learning

The Cook Islands Adapt to Global Warming and Climate Change

In this report, originally posted on www.cmdcngo.org, Sister Margaret O'Dwyer, DC describes the threat posed by global warming on the Earth's oceans and weather systems, and as a result, on the life of the residents of the Cook Islands. She describes how islanders are planning to adapt to these threats.

The Cook Islands are diligently planning to protect their “*enua*” (lands) and “*moana*” (ocean) from effects of global warming and climate change, even though they bear minimal responsibility for causing them.

“Big countries are into *mitigation*, but *adaptation* is our *only* choice,” said Deyna Marsh, Education and Awareness Coordinator for the Cook Islands National Environment Services. “Changes are already happening. Sea levels are rising all around the Pacific. **ES** If nothing is done now, we will lose our Islands, our traditions, our culture. Buildings and infrastructure on the foreshore will be lost or damaged, and both food security and the health of the people will be affected.”

A workshop held in Rarotonga, February 28 to March 4, produced a Cook Islands Climate Change Adaptation Plan. If the Plan is approved by managers of the Kyoto Protocol Climate Change Adaptation Fund, the Cook Islands could receive \$5 million in support.

Pasha Carruthers, Cook Islands National Environment Service’s Island Futures Manager and organizer of the workshop, says global warming and climate change are affecting the Islands in many and serious ways.

First, sea levels are rising at the rate of about .5 millimeters per year, or about 4 centimeters over a decade, she said. Rising sea levels affect the pearl industry and tourism. Pearls need certain temperatures for peak production. If temperatures rise, the pearl returns aren’t favorable.

Secondly, the Islands are experiencing more severe weather events. Cyclone Pat in early 2010 caused nearly \$12 million (New Zealand) in devastation to the Island of Aitutaki while Tropical Storm 11 (later Cyclone Sarah) destroyed the School in Penrhyn. The frequency and intensity of cyclones is up. “When we get cyclones, we get substantial damage to infrastructure,” said Mathilda Miriea-Tairea, who was Project Manager for The Cyclone Emergency Assistance Loan, which helped the Cooks recover from five cyclones which struck various islands in early 2005. “Harbors, roads, schools, buildings and hospitals all required repairs.” One of the five cyclones, Percy, which struck the Island of Pukaka, also served as an example of how powerful waves can salinate taro patches, destroying the crop and threatening food security.

Third, there is a shift in rainfall and weather patterns. According to Cook Islands Meteorological Service, the average temperature is increasing by about a degree, so seasons will be longer, hotter, and drier. Some islands are receiving more rainfall than usual, while others, such as Penrhyn, are experiencing drought. “If you don’t get the seasonal rainfall, or the cycles are out of whack, you could have empty water tanks,” said Carruthers. Storm surge damage also will increase. Planters are noticing changes in growing seasons and are researching ways to make plants more adaptable to heat, drought, and higher rainfall. Food security is a definite issue.

Fourthly, reefs suffer extensively from global warming. Reefs protect shorelines from storm surges, serve as homes to marine life, and attract tourists. But rising sea temperatures are affecting the coral. Coral can bleach due to heat stress which damages the algae which supply them with food. Carruthers mentions another, relatively new, phenomenon which requires more study. “Five years ago, we didn’t think that as more carbon dioxide enters the air, the ocean takes it up through phytoplankton and stores it, causing acidification,” she said. “That makes the ocean less alkaline, which puts more pressure on coral reefs. It dissolves them. The coral reefs can’t withstand it.”

Following the workshop, Island leaders are gathering more data, brainstorming about adaptation and suggesting many solutions, such as planting more coconut trees, improving cyclone shelters, researching weather-resistant crop trees to prevent soil erosion, better preparation for disaster reliefs, and greater reef protection. The Pacific Conference of Churches issued a position paper in April, 2009, particularly related to climate change refugees. “To continue to walk the current path of ecological destruction is not only recklessness; it’s a sin,” the paper states. What would Islanders say to larger nations who are great carbon emitters? “They need to care about the little guys,” says Ms. Marsh, “Take a little more time to consider us. We’re humans, too! We also have communities, and we are profoundly affected by climate change.”

The questions that follow are based on the Earth Charter principles. Use them to evaluate the impact of carbon emissions on the life of Cook Islanders. Based on your evaluation, what would you advise the “larger nations who are great carbon emitters” to do?

A value framework for evaluating social and ecological realities

Anita L. Wenden

Ecological sustainability

According to the report, who is primarily responsible for increasing carbon emissions which have increased the rate of global warming and climate change? How is climate change and global warming affecting Earth’s life support systems, e.g. sea levels and the weather in the Cook Islands?

Do humans have the right to a life style that so affects the Earth’s well being? In other words, should Earth rights be taken into account in evaluating the impact of the human lifestyles, the carbon emissions of which affects the functioning of the Earth’s life support systems in this way? Why? Why not?

Mitigation refers to attempts to control and reduce global warming by reducing the emission of carbon. Do a web search using the key words 'mitigation of carbon footprints' or 'carbon mitigation' to determine whether & how community groups or governments in industrialized and developing countries are making any efforts to reduce carbon emissions.

Social justice

How has the life of the residents of the Cook Islands been affected by the impact of global warming on the oceans and weather? Would you consider these consequences to be a violation of their human rights? i.e. What rights do citizens have to a weather system that ensures the fulfillment of their basic human needs?

How should the people of the Cook Islands be compensated for the threat to their livelihood and wellbeing posed by the consequences of climate change? Who should be responsible for providing this compensation? Who should benefit from such compensation? Why?

Intergenerational equity

How will the threat to Earth's oceans and weather system posed by high carbon emissions affect the quality of life of people in future generations? Would such a threat be a violation of their human rights? If so, which ones?

What should local and national governments do to ensure that the rights of future generations are not violated in this regard? international decision-making bodies?

Participatory decisionmaking

How has the government of the Cook Islands responded to the threat posed by climate change on its citizens? In dealing with these problems, have the concerns of individuals and groups been solicited? of the most powerless and vulnerable groups? If not should they be?

Courses online

National Peace Academy (NPA) Peacebuilding Peacelearning Certificate Program

For those seeking to create positive change in themselves, their communities, and the world, the NPA's National Peacebuilding Peacelearning Certificate Program offers courses that provide a holistic view of peace through inquiry into five inter-related and interdependent spheres of peace that comprise the NCP framework, i.e. the *personal, social, political, institutional and the ecological*. The program draws upon the expertise of a consortium of organizations, e.g. *Teachers without Borders, Adelphi University,*

Metta Center for Nonviolence, TechChange-the Institute for Technology and Social Change, Earth and Peace Education International and will be launched in the spring of 2012. For more information about the certificate and the courses visit www.nationalpeaceacademy.us or

Earth and Peace Education International

EPE offers five-week courses, thematically organized to help you to reflect upon 1) a value-based ethic for a sustainable Earth and a culture of peace; 2) the climate crisis ; 3) sustainable communities. They are offered in the Fall (October – November) and the Spring (March – April) and limited to a minimum of 3 & a maximum of 8 participants.

SPRING 2012

Approaches to reducing global warming - February 27 to March 30

Introduction to Sustainable Communities - April 2 to May 4

FALL 2012

Ethical issues for a planet in crisis: An introduction - September 10 to October 12

Distributing wealth, resources and power - October 15 to November 16

For more information visit www.globalepe.org or write to wenden@rcn.org

Books



Mey Eltayeb Ahmed

**The National and Indigenous
Management of
Environmental Conflicts**
in the Savannah Belt, Sudan
Case studies of the Blue Nile and Nuba Mountains



The National and Indigenous Management of Environmental Conflicts in the Savannah Belt: Sudan Case Studies of the Blue Nile and Nuba Mountains

Mey Eltayeb

This research seeks to understand the management of natural resource conflicts in the Savannah belt in Sudan, focusing on the interaction between indigenous and central governmental conflict management mechanisms. By analyzing the various actors' perceptions, interests and needs regarding different conflict management mechanisms, the study aims to indicate conflict management mechanisms appropriate to the Savannah region in Sudan. Conceptually, the research explores how approaches from legal pluralism and conflict transformation can be synthesized and adapted to a different cultural setting to analyze how to mitigate environmental conflicts.
Lambert ACADEMIC PUBLISHING ISBN 978-3-8383-9712-2, paperback, 228 Pages

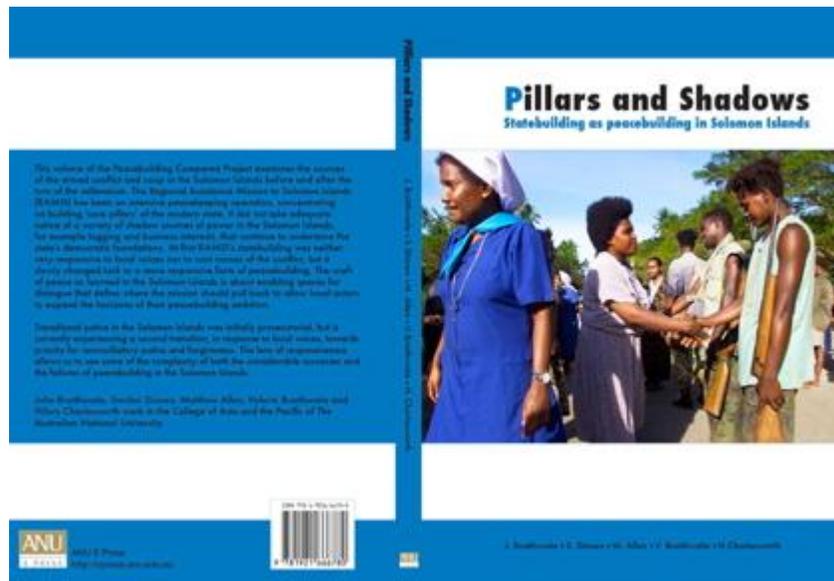
Pillars and Shadows: Statebuilding as Peacebuilding in Solomon Islands by

John Braithwaite, Sinclair Dinnen, Matthew Allen, Hilary Charlesworth and Leah Dunn (Canberra: ANU E Press, 2010). The E-publication is free to download from ANU E Press:

http://epress.anu.edu.au/pillars_shadows_citation.html

Hard copies can be purchased for AUD\$19.95 at the same address. The previous two publications on Indonesia and Bougainville are also available at:

<http://epress.anu.edu.au>.



Videos

UN Women Say NO – UNiTE to End Violence against Women

"MONSTERS" VIDEO - IMPACT OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ON CHILDREN & FAMILIES

<http://www.youtube.com/saynotoviolence>

"MONSTERS" portrays the alarming impact of domestic violence on families and children, as seen through the eyes of a young girl. Studies suggest that between 3.3 million and 10 million children witness some form of domestic violence each year.

The video notes that girls who witness abuse are more likely to be abused later in life, and boys are twice as likely to abuse their own partners -- "because that's the world they know."

MONSTERS is produced and funded by the Verizon Foundation and supported by the National Domestic Violence Hotline.

Moving Planet



WATCH THE VIDEO >>

[Watch the Moving Planet Video: www.350.org/moving-together](http://www.350.org/moving-together)

Civil Society Organizations (CSOs)

Human wrongs watch

Baher Kamal and the like

Everybody talks about human ‘rights’. Nevertheless, human beings have been perpetrating, systematically, all kinds of wrongs—they kill each other, they destroy forests, seas, lands, and atmosphere. Simply, humans are now more than ever under the mercy of two dominant powers: the ‘market lords’ and the ‘war lords’—everything, humans included, are now subject to trade deals.

Human wrongs Watch informs about some of the many human ‘wrongs’ to draw our attention to these ‘misdoings and slow down the consumerization of society.

For articles reporting on recent human ‘wrongs’ visit their website at <http://human-wrongs-watch.net/>

Children of the Earth Foundation

Mission

It is their mission to ensure the survival of future generations by guiding youth and community to a pure connection with the Earth.

Program goals include

- Creating a profound respect for the Earth and all of its inhabitants.
- Supporting and nurturing the personal growth and self-esteem of our participants through survival skills, animal tracking, nature awareness, storytelling, and performance.
- Instilling a deeper connection to the Earth as true caretakers, passionate about learning.

www.cotetf.org

Let ours be the time remembered for the awakening of 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

A plea and a challenge

OPEN GOVERNMENT DECLARATION

[English](#) - [Español](#) - [Français](#) - [Português](#)

September 2011

As members of the Open Government Partnership, committed to the principles enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the UN Convention against Corruption, and other applicable international instruments related to human rights and good governance:

We acknowledge that people all around the world are demanding more openness in government. They are calling for greater civic participation in public affairs, and seeking ways to make their governments more transparent, responsive, accountable, and effective.

We recognize that countries are at different stages in their efforts to promote openness in government, and that each of us pursues an approach consistent with our national priorities and circumstances and the aspirations of our citizens.

We accept responsibility for seizing this moment to strengthen our commitments to promote transparency, fight corruption, empower citizens, and harness the power of new technologies to make government more effective and accountable.

We uphold the value of openness in our engagement with citizens to improve services, manage public resources, promote innovation, and create safer communities. We embrace principles of transparency and open government with a view toward achieving greater prosperity, well-being, and human dignity in our own countries and in an increasingly interconnected world.

Together, we declare our commitment to:

Increase the availability of information about governmental activities.

Governments collect and hold information on behalf of people, and citizens have a right to seek information about governmental activities. We commit to promoting increased access to information and disclosure about governmental activities at every level of government. We commit to increasing our efforts to systematically collect and publish data on government spending and performance for essential public services and activities. We commit to pro-actively provide high-value information, including raw data, in a timely manner, in formats that the public can easily locate, understand and

use, and in formats that facilitate reuse. We commit to providing access to effective remedies when information or the corresponding records are improperly withheld, including through effective oversight of the recourse process. We recognize the importance of open standards to promote civil society access to public data, as well as to facilitate the interoperability of government information systems. We commit to seeking feedback from the public to identify the information of greatest value to them, and pledge to take such feedback into account to the maximum extent possible.

Support civic participation.

We value public participation of all people, equally and without discrimination, in decision making and policy formulation. Public engagement, including the full participation of women, increases the effectiveness of governments, which benefit from people's knowledge, ideas and ability to provide oversight. We commit to making policy formulation and decision making more transparent, creating and using channels to solicit public feedback, and deepening public participation in developing, monitoring and evaluating government activities. We commit to protecting the ability of not-for-profit and civil society organizations to operate in ways consistent with our commitment to freedom of expression, association, and opinion. We commit to creating mechanisms to enable greater collaboration between governments and civil society organizations and businesses.

Implement the highest standards of professional integrity throughout our administrations.

Accountable government requires high ethical standards and codes of conduct for public officials. We commit to having robust anti-corruption policies, mechanisms and practices, ensuring transparency in the management of public finances and government purchasing, and strengthening the rule of law. We commit to maintaining or establishing a legal framework to make public information on the income and assets of national, high ranking public officials. We commit to enacting and implementing rules that protect whistleblowers. We commit to making information regarding the activities and effectiveness of our anticorruption prevention and enforcement bodies, as well as the procedures for recourse to such bodies, available to the public, respecting the confidentiality of specific law enforcement information. We commit to increasing deterrents against bribery and other forms of corruption in the public and private sectors, as well as to sharing information and expertise.

Increase access to new technologies for openness and accountability.

New technologies offer opportunities for information sharing, public participation, and collaboration. We intend to harness these technologies to make more information public in ways that enable people to both understand what their governments do and to influence decisions. We commit to developing accessible and secure online spaces as platforms for delivering services, engaging the public, and sharing information and ideas. We recognize that equitable and affordable access to technology is a challenge, and commit to seeking increased online and mobile connectivity, while also identifying

and promoting the use of alternative mechanisms for civic engagement. We commit to engaging civil society and the business community to identify effective practices and innovative approaches for leveraging new technologies to empower people and promote transparency in government. We also recognize that increasing access to technology entails supporting the ability of governments and citizens to use it. We commit to supporting and developing the use of technological innovations by government employees and citizens alike. We also understand that technology is a complement, not a substitute, for clear, useable, and useful information.

We acknowledge that open government is a process that requires ongoing and sustained commitment. We commit to reporting publicly on actions undertaken to realize these principles, to consulting with the public on their implementation, and to updating our commitments in light of new challenges and opportunities.

We pledge to lead by example and contribute to advancing open government in other countries by sharing best practices and expertise and by undertaking the commitments expressed in this declaration on a non-binding, voluntary basis. Our goal is to foster innovation and spur progress, and not to define standards to be used as a precondition for cooperation or assistance or to rank countries. We stress the importance to the promotion of openness of a comprehensive approach and the availability of technical assistance to support capacity- and institution-building.

We commit to espouse these principles in our international engagement, and work to foster a global culture of open government that empowers and delivers for citizens, and advances the ideals of open and participatory 21st century government.

Countries that have endorsed the declaration as of September 20, 2011:

- Brazil
- Indonesia
- Mexico
- Norway
- Philippines
- South Africa
- United Kingdom
- United States



EPE mission statement

Founded in 1992, Earth & Peace Education International* (EPE) aims to promote the recognition of the reciprocal relationship between ecological degradation and the violation of human rights on a local, national and global level, in other words between social and ecological violence and its converse, social and ecological peace.

Contextual sustainability, the organizing principle underlying EPE's educational approach, defines this relationship. It assumes that the Earth is the primary context and essential foundation of all social activity and that ecological sustainability is key to achieving a culture of peace. Reciprocally, respect for human rights characterizes the social context essential to ecological sustainability.

EPE's educational activities facilitate the development of an *integrated* and *value-based* perspective on issues related to the achievement of a culture of social and ecological peace.

***EPE was formerly known as Earth and Peace Education Associates International**

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Contributions to Transitions

Send contributions for the newsletter to Wenden@rcn.com, e.g.

- accounts from your region that show the link between social violence and ecological destruction or the reverse – social and ecological peace
- reports on projects working for the development of sustainable, just, nonviolent, and participatory communities
- educational resources

