

ONE PLANET - ONE COMMUNITY

# Earth Focus

## RETHINK IT ALL

### Sustainable Development

Rethinking the meaning of Commitment.  
A fresh look at what's been accomplished  
and what yet remains to be done. By Mark  
Halle

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### Plastic Free Living

An exclusive guide for minimising your  
daily use of plastics

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### Let's Talk About the F - Word

No its not what you think, but reactions to  
it are similar

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### Remembering Jacques Fresco

A true visionary presenting a well rounded  
vision for creating a harmonious global  
society

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# MESSAGE FROM EFF PRESIDENT

It is with great pleasure that we announce the re-launching of our publication, the Earth Focus magazine originally begun in 1992. The articles available on line will allow many to be informed, to question and to share common experiences that touch on sustainable development. Wishing you a good read. Marco Föllmi, President of the Earth Focus Foundation.

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Upper photo EFM Editorial Committee from top left, Ridima, Martin, Milli, Laura, Nicola and Camille. Lower image conference focusing on Latin America & co-organised by Earth Focus.

Complementary conferences, debates and discussions were organised to keep a follow up element and for more opportunities for exchange.

# Foreword

In an atmosphere of continuous disinformation, many important developments (and past ones) continue to be ignored. It is in this context that the idea to relaunch the Earth Focus magazine was taken.

The thing is we have solutions to most world problems. They just need support to be realised.

Now is the time for action! Contributions contributed content as well as regular input by a host of experts.

## HISTORY OF EF MAGAZINE

Following the historic Rio Earth Summit in 1992, a lively debate was held at the Pregny campus of the Geneva International School. With the help Mr. David Batten, the outcome of that discussion led to the publication of the first Earth Focus magazine.

## LEARN SHARE & ACT

Since then, 36 issues have been published and circulated worldwide fostering exchange and further discussion. Students at every level, whether primary, secondary or in higher education contributed content as well as regular input by a host of experts.



## COVER COMPETITION

In celebration of the re-launch of the Earth Focus Magazine we would like to invite you to help choose what best represents us and what we stand for within our foundation.

We invite you to a cover page competition for our next issue! What do you think represents Earth Focus Foundation?! Don't miss your chance to have your artwork, photograph, or drawing presented as the cover page of our next issue! We warmly invite you to show us what you think of issues within the Sustainable Development realm! The overall theme for the next issue is Down to Earth, What does this mean? To us it means putting things back into perspective, gaining a sense of reality within a media crazed information society, examining the world and its issues from a holistic and accessible view. What does Down to Earth mean to you? Interested in participating?

Please send your submissions to [editor@earthfocus.org](mailto:editor@earthfocus.org)

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to share?

FOR CONTENT  
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ORG](mailto:EDITOR@EARTHFOCUS.ORG)

WE LOOK FORWARD TO  
SHARING YOUR STORY

Write us!





# Sustainable Development

## Rethinking the meaning of commitment.

2015 was a bumper year for promises. In July our governments adopted the Addis Ababa Action Agenda on Financing for Development. In September, they adopted the 2030 Agenda with its 17 Sustainable Development Goals and 169 targets. And, to crown the year, they adopted the Paris climate accord in December, under which governments committed to action to keep global warming well below 2 degrees Celsius.

Before we conclude that our work is done, however, we should ask ourselves exactly what is meant when our governments solemnly adopt these texts. To what exactly are they “committing”? Is there any way effectively to hold them to their commitments? Can a price be exacted should they neglect to do what they promised?

Past practice is not encouraging. The list of goals, targets, action plans, strategies and other ceremonial attributes of consensus that have gathered dust on the shelf grows longer by the day. The reality is that while governments get plenty of credit for signing up, there is no real price to be paid for failing to comply and a million ready excuses for letting commitment flag until a new set of goals can be adopted and replace the old set.

Back to the 2015 crop: what is the nature of our commitment to the SDGs, or to the Paris agreement? Both are, of course, voluntary. Neither is binding or enforceable in the normal sense of the term. Nobody can take a UN State member to court over its failure to implement the actions it solemnly and publicly undertook to deliver. Indeed, the Paris Agreement was built from the bottom up, on the basis of the “Intended Nationally-Determined Contributions” of each Party. In other words, country X said “we are prepared to do this” and the others took note. Put all these INDCs together and you have a catalogue of promises made. What we agreed to was what was agreed. No country is obliged to do more than what they declared they intended to do anyway. In fact, no country is even obliged to do that.

Of course after years of failing to agree anything comprehensive, it was important to show that the world can agree on something, even if the sum total of the intended contributions falls far short of what is needed to deliver a result below two degrees Celsius. But the only arm of implementation, in reality, is moral suasion. Countries may well feel they need to play their part and, if they do, so much the better. If they don’t there is not much we can do other than wring our hands and lament the bad faith in evidence.

Or maybe not. Happily, we don’t depend on governments for the bulk of the progress made. Possibly the most direct result of the Paris agreement is that it represents a certain guarantee of continuity and alignment in climate policy, and that in turn translates into a major shift in the investment patterns of private capital owners. The positive effect of this shift – matched with the policy and regulatory moves by the more advanced governments - could precipitate a transformative change in the alignment of investment with low-carbon goals, which is, after all, the third objective of the Paris agreement.

The result is probably most evident in the pace at which clean energy technology is developing and being adopted around the world. Further development of renewable energy, battery storage, electric vehicles and the like could take us a long way to meeting the goals of the climate agreement. We may succeed simply because the market is going in that direction anyway, aligning with the established public policy goals. Paris will have speeded up the market transition.

The SDGs – for all the enthusiasm and determination of countries to implement them - are unlikely to have the same market-transforming impact. Even if they were solemnly adopted, whether or not they are implemented at the national level is up to the countries themselves. Aside from reputation, peer pressure and the fear of our problems growing steadily worse, there are no real tools with which to exercise accountability. The complexity of the SDG agenda means that it cannot represent the sort of framework that investors are looking for, so its impact on shifting patterns of investment may not be very great.

The real question, however, is that which asks if sustainable development is genuinely compatible with the dominant global system of economic organization. If it is, there is a major adjustment job to be done. If not, however, what we need is transformation – a shift that fundamentally changes the way in which we relate to the planet, and in particular in the way that financial and capital markets work. We cannot, under this scenario, wait around for markets to lead us through the needed changes.

Naomi Klein, in her book “This Changes Everything”, states starkly that we can have either a two degree ceiling, or we can continue to use coal, but not both. If she is right – and I strongly suspect she is – then we need not only to make the choice, but to face up to its consequences as quickly as possible.

Frankly, it means killing the coal industry by whatever legal means possible – legislation, social movements, starving off funding, divestment, stranding assets, technological advance, programmes for the affected workers and communities, or whatever it takes.

This is the kind of rethinking we need to get used to if we are genuinely going to achieve the SDGs or limit global warming to the two degree ceiling or, hopefully, much less. It is not tinkering around with adjustments to the current, failed, system. Again, the current realities of finance offer a sobering wake-up. Estimates of what is required to implement the SDGs range between \$1.8 and \$5 trillion dollars per year through 2030. It seems like a large figure but it is only a small percentage of global GDP – or even of assets under management. A recent report from OECD suggests that some \$21 trillion is hidden from public view, evading taxes and contributing little to the public purse. Loopholes allow a single corporation - Apple - to keep cash piles of almost \$300 billion abroad, out of the reach of the US Internal Revenue Service and outside the productive economy.

By contrast, official development assistance – which never came close to the target, set in 1966, of 0.7% of the GDP of the OECD countries - hovers around \$140 billion, and that figure is likely to sink rather than rise. Our target of raising \$100 billion per year to spend on urgent climate actions in developing countries through the Green Climate Fund has not even hit the 20% mark.

And yet, at the same time, we spend some \$500 billion a year subsidising carbon-based fuels, an incentive that directly and conspicuously undermines the climate targets set out in the Paris agreement. That is four times the total of development assistance and, since it has a perverse effect, serves to cancel it out to a large extent.

We all know that aid will not deliver development. The capital available in the private sector will need to be mobilized. It is disturbing therefore to learn that two tiny Caribbean colonies – the Cayman Islands and the British Virgin Islands – receive more foreign direct investment than Africa, or that the 50 or so Least-Developed Countries – those most in need of investment - receive no more than 5% of aggregate FDI.

Sustainable development requires not only doing new, good, things but phasing out unsustainable practices. Many of those practices are to be found in the rules that govern financial and capital markets. It is no use sitting around and hoping that the world will suddenly wake up and act responsibly, in the long-term interests of the entire planetary population. The rewards for favouring short-term gain over long-term benefit, of investing in activities that damage social cohesion, and organizing to secure advantages for a special interest group at the expense of the population at large are simply too great.



Noticias Positivas based in Argentina shared an interview with us about a recent venture to make paper from stone. Belgian entrepreneur Gunter Pauli is the creator of the ZERI foundation that's dedicated to promoting the concept of a Blue Economy and Asian businessman Henry Liang, CEO of the Lung Meng Technologies Co., whose company produces stone paper. Yes, Liang produces paper made of stone and not cellulose pulp.

-What importance does a project like this have under the concept of Blue Economy?

Gunter Pauli: -Blue Economy proposes that we use what is available locally, and that we focus on creating more added value for what is already available. It suggests that we respond to the country's necessities, and that we regenerate the environment, using a clean, healthy and full of added value

production. Stone paper is, after all, limestone; a residue of mining activity. This residue is combined (80 %) with plastics (20 %), that can also be recycled, and the combination of both gives us a type of paper that doesn't need water or cutting trees for its production, and that can be recycled for ever. This is Blue Economy.]

-What is the role of the Ministry of Environment regarding this type of initiative?

Sergio Bergman: -With you we share good news, and it is good news to migrate from just seeing the environment to actually protecting it – when we are always arriving late or in the wrong way-, and seeing the State as a 'Green Police' that has to be controlling and auditing to not generate damage. Migrate, I say, towards the paradigm of sustainable development, which wants to stimulate a responsible use of the environment that generates added value, that changes the paradigm.



# Sustainable Development as a Science?

Author in Focus:

Didier Blasco - Consulting Engineer and Teacher,

loves to share his knowledge, disseminate information and animate, with much listening and creativity, to lead towards autonomy and assertive expression of personal gifts.

His feelings about Earth Focus Foundation: "New approaches to sustainability through empathy and ethics, opening to innovative education and management practices."



Answering this question in an academic way is already limiting the view on what Sustainable Development (SD) actually is, when using exclusively a cognitive mental approach. Yes, SD is a science, in the classical understanding of this word: analytical, pragmatic, and well-founded on concrete and repeatable results. But SD is a rational approach of complexity, and therefore, SD is not reductionist, and does not chunk reality into separate and wrongly supposed independent pieces. On the contrary, SD is demonstrating that these old and limited thinking ways are limiting our understanding of reality. Because SD goes across different scientific fields, considers different points of view, connects layers of reality in a holistic way and opens to the dynamics of self-organising systems.

Let's be practical and consider a simple example for the determination of an agricultural best practiced, in sub-Saharan Africa. On the one hand, you have the possibility to increase the grain crop by 60% to 80%, by the use of chemical fertilizers that are financed at first with development grants from northern countries. On the other hand, you can consider the use of seeds specific of the arid areas, of organic fertilizers, and new practices combined with ancestral and local forgotten agricultural practices, and get a 200% and more grain crop increase. The local autonomy, the preserved sanity and liveliness of the soil, the preserved sanity of drinkable water and the preserved biodiversity would be some of the complementary decision-making criteria.

What kind of environment do we want to leave for the next generations? Desert lands poisoned with defoliant chemicals, radioactive nuclides, mortal mines and bombs and other witnesses of our warrior madness? Dead lands exhausted by greed, ignorant selfishness and well-maintained stupidity? Obviously, the war business is the most profitable in the short term and also an economical and ecological disaster in the long term, as this deadly short-term profitability is not considering the cost for material rehabilitation and collateral damages. And I am not saying a word on the human and environmental damages...

**So now let's talk about wolves.** These beings are a symbol of ferocity in human mythology. But the specialists studying their social behaviours will tell about the huge amount of time they spend playing every day. And when wolves were re-introduced in Yellowstone national park in the 90's, the unexpected consequences surprised all observers. Not only did the wolves regulate the population of elk, but they helped in changing the ecosystem, and restored the health of the park, increasing biodiversity, changing the shape of the rivers, stopping erosion ...



(<http://www.filmsforaction.org/watch/how-wolves-change-rivers/>)



Actually, this 'apex predator' is also protecting life! This example demonstrates the complexity of living systems with emerging possibilities and self-regulating interactions. So yes, SD is a little more than a traditional science: actually, a systems' science and the way to a recovered wisdom.

Inspired by nature's intelligence, permaculture is already proving the point for many years. The Pharmaceutical industry understood a long time ago that they had to hurry and study the hundreds of medicine plants that surround the villages of so-called primitive autochthonous populations in the tropical forests, hopefully before these native people and their culture disappear thanks to our civilisation of technical 'progress' ...

And SD is more than a science as it helps us reconnect with basic human values and skills such as tolerance (for diversity being inherent to life and part of the nature's intelligence), intuition (for a mental rational approach is not always best), sensibility (through awareness of our roots and exploring our feelings and moods when connecting with nature, its wonder, its beauty).

We learn about our own nature from animals and plants, and we find help and radical new ways of support for disabled human beings. Dogs help reintegration into society, alpacas support autistic children... Yes, SD is much more than a science: actually the way of a recovered passion for human life.

With the consciousness of our multiple facets as sensibility, creativity, rationality, we can step back and get rid of the reductionist trick, and stand up in our accountability towards past generations and the ones to come. SD will help us recover our empathy, simply being for the sake of it, and find and explore feelings and states of mind that will only occur with our connection to life, within us and in the marvellous world surrounding us, giving back a sense and pleasure, and more beauty, for and by the love that we are and that we want to express and share.

RE-USE  
AND  
RECYCLE

# ARTS & CRAFTS IDEAS

Here at Earth Focus we thought it important to get crafty and experiment with recycled materials to come up with some reusable artworks. Not only is it a fun project but it puts the ideas of Sustainability into practice

For a Secret compartement Book Box you need:

- Old Book
- Glue
- Knife/Cutter

For a No-Sew T-shirt Tote Bag you need:

- An old T-shirt
- Scissors
- Fabric paint/ Decorations



For a Tea light Holder you need:

- A used can
- Scissors





MAX & VOLTAIRE



## TALK ABOUT THE ENVIRONMENT

“Hey Max,” says Voltaire. “Why is Madame Rosemarie taking all those empty wine bottles out to her vegetable garden?”  
“I don’t know” replies Max. “ Let’s find out.”

“It looks like she is making a garden border with her empty wine bottles,” says Voltaire. “Madame Rosemarie likes to drink wine so she has lots of wine bottles.”

“That’s a great idea,” states Max. “Not only is she making her garden pretty but she is also doing something important for our environment.”

“Why is putting wine bottles into the ground important for our environment?” asks Voltaire.

“She is putting the 3R’s into practice,” answers Max.

“What are the 3R’s?” asks Voltaire.

“The 3R’s stand for Reduce, Resuse and Recycle,” explains Max. “When we reuse things, we reduce waste and that’s good for the environment. When Madame Rosemarie uses empty wine bottles to make a garden border she is recycling the wine bottles and using them for another purpose.”

“I see,” says Voltaire. “I have to do something now so I will see you later.”

“Where are you going?” asks Max.

“I’m going to find my dog grooming brush and bring it to Madame Rosemarie so she can groom me,” replies Voltaire. “After Madame Rosemarie brushes me she takes the fur from the grooming brush and leaves it for the birds who use it to build their nests. So, I am going to recycle some of my fur and help to protect the environment. We should all do our part.”

THE MAX AND VOLTAIRE ADVENTURE SERIES™ WERE CREATED BY MINA MAUERSTEIN BAIL  
TO FIND OUT MORE CHECK OUT: [WWW.MAXANDVOLTAIRE.COM](http://WWW.MAXANDVOLTAIRE.COM)

## INTRODUCTION

Plastic production began back in the 1840’s and to this day, every piece of plastic produced still remains on the earth. This is because plastic does not biodegrade. Now, any of the millions of plastic products thrown out lay way into the future either in landfills or in our precious oceans.

## PLASTIC IN THE OCEANS

Due to UV radiation and the mechanical forces of the wind and waves, plastics break down and fragment. Pieces deteriorate into microplastics increasing their surface area and the possibility of chemical transport.

## MICROPLASTICS

Microplastics act as little sponges with their surface area containing concentrations of harmful pollutants. These minute pieces are mistaken for algae and krill, consumed by small fish, then bigger fish, then bigger mammals: Even humans!

## WHAT YOU CAN DO

This is a comprehensive guide on how to eliminate plastic from your daily lives. While it is not easy, since plastic is everywhere, it’s a cause worth fighting for.

IT IS PREDICTED  
THAT THERE WILL BE MORE PLASTIC  
THAN FISH BY KG IN THE OCEAN BY 2050.  
**YOU CAN HELP  
DECREASE  
THE PLASTIC WASTE!**



# Plastic Free Living

## An Exclusive Guide



## TOP FIVE EASY WAYS TO QUIT PLASTIC

These are the solutions you would have heard everywhere, but that is because they are easy to do and make a huge difference. Create new habits to help the earth : keep bags in your car, take the time to have a coffee and constantly teach by leading by example.

1. Bring a reusable water bottle wherever you go.

2. Bring a reusable bag or box when you go shopping

3. Say no to the plastic straw.

4. Have coffee in, or bring a keep cup.

5. Only takeaway if you bring your own container.



## PLASTIC FREE KITCHEN

It is impossible to go to any supermarket and ignore the vast amounts of fresh produce wrapped in plastic. Please tell me why oranges need an artificial wrapping?

Go to farmer's markets. Not only is it supporting local businesses, the prices tend to be lower and you have fresher choices.

Make your own produce bags or buy reusable ones.

Choose bulk stores if you have the opportunity.

If you do not, pick the pastas packaged in paper and canned food over plastic packaging.

If you enjoy bubbly water, invest in a bubble maker for your home.

If you do not like tap water, invest in a filter.

Switch up your tea bags for loose leaf tea.

Also, do you really NEED those chips? :)



## PLASTIC FREE CLOTHING

Wait, there is plastic in clothing? Unfortunately, Yes. When washed, many synthetic materials release microfibers which do not get caught by the washing machine, and instead end up...Yes, you guessed it. In the ocean. This can be up to 4,500 fibers per gram of clothing per wash!

1. Buy clothes made out of 100% natural fibers including : cotton, linen, wool, silk, cashmere, jute or hemp.

2. Wash the synthetic clothing you own less frequently, on colder settings with liquid laundry soap.

3. Line dry instead of spin dry which increases frictions and loosens fibers.

4. Check what your shoes are made of, and again, invest in fewer but higher quality pairs.

5. Avoid shopping online to minimise packaging.







## PLASTIC FREE BATHROOM

If you look into your bathroom, I guarantee you will have many subtle plastic items around your sink, in your shower and in the drawers.

1. Switch to bars of soap or make your own liquid soap!
2. Choose shampoo and conditioner bars to eliminate packaging. Or go No poo!
3. Get a bamboo, biodegradable toothbrush.
4. Consider getting recycled toilet paper without plastic packaging.
5. Get good quality metal razors that last longer, and shave better.
6. Check out the myriad of zero waste toothpastes available online.



## COOL RESOURCES TO CHECK OUT

A Plastic Ocean – a feature-length documentary bringing to life the consequences of our global life style.

Bag It – Is your life too plastic?

Trash is for Tossers – A woman with a tiny jar of rubbish after four years.

The Ocean Cleanup – Boyan Slat developing a method to clean the seas.

Ban The Bag – get behind petitions for your country or state to ban plastic bags.

Rob Greenfield – wearing 30 days worth of trash to show our wasteful lifestyle.

NoPlasticPlease - Alexis' brainchild with an A-Z list of eliminating plastic

## WHY STAY MOTIVATED?

Magnificent animals such as this whale shark are being found with plastic remains in their bodies. Studies on sea bird populations have found that 79% of Shearwater species have ingested plastic! While the amount of plastic ingested by turtles varies between species, in some studies, 100% of jellyfish eating turtles had plastic in their bellies! Unsuspectingly, even people who still eat fish are consuming these tiny fragments of microplastics.

As well as endangering animals, plastic also turns natural beauty's into ugly rubbish tips. Washing in from the ocean or flowing down rivers, plastic accumulates along river banks, in forests and on beaches. What used to be known as the five ocean gyres, are now more commonly called the '5 plastic gyres'.

This is the only earth we have, and until Elon Musk figures out how to get us to Mars we have but one choice to make. We must fight for this planet, for our own children and all the future generations.



## PLASTIC FREE LIFE

Keep in mind that a lot of plastic is hidden : in juice cartons, coffee cups and most lids.

Be on the lookout for natural alternatives : i.e.. Natural compostable or flushable cat litter.

Keep Tupperware on hand to avoid single use containers.

Choose to recycle newspaper, colourful paper or even cloth for wrapping presents.

Use vinegar as your multi purpose cleaning detergent, or get creative and add essential oils to perfect your own recipe.

If you smoke, choose tobacco pouches and paper filters.



# Overfishing

## and what you can do about it

by  
Laura  
Malaguti

We live on this planet called Earth but when we observe satellite images, wouldn't it be more appropriate to call it Ocean? Indeed, the oceans covering 71% of the Earth's surface – primarily the Pacific, the Atlantic and the Indian, together with the Arctic surrounding the North Pole and the Southern surrounding Antarctica, merge to form the largest habitat on Earth. (WWF, 2017) Supporting a great variety of life, our oceans today are under great threat by overfishing, climate change, maritime traffic, pollution and an increasing global population.

### FISHING METHODS AND BYCATCH

Several fishing methods are destructive but it is important to note that progress has been made over the past decade, especially after the broadcast of The End of the Line. Longline, set nets and trawling are among the most destructive methods but several technological innovations have seen the light including the Turtle Excluder Device (TED) allowing the sea turtle to escape, which is now used by many trawlers. In the past, levels of dolphins, turtles and seabirds were extremely high. (WWF, 2017) Education of mesh sizes of the nets, modification of the methods used and time of fishing operations, legislation and monitoring of fishing fleets, and the increasing awareness of fishermen through education are all positive changes being seen. (Lewison et al., 2004)



### EDUCATION

Education is key. "Through interpretation, understanding; through understanding, appreciation; through appreciation, protection." (Freeman Tilden, 1957)

### WHAT CHOICES CAN WE MAKE AS CONSUMERS?

This starts with all of us making the right food choices and thus driving the market. There are widely less "popular" fish that are available at healthy rates and can be caught using sustainable methods such as mackerel (the "tuna's cousin"), Dab and anchovies. Avoid cod, Atlantic salmon, plaice, lemon sole and tuna.



### MSC

The blue MSC label means it comes from a sustainable fishery that has met the Marine Stewardship Council Fisheries Standard which measures the sustainability of wild-capture fisheries and ensures standards were developed through consultation



### FRIEND OF THE SEA

Friend of the Sea follows the FAO Guidelines for the eco-labelling of fish and fishery products from marine capture fisheries. Certification is only allowed for products from not overexploited stocks. (Friend of the Sea, 2017)



### ASC

Aquaculture Stewardship Council which aims to transform aquaculture towards environmental sustainability and social responsibility. (ASC, 2017)



# Let's Talk about the F word

By Caroline Myrthue & Tara Tibblin

CAN YOU GUESS WHICH WORD STARTS WITH THE LETTER "F" AND CAN OCCASIONALLY DRAW A SCOWL TO THE FACES OF SOME INDIVIDUALS?

No, this word is not inappropriate enough to not be uttered in front of your elders, but a discussion on the word in question may churn the same response. A scoff, a shrug or a blatant hush are not uncommon or out of order in terms of reactions.

## THE WORD IS.... FEMINISM

Now before you close your laptop or put away this magazine, hear me out. I stand as a privileged middle class sixteen-year-old who has a lot to say. Although, I am very privileged and you may not want to listen to me, a girl who has had her fundamental rights protected since birth, I as an individual have witnessed injustice plaguing underprivileged women and girls worldwide every single day. I have to ensure that because I have a voice, that advantage is taken and I speak for all of those who are silent. Due to the conscience of my soul I cannot simply ignore this opportunity, and now because I have the benefit of a voice, I am going to be heard.

Now before we go any further in this article, we have to get some things straight. As we all know, terms such as Femi-Nazi circulate when a woman identifies herself as a feminist. This is an insinuation, where women who do believe in Feminism think that they are better than men, hate men and are aggressive in advocating women's rights.

This can be attributed to the fact that people simply do not know the true meaning of the term 'Feminism' and thus, when someone who is passionate about the subject campaigns or advocates for it, it is understandable that they may come off as strong individuals. It is our belief that if those who do not know these definitions are ultimately educated about them, then their perception of Feminism can be altered. They may even become Feminists themselves.

Let's begin to face the hard cold truth. In a room with an equal quantity of young women and men, the question was posed: who identifies themselves as feminists? If you do, raise your hand. Only a few young girls raised their hands, while the rest of the room was imbued in an awkward silence with puzzled looks. The young girls who raised their hands represented different countries, cultures and backgrounds; however, their smiles outshined these barriers and the silent agonising atmosphere expressed by those who opposed their identification when they caught the sights of the likeminded individuals in the room. Subsequent to the question, a further similar task daunted the young students to raise their hand if they identified themselves as a supporter and believer of gender equality. Without a second of doubt, the room was filled with confident hands of both genders, reaching for identification. This time, the silence fell on those rare individuals who did not commit to support such a fundamental human right. The quest of this detailed observation displayed the belief in the right that all individuals should be equally treated, despite their gender.

And it was also to investigate the irritability which fell upon the room when the f-word was mentioned. The same contempt most of you probably feel when you still hear the f-word in your heads while reading this article. Why is it that the word feminism carries such an expensive stigmatic label? Truth is, the actual definition of Feminism is the belief that men and women should have equal rights and opportunities. This covers the exact same fundamental objectives that the word gender equality carries. Thus many don't know their similarity because of the man-hating mark that it carries.

Feminism is called feminism, not to devalue the importance of men's rights, but to specifically identify females within the matter of gender equality, since females' rights are the minority of the two in today's society. Now, the facts according to globalcitizen.org is that, in most countries women only earn between 60% and 75% of men's wages - for the same work. Also, there are approximately 781 million illiterate adults worldwide - two-thirds are women. To inform the global population about this valid and serious issue, the feminist movement was created to encourage equality for both genders, not to make an individual feel shameful for proudly believing in an essential human right.

We could continue to talk about the facts and try to convince you even more why gender equality is a big issue in our world, but that's not the aim of this article. Instead, feel empowered to fight for the justice of equal rights between both genders, not just as a man, or as a woman, but as a feminist.



# The Great Aletsch Glacier

The largest European glacier located in Switzerland, which over the last 100 years has shrunk considerably and continues to do so in the present day

## FRESH- WATER SOURCE

If this mass of ice melted, it could supply every single person on the Earth with a litre of water every day for 4.5 years

## SPEED

The distance covered by the ice over time in the process is the glacier's velocity. The velocity of the Great Aletsch Glacier is 200 m per year

## THROUGH THE YEARS

From left to right, (above) the three images show the state of the Aletsch in 1971, 1991 and 2002.

## Mea-

surements by the Pro Natura Center Aletsch show that the glacier is experiencing dramatic ablation, shrinking by up to 50 metres in length each year

photos by Martin Andrysek



# The Globalisation of Education



By

Jeni Baykoca  
Lina Ismail  
Ines Perez  
Gaia di Bernardini  
& Maddie Gatch

## Let's educate the educator.

With the competitiveness and extreme amount of pressure that students are subject to in school systems around the world, it is inevitable to wonder if education has changed from an enjoyable journey into a one-size-fits-all system. Education is and should be considered a tool with which we can question the unquestionable. As you continue to read on, you will discover ways in which you as a student may use your education to modernise the system, which we are forced to enter at a very early age.

According to Roma Thakur, teenagers today have the same anxiety levels as insane asylum patients in the 1950s. What are the consequences of this? Due to the pressure of achieving good grades, children have resorted to cheating as a gateway. This contradicts the real purpose of education which is to learn and to develop opinions. As stated in a CNN poll, 75% out of a group of 4,500 high school students have cheated, with over half directly plagiarising (50% do not consider copying answers as cheating).

Along with high pressure and expectations to achieve, often teachers are put under high stress to have their students do well in the exams. This can lead teachers to "cheating the test." Many teacher unions have tried to fight this, arguing that this can put an immense amount of unneeded pressure on both the staff and the students. This results in students placing greater emphasis on the grade rather than the learning process.

A way by which education may prevent such stress is through creative art skills. It has been proven that art skills in education have a significant effect on the academic and social success of the students. Art skills such as drawing, playing an instrument, painting and dancing help with stress relief and can open the door to positive stress management. Those who say that the art skills can restrict students from "core" subjects are indeed incorrect! Using data submitted by the state's public schools, the Missouri Department of Education has shown that those with better participation in creative skills are more likely to come to class, avoid being excluded and would go on to become a graduate. Additionally, they demonstrated higher proficiency in mathematics and communication. Arts education has a significant effect on the academic and social success of the students.

While in the past, decisions over the conduct of the educational systems in schools were limited to the decision of the governments. Since the ever-growing presence of the student body in making certain decisions is becoming a reality, it is now time for the younger generation to become proactive and voice their opinions. If you feel like making a contribution to the development of your school's education system regarding certain feasible aspects (such as teaching methods), it would be ideal to get in touch with your teachers or school administrators through e-mail or even take part in conversations with the student council representatives (if your school has any) to make helpful recommendations to teachers on how to improve the learning experience.



# ZERO WASTE IN KAMIKATSU

By  
Camille  
Baud



If you are familiar with alternative media and like reading about local and ecological initiatives, you might have heard of Kamikatsu- a small Japanese village located in Tokushima prefecture, on Shikoku island- and its Zero Waste policy. I had heard of Kamikatsu village and was intrigued by it. Thus, a few months ago, as I was traveling over Japan, I decided to go and see it with my own eyes. Kamikatsu is the smallest village of Shikoku island. It is located in the mountains, 40 km south-west from Tokushima. 85% of its surface is covered with forest. There are 1600 people living there and 50% of them are over 65 years old. Despite appearances, Kamikatsu is very modern in many ways, especially in its recycling scheme, which got started about 23 years ago...

## Timeline of the Zero Waste Policy

**1994:** Launch of the city waste recycling plan (for environmental reasons but mainly for budgetary reasons because it was cheaper to recycle waste than to organise a system of collection and disposal of waste).

**1997-2002:** The waste recycling rate in the village is about 55% in 1998. The sorting station progressively move from 9 categories of recycling bins to 22 categories and to 34 categories in 2002.

**2003:** Adoption of the Zero Waste Declaration with the aim to promote the recycling of waste and the reuse of existing resources, by completely eliminating waste having to be incinerated or buried by 2020.

**2004-2007:** Creation of the association Zero Waste Academy and opening of the shop and craft centre Kurukuru.

**2016:** The waste recycling rate is between 80% and 90% (in comparison, it is about 20% is the rest of the country).



## Nowadays in Kamikatsu

I get the chance to spend my day with Terumi Azuma, a lovely 28 years old woman working for the association Zero Waste Academy, in charge of the project (there are five employees in total).

She makes me discover the waste sorting station of the village and its 45 different categories of bins (they have added some more since 2002). As an example, we find in different bins: aluminium cans, steel cans, brown glass bottles, transparent glass bottles, "other colour" glass bottles, newspapers, papers, cardboard, plastic bottles, caps, plastic packaging, batteries, bulbs, fluorescent lamps, chopsticks, make-up, toothbrush, clothes...

Concerning food, I learn that every household is equipped with its own compost bin. The rate of composted food is almost 100% and the compost obtained is wholly used as fertiliser for local crops.

The residents of the village have to go to the station, opened every morning, by themselves and dispose in each bin their waste- it has to have been cleaned beforehand. Each category of waste is regularly collected and sent to different recycling centres, or, if the category is non-recyclable, to a waste incineration plant or landfill site...

In this way, to get to the objective of zero waste by 2020, the small team of the Zero Waste Academy keeps on searching for new ideas: the creation of other categories of recyclable waste; or putting into place a system of collection of points and random drawings with a voucher for the most careful residents.





## A Local Economy

But actually, the concept of zero waste in Kamikatsu goes further than just managing waste. Indeed, the will of the residents is to promote a real local and circular economy.

In that sense, they created a place where the residents have the possibility to drop all items still usable that they want to get rid of, and where everybody can come and take them, for free. The shop is called “Kurukuru”, meaning “circular” in Japanese and it offers dishes, clothes, bags, books, batteries, and any other sort of gadget. Terumi tells me that in 2016, the items' circulation rate in the shop was 90% (not bad!).

Moreover, clothes, futons and other fabrics collected at the sorting station are sent to the Kurukuru craft-centre, where volunteers re-use waste materials, undo, redo, sew them to make modern clothes, bags, key-rings, and other accessories. The creations are sold in the village at very attractive prices.

Finally, residents of Kamikatsu try to promote local businesses to attract new residents and prevent population's decline in the village.

For instance, Terumi and her husband opened a new café/restaurant three years ago, the “Polestar”. This small but very modern place completely meets the objectives of sustainability as included is the Zero Waste Declaration: the cook minimises the vegetable peelings as much as possible; no paper napkins are given to clients; drinking straws are made in compostable materials; receipts are not printed; the heating system is fuelled with wood and the place is very well-isolated. Moreover, the meals, drinks, and deserts are mainly made with ingredients produced in the village (rice, potatoes, lemon (to make the delicious lemon juice called “Yuko”), pumpkins, maple leaves (“Momiji”)

Another famous place in Kamikatsu is its “Rise and Win” Brewery, (detailed article written on the specific topic <https://www.curbed.com/2015/8/6/9933072/japanese-ecoconscious-brewery>), of which the building and the furniture is made out of reused materials, and where the craft beer is



## Raising awareness for Deforestation with:



The deforestation crisis has a major impact on today's society and future generations. Trees create biodiversity, water security, clean and fresh air! However, hundreds of trees are being cut down everyday. To combat this very pressing problem, Ecosia was created! Ecosia is a search engine which uses ad revenues to plant trees. As you are reading this, Ecosia is planting one tree every 5 seconds! In total, Ecosia has planted 7,586,299 trees and counting!

When 9th grade students at Southbank International School in London heard about this, they knew they had to take action at their school! They first started by researching the browser and the possible impact it could have. They then used their research to prepare a presentation for Grades 6, 7 and 8. In the presentation, the audience learned about the global deforestation crisis, what Ecosia is and how they can use it. To give students an incentive to use Ecosia, a competition was created. For the competition, Ecosia advocates sent out a survey asking each student in Grades 6, 7 and 8 to ask their class how many trees they have planted so far. With those that planted the most trees getting a special discount for campus lunch! Soon more and more people began to download Ecosia!

If students changed their search engine from others such as Google to Ecosia, this would donate trees each time a student searched something. Then 80% of the profits which they make from their search ad revenue go to the planting of trees. They plant trees all over the world, including Peru, Indonesia, Madagascar and in Burkina Faso. In Burkina Faso the Sahara Desert is rapidly expanding south and is making it very difficult for people to survive there. By planting trees there, this will stop the process of desertification and restore the fertile land. Peru has become heavily deforested as it became a red zone for cocoa production. Additionally, Ecosia is now working with local coffee and cocoa cooperatives to reforest the area and establish new incomes for local communities. Madagascar is the most globally bio-diverse hotspot. However, the island has lost over 90% of its forests. To solve this issue, Ecosia is hiring villagers to replant the forests so that wildlife can finally return and soil erosion will stop. Lastly, Mount Saran in Borneo is covered by natural forests and is home to many species, such as, the Orangutan. There, local villages have formed a group called the “Gunung Saran Lester Foundation” to create another alternative to more widely spreading palm oil production. To help, Ecosia will support this company financially and help the farmers' livelihoods by planting ten different types of trees such as sugar palm.

Overall, Ecosia's mission had a great impact on Southbank's school community - which helped students understand and help solve the deforestation crisis. It had a positive impact on the school community as Ecosia brought people together to help take action on one of the world's most current global issues.

By Cambron Wade and Viveka Tibblin



# The Shadow of the Bangles, a poem by Ridima Mittal

## Poetry Section

Sitting beside the door, pleading for a right on my  
body Begging for a life to live, hopes and tears shoddy  
a weeping heart, yelling for mercy, a vision even worse  
Why me, why am I born a girl, why am I a curse?

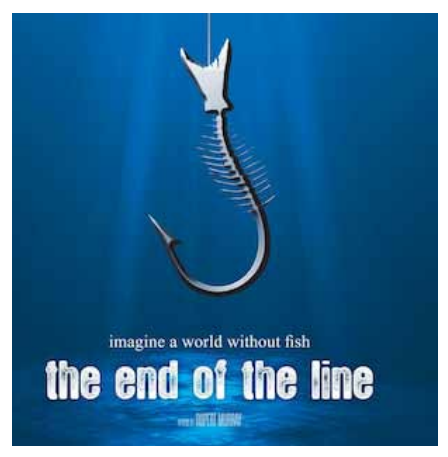
Torn to pieces, my body became a victim to lust Raped  
with no obedience, my soul whipped to dust Treated as  
a worthless object, chasing my own hearse Why me, why  
am I born a girl, why am I a curse?

Supressed, repressed, violently thumped and thrashed  
Beaten, rotten and eaten, his vows and my faith crashed  
I owed my existence to him, made him my universe Why  
me, why am I born a girl, why am I a curse?

Sold to feed a few, many fed me to be sold again As  
poverty grew like a weed, my sheet had a stain Traded  
for pleasure, bleeding to pain, still a young verse Why  
me, why am I born a girl, why am I a curse?

Perhaps I should open the door, letting sunlight so  
bright Perhaps I should reform my fate, stand, learn and  
fight Perhaps I should refuse your brutal actions on me  
diverse It is me, I am born a girl and I am not a curse.

Perhaps I should move out, move on, oppose and resist  
Perhaps I should compete, my individuality to persist  
Perhaps I should voice against my own created amerce  
It is me, I am born a girl and I am not a curse.



### END OF THE LINE

Initially a book by Charles  
Clover in 2005 in which he  
states that 75% of the world's  
fish stocks are either fully  
exploited or over-fished, it  
became a documentary film in  
2009 revealing the impact of  
global overfishing.

It examined the extinction of  
the Bluefin tuna essentially  
triggered by the increasing  
Western demand for sushi,  
the vast impact on marine life  
of the overpopulation of jelly-  
fish due to pollution, and the  
profound implications of a  
future world with no fish

Release Date: June 12, 2009

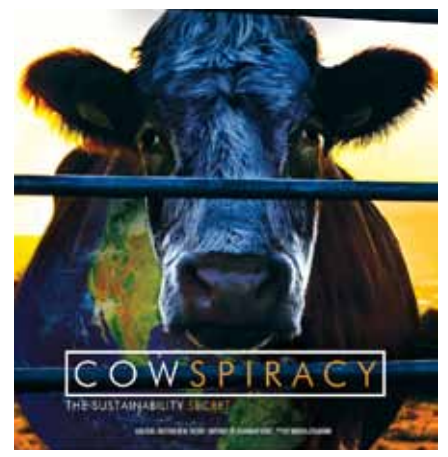
Genre: Documentary

Director: Rupert Murray

Writer: Charles Clover

Cast: Ted Danson

Studio: Arcane Pictures, Calm Produc-  
tions, Dartmouth Films



### COWSPIRACY

Reveals a previously largely  
unmentioned contributor to  
climate change, that being  
beef production and other  
animal farming activities.

Some of the facts brought to  
light are that Chickens, tur-  
keys pigs and cows are collec-  
tively the largest producers of  
methane in the U.S... Methane  
is 20x more powerful at trap-  
ping heat in the earth's atmo-  
sphere than carbon dioxide.

Release Date: September 15, 2015

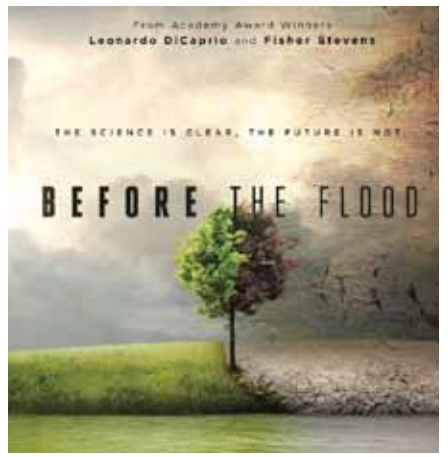
Genre: Documentary

Director: Kip Andersen, Keegan Kuhn

Writer: Kip Andersen, Keegan Kuhn

Cast: Kip Andersen

Studio: A.U.M. Films; First Spark Media



### BEFORE THE FLOOD

The pressing issue of climate  
change has produced contro-  
versial debates among schol-  
ars, politicians, and scientists  
all around the globe.

Before the Flood, a documen-  
tary by Leonardo DiCaprio, in  
collaboration with National  
Geographic, incorporates key  
factors in the debate on Cli-  
mate Change and does so in a  
very fluent manner.

Review continued on next  
page

Release Date: July 16, 2010

Genre: Documentary

Director: Leonardo DiCaprio

Writer: Christopher Nolan

Cast: Leonardo DiCaprio, Ken Wata

Studio: Warner Brothers



## Detailed Review - Before the Flood by Milli Ehringhaus

The production is characterized by the famous painting The Garden of Earthly Delights by Hieronymus Bosch. From the Garden of Eden, to the second panel which depicts over-population and excess, and then to the last panel which shows massive decayed landscapes. This sets the tone for the direction in which the film is headed. In this production DiCaprio travels all over the globe to investigate the damage done to our Planet. DiCaprio, does this under the name of the United Nations Messenger of Peace on Climate Change. Footage of the Paris Climate Summit in 2015, shows the collaboration of the global community in efforts to find a solution to global warming, although it may seem like a step forward, DiCaprio questions whether it is enough. DiCaprio addresses issues such as poverty in India, destruction of rainforests due to our immense palm oil consumption, the destruction of coral reefs all over the Planet, the endangerment of species and the rise of sea level.

DiCaprio admits a pessimistic attitude towards the issue of climate change in the opening of the documentary, which lets him relate to the majority of the global population. However, this pessimistic attitude is translated into some form of faith and hope at the end of the film, whilst still maintaining the urgency of the issue at hand. DiCaprio speaks of a global nation whose responsibility lies in a major transition towards renewable energy and stopping fossil fuel consumption.

Another distinctive point DiCaprio makes is the critique on the USA. This becomes apparent with his visit to India, where he discusses the advantages of renewable energy versus the disadvantages of coal. The issues of mass consumption and a certain lifestyle that the US population has grown accustomed to appears to be a major factor in creating Greenhouse Gases. The US is portrayed as hypocritical; while expecting developing countries to switch to renewable energy, they have the largest consumption of Fossil Fuels around the globe. Moreover, DiCaprio himself claims responsibility for partaking in this luxurious lifestyle, which brings viewers closer to him and provokes sympathy to an extent. Engaging users in the sense, that they should not feel bad in what lifestyle they are partaking, as long as they are willing to change and grow with this new awareness.

Although the production was very informative and educated, the knowledge presented was not new. Before the Flood showed itself to be a convincing production. It depicts the problem clearly, when referring to the corruption within our system which triggers and maintains the flow of false information, based on corporate interests. This link, in particular demonstrates to what extent we as 'normal' citizens are being corrupted on a much higher level and the need to not feed this corruption becomes apparent

## GIN Conference 2017

Back to Luxembourg 22 March 2017, from Geneva, Switzerland you have the impression that Luxembourg is not far, well when they take off the trains from Basel, northern Switzerland, to Luxembourg and you learn that it will take more than nine hours and five changes, that you can go via Paris – another eight hours or fly for a fortune – drive for five and a half hours – well we drove, and though it took longer we eventually got there. I, personally, have attended quite a few of the 12 GIN conferences, in fact helped organise two in Geneva in 2009 and 2010, each time it is a new and invigorating experience.

Valerie Isbeque does a fabulous job that leaves, each year, around three to four hundred young high school students, of all different nationalities, with positive memories and values that will last them for life. With the privilege of attending an international school in their own country or a foreign country these young people already have an experience of international living through their parents and teachers. The annual visit to Global Issues Network (GIN) conference, if you have belonged to the GIN group in your school, worked together to develop projects, raised money for a cause or been to assist others you will understand GIN.

Valerie spends the year finding key-note speakers to stimulate the students, people who have believed in their cause and worked hard to achieve it will come to share and speak, tell their story which can be very moving and sometimes very shocking, answer questions and they bring a breath of fresh, committed and stimulating fresh air. Their examples are to be followed and how better than to meet, speak and follow these incredibly brave people?

This year we went from Wiser Girls School in Kenya with Andrew Cunningham to juggling and tight-rope walking in Afghanistan, escaping from genocide in Rwanda, surviving the Tsunami in Sri Lanka causing tragedy and positive action, helping girls and women in Burundi and more. The students were inspired and announced their plans for action in the coming year. Each GIN group also held a workshop on the subject that they wished to share. These young people will be active world citizens.

We all look forward to the next GIN conference.

By Nicola Spafford Furey



# Clean Energy

## Truly Renewable Sources.

When told that this or the other is a form of clean energy what is really meant. How can nuclear power be described as clean when it leaves behind tonnes of radioactive waste whose storage till now has not been resolved.

Hydro-electric power is also considered clean though the adverse impact on local environment has been well documented

The question is rather is it sustainable.

### GEOTHERMAL

One of the most efficient methods for generating power and heat. Pump cold water down, and as it hits hot layers of rock-steam comes up. Unfortunately only feasible in volcanic areas.

### TIDAL / WAVES

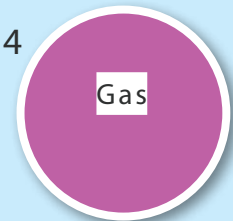
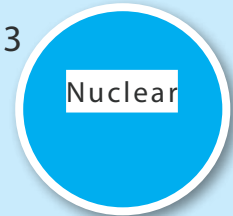
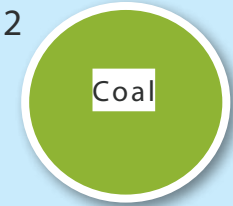
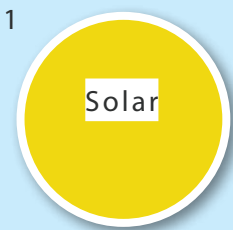
Various concepts have been tested, a large scale rollout of the technology is still to be seen.

### WOOD PELLETS

Various fallen branches and other bio-waste is compressed into pellets that provide heating. New trees are planted to offset the CO2 released.

## MATCHING ENERGY SOURCES

Can you tell which photos represent which Energy source? Draw lines to match each one and test your knowledge.



Answers.

1c, 2e, 3b, 4a, 5f, 6d

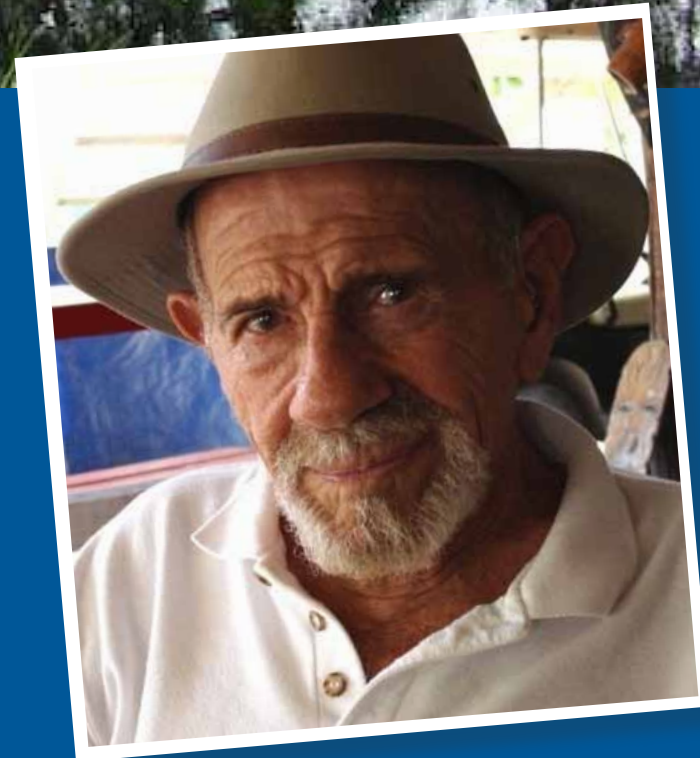




FIND OUT  
MORE:

THE.VENUSPROJECT.  
COM

Jacque Fresco (March 13, 1916 – May 18, 2017) is the founder of The Venus Project. A continuing effort to implement a defined vision for a peaceful and prosperous world.

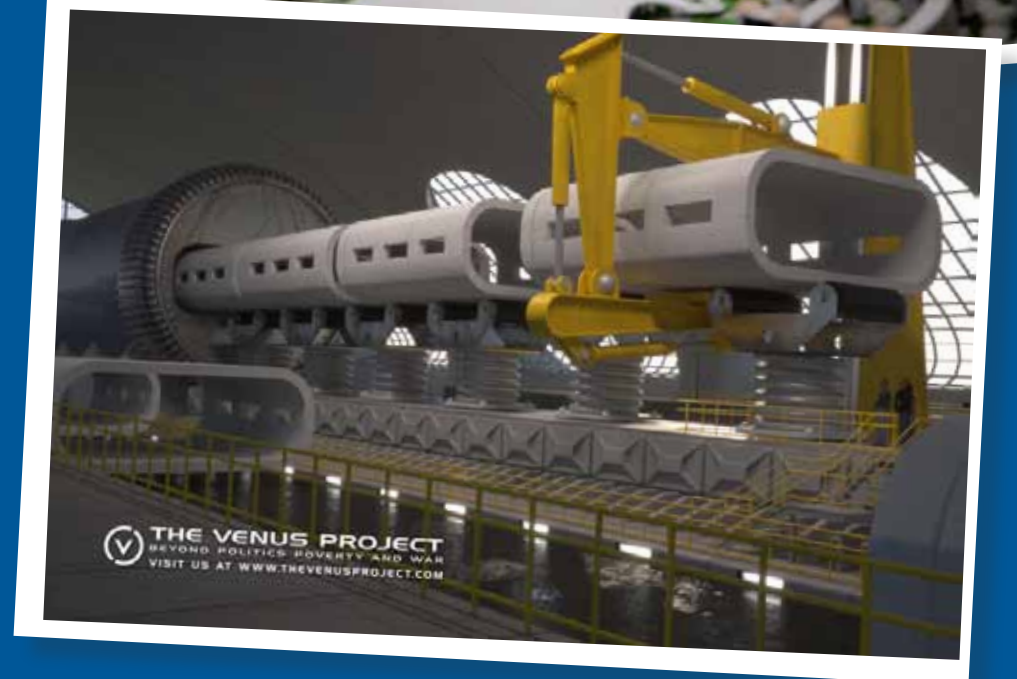
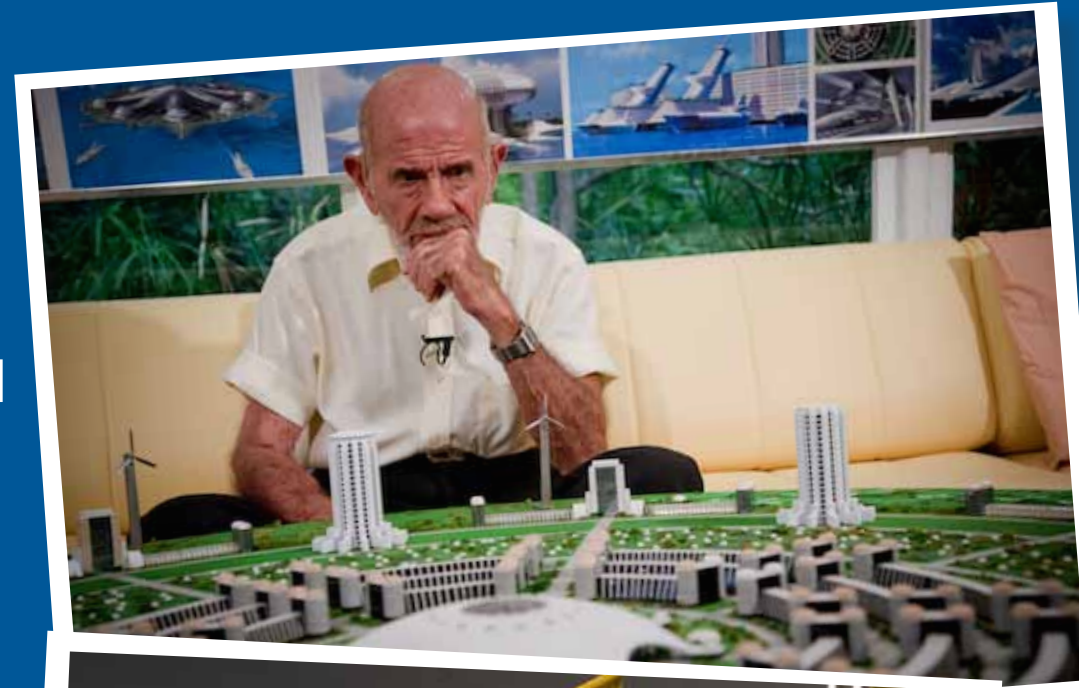


### THE VENUS PROJECT

The Venus Project reflects the culmination of Mr. Fresco's life work: the integration of the best of science and technology into a comprehensive plan for a new society based on human and environmental concern. It is a global vision of hope for the future of humankind in our technological age

### AUTOMATED CONSTRUCTION SYSTEM

A multi-function unit machine is used to lift and later insert prefabricated housing components into a support structure. Although these prefabricated units are composed of standard components, they are of a modular design with such a wide and diverse array as to allow maximum individual expression in interior design and décor.



### ROXANNE MEADOWS

From 1975 to the present, Roxanne Meadows has worked to develop and promote The Venus Project and participated in the exterior and interior design and construction of the buildings of The Venus Project's 21-acre research and planning center. (pictured top left)

As a futurist presenting the aims of The Venus Project, Ms. Meadows, along with Mr. Fresco, has lectured at conferences and seminars in over 20 countries around the world.





# INITIATIVES IN FOCUS

## FOUR IMPORTANT INITIATIVES PROMOTING POSITIVE CHANGE

" Ecocide is the extensive damage to, destruction of or loss of ecosystem(s) of a given territory, whether by human agency or by other causes, to such an extent that peaceful enjoyment by the inhabitants of that territory has been or will be severely diminished. "

This is the definition presented by **Polly Higgins**. the aim is to add it to the Rome statute which already sets



out four Crimes Against Peace and the International Criminal Court to enforce them. A mock trial in the UK Supreme Court has already demonstrated that Ecocide law works.

After the horrors of World War II, Eleanor Roosevelt and many others internationally came up with a plan for peace and prosperity for people in all countries based upon fundamental human rights. This plan is embodied in the famous Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Unfortunately, this plan of rights for all has never been fully implemented. Unite for Rights is a non-governmen-



tal organization that is helping to implement this plan by uniting people, businesses and governments to draft a Global Bill of Rights, a list of fundamental human rights enforceable in the courts of all countries. By **Kirk Boyd**

The Global Campaign on Military Spending (GCOMS) is an international campaign founded in December 2014 and promoted by the International Peace Bureau led by **Colin Archer**

The main aim is to reduce the global military spending thanks to the cooperative works made by the organisations of civil society. Nowadays, more the 100 organizations from 35 differ-



ent nations have joined the campaign.

The GCOMS is run by a steering group of activists from all over world, and is coordinated by the Center of Peace Studies J.M.Delàs in Barcelona

The UN Charter begins on the promising opening words: "We the peoples." However, one will seek in vain for any clause in the document that specifies a means by which ordinary people can play a role in decision-making.

The Campaign for a United Nations Parliamentary Assembly is a global network of parliamentarians, non-governmental organizations, scholars, and dedicated citizens



that advocates democratic representation of the world's citizens at the United Nations. A United Nations Parliamentary Assembly, UNPA, for the first time would give elected citizen representatives, a direct role in global policy. Founded by **Andreas Bummel**

For more information:

ERADICATING ECOCIDE  
<http://eradicatingecocide.com/>

UNITE FOR RIGHTS  
<http://www.uniteforrights.org/>

GCOMS CAMPAIGN  
<http://demilitarize.org/>

UNPA CAMPAIGN  
<http://en.unpacampaign.org/>

Adressing root causes

To have real change not only is humanitarian aid needed but a evolution of the international system.

Not just applying band-aids but dealing with the root causes.

These are just some of the initiatives play an important role in this process.



# New Roots Cooperative Farm

Sustainable Farming and Empowerment of New Americans in Maine



by Anne Ehringhaus

Maine, A State tucked in the Far Northeast Corner of the US, is the whitest (in terms of Race), the oldest and one of the poorest states in the nation. Most High school and University Graduates leave the state to find jobs and make money elsewhere, causing a much cited "brain drain," a lack of much needed entrepreneurial spirit. Traditionally a state that built its economy on natural resources, it struggles now with a lack of manpower to work the farmland that used to sustain the people of Maine.

Maine also has a growing population of Somalis who fled their wartorn country. They bring ethnic and religious diversity to the State and contribute largely by starting their own businesses. They follow a nationwide trend of immigrants who are more than twice as likely to start a business as the Native-born (newamericaneconomy.org). Many Somalis, amongst them a significant number of women, used to be farmers in their home country, and so some initiatives were created to help Somalis farm land and contribute to communities by growing vegetables.

These initiatives are sustainable on many different levels and have been very successful. They contribute culturally, because they help Somalis use their skills and thus, help them to gain confidence in their new home by building on to existing traditions. They also support Community outreach and build bridges between immigrants and other community members.

Programs like the New Roots Co-op Farm also make sense economically, because they support self-reliance and independence. They strengthen the economy by growing and selling produce locally. As a result, the produce is fresher, more nutritious and the Carbon footprint is largely reduced by short ways of transportation. And – last, but not least – the farmland is preserved and can continue to sustain all people of Maine.

## What are the implications of this example in a global context?

Difference is good. To embrace and be open to it means to allow change for the better. To change the attitude about "the other" must start with those who are in the majority, those who are tempted by xenophobia, those who are in power. When migration is accepted as part of the human existence, we can move beyond boundaries and can create truly sustainable and empowering communities, who benefit everyone. Immigration can be a great force to bring people together if we give it a chance. It brings needed resources and skills and provide opportunities for positive and constructive growth. To capitalize on these skills, there needed to be resource and skills-based immigration policies in place. Before we ask about the country of origin, we should ask and screen the specific skills which are brought to the new country.

The new Roots Cooperative Farm is a success story of a smart program implementation that connects with all stakeholders: The community, The Somalian farmers, the federal, state and local agencies. More of these multipronged collaborations should be created and encouraged on a local, national and global level. Support, led by multicultural Staff - should be on site to address issues when they arise and not when it is too late.

In conclusion, the first step is that we need to learn more about each other and each other's culture instead of jumping to conclusions and assumptions. as tempting as it may be. It is essential to understand as much as possible about the cultural background of ourselves and "the other." That means we need to become culturally intelligent and increase awareness. If we employ a positive attitude towards "the other," we can move beyond boundaries and see the opportunities and the richness that diversity brings. Who says that "handling the refugee crisis" has to be a panic reaction as it so often is? What prevents the receiving countries as seeing it as a great gift? With a positive mindset, immigration can help societies to become more prosperous, more vivid, more alive and more sustainable. It can be a proactive process in which countries evaluate their needed skills and then recruit matching immigrants or train them accordingly. It certainly enriches Maine and many other parts in this world. Immigration done right will create a more peaceful and safer world. Let's not fight it. Let's embrace it.



# The Human Rights Divide



While in 1948, with the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights there was overwhelming support for the holistic idea that human rights were universal and interdependent. Unfortunately, the declaration could not be invoked by individuals before a court of law.

This meant that there was no way to keep countries committed to those principles. Nothing could be done until a new document was agreed to, not just a declaration but a covenant, carrying legal weight.

However, by the time the first covenants were agreed to in 1966, the world was at the height of the Cold War. East vs West so to speak, which was reflected in the field of Human Rights as well. Hence two separate Covenants were adopted:

The United States and its allies prioritised a set of rights that resulted in:

**The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights**

These focused on issues such as "Freedom of Expression" or "the prohibition of arbitrary arrest".

Or the right to hold peaceful protests to demand accountability from government officials.

The Soviet Union and its allies backed a different approach, reflected in:

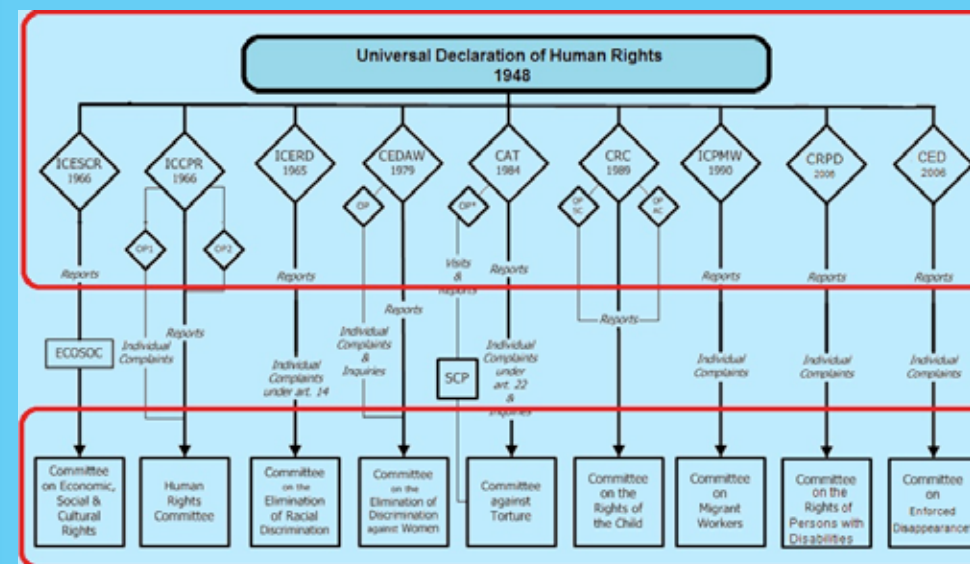
**"The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights"**

which brought forward a different set of rights not included in the Western backed document.

These included the right to shelter, food, healthcare, employment and education. Arguably, just as important.

by  
Martin  
Andrysek

## The Current Human Rights System



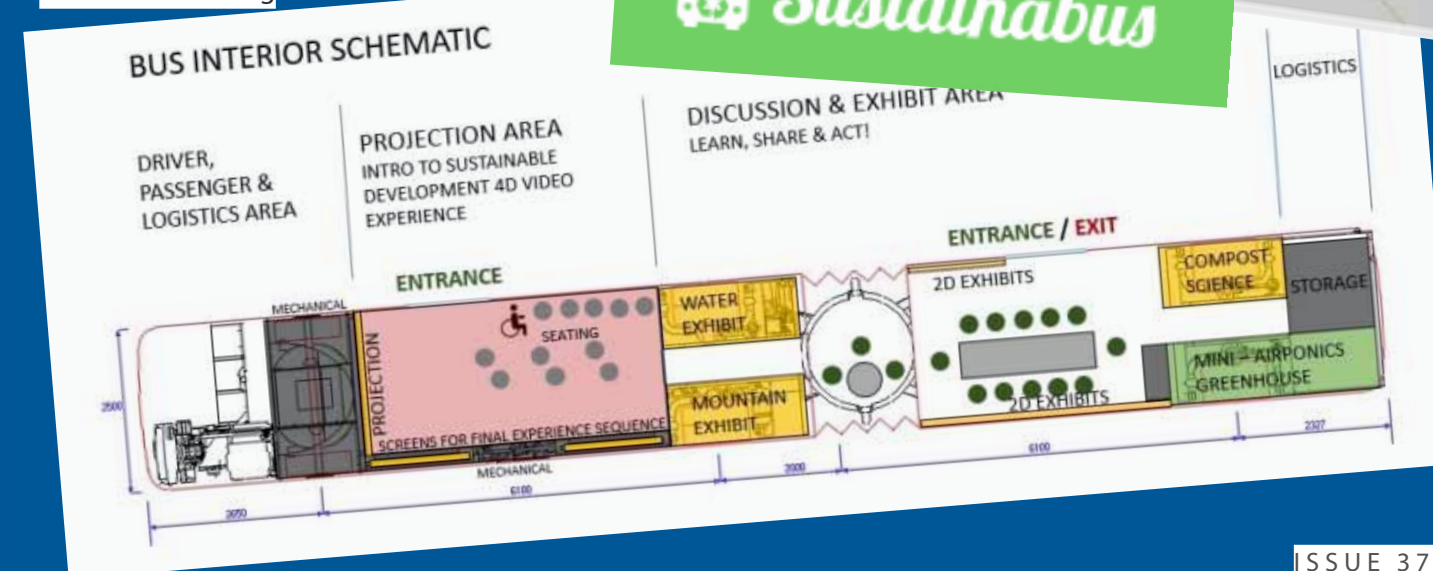
Over time, additional treaties were added such as the convention against torture, the convention on the rights of the child, and many others, each with their own committees and procedures.

The whole setup is rather complex, however, the initial division still raises questions whether a streamlining is in order to make it more accessible to the average person. Possibly by condensing everything into a single new document or "super treaty".

## EARTH FOCUS FOUNDATION UPDATES

### SUSTAINABUS PROJECT UPDATE:

Progress continues on the Sustainabus project. A mobile exhibition showcasing principles of sustainability. Currently detailed plans are being drawn up for the various interior exhibitions. Next the installation process will begin. Most recently, the permaculture exhibit has been defined. Find out more: [Sustainabus.org](http://Sustainabus.org)





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