



SEALOEarth
Serene Environment And Life On Earth

A world in which all people participate in the stewardship of planet Earth.

SEALOEarth in Special Consultative Status with the United Nations ECOSOC since 2017

NEWSLETTER

Earth Day 2017

“Look deep into nature, and then you will understand everything better.” ~ Albert Einstein

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We hope that you will enjoy reading this newsletter!

Celebration of Earth

Westford, Massachusetts, USA

Earth Day was celebrated at the J V Fletcher library in Westford, Massachusetts on Saturday, April 22nd 2017.

Dr. Chaitanya Hiremath led an interactive activity that demonstrated the population change over time according to habitat availability. He then welcomed the audience to the Earth Day Celebration.

Ms. Shobha Hiremath was the master of ceremony. Eagle Scout Taha Rangwala spoke on his project on “Reed Brook Erosion Protection”. Eagle Scout William O’Neal’s project on “Westford Seed Library” was also recognized.

The Keynote address was given by Dr. Deborah Harmon Hines, Vice-provost, Professor Emeritus of Radiology and Nursing, University of Massachusetts Medical School, Worcester, USA. The title of her talk was “*It takes a village ... To save the earth!*” Then Dr. Hines gave away the certificates.

Ms. Shobha Hiremath announced the winners of the Global Essay Contest. John Sturrock and Danielle Milanette read their essays.

To heighten the awareness of the bees dying worldwide, a packet of seeds of flowers were given away to all the people who attended the celebration.

Global Environmental Distinction 2017

Inspiring environmental projects related to fostering biodiversity, strengthening ecosystems, and establishing sustainable practices were recognized.

Westford Seed Library

William O’Neal (USA)

Reed Brook Erosion Protection

Taha Rangwala (USA)



Global Essay Contest 2017

Around the World

In the early 2017 alone, SEALOEarth’s global reach included countries such as, Australia, Bhutan, Cambodia, Canada, Germany, Guam, India, Indonesia, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Malawi, Malaysia, Netherlands, New Zealand, Russia, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, United States, Vietnam, and Zambia among others.

We received wonderful essays from seven countries across three continents. The essays were scored by our international panel of judges. We were disappointed that we did not receive any entries in the Youth category again this year. We encourage writers of all ages to make use of the resources made available to get started.

Winners

"Do humans have enough - consciousness, intelligence, rationality, creativity, empathy, love - to let life on earth survive?"

Juniors (ages 13-17)

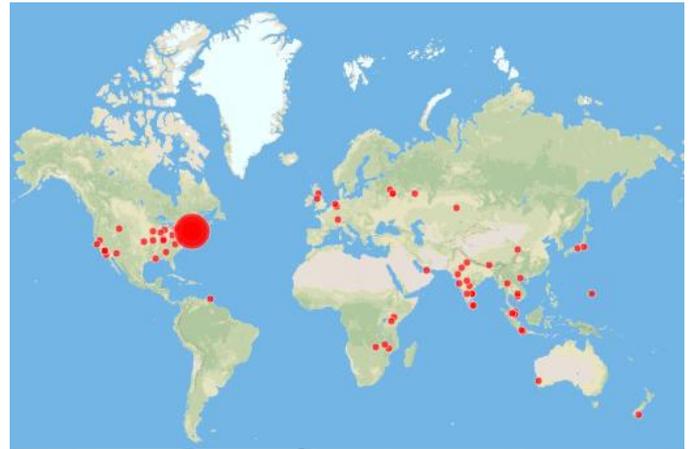
- | | |
|--------------------------|-----------------|
| John Sturrock (USA) | 1 st |
| Danielle Milanette (USA) | 2 nd |

Seniors (ages 18-25)

- | | |
|---|-----------------|
| Nur Shafiqah binti Mohd Safuan (Malaysia) | 1 st |
| Chanratha Pros (Cambodia) | 2 nd |

Honorable Mention

- Beaton Galafa (Malawi)
- Darshan Saraff (Canada)
- Andrew Twombly (USA)





Essay prompt for 2018

“Describe how the stewards of our planet Earth are leading by example, how they are making a difference, and how we can help.”

The deadline is March 1, 2018.

For more information, please visit:

<http://sealoearth.org/essaycontest.html>

Rachel Carson



Finest nature writer
Author, *Silent Spring*

“Underlying all of these problems of introducing contamination into our world is the question of moral responsibility -- responsibility not only to our own generation but to those of the future.”

“One way to open your eyes is to ask yourself, ‘What if I had never seen this before? What if I knew I would never see it again?’”

Sources: Wikipedia and www.rachaelcarson.org.

It Takes a Village To Save the Earth!

Keynote Address



Dr. Deborah Harmon Hines

Vice-Provost, Professor Emeritus of Radiology

University of Massachusetts Medical School

Worcester, USA

(Transcript of the video)

I'd like to thank my good friend Chaitanya for inviting me. He has come and worked with us in the summer time at UMass Medical School and our STEM education efforts, and you should know that the Medical School reaches out kindergarten level all the way through college in terms of STEM education. We realize that people can't go to medical school if they don't do science, that they don't do math. A lot of engineers convert to go into the health professions and nowadays we're dependent upon a lot of those engineers, especially in information technology, to help support the entire enterprise of healthcare, so we've been involved in this for a number of years.

I'm going to tell you some stories to illustrate the point that I want to make today about it takes a village. I'm old enough to remember the first Earth Day, and if you do the math I was a senior in college when it happened. I remember all of the people getting together waving flags, doing all of those sorts of things. I was attending a historically black college, now being a teacher, if you don't know what that is,

you have to look that up (*you want to close the door*), LeMoyne-Owen College in Memphis Tennessee. At that time I had completed all of my required courses for graduation. It was spring, so I just took a lot of elective courses and one of those elective courses was a course in philosophy taught by white nun. Now this is the trailing days of segregation. Okay, now having a white nun on campus was not special because she was white. Most of my instructors were white. As a matter of fact they were mostly Jewish. When Jewish people were fleeing Germany in the late 30s, coming to this country they were not welcome. It was bad to be black, and it was bad to be Jewish in this country at that time. But the historically black colleges and universities welcomed them. They had doctorates and science and math and the humanities. So many of my instructors of my historically black college were white and Jewish. But, a white nun? We were Protestant institution. So here's a little nun is running around campus and her habit, she was easy to spot. It took some getting used to her. She had us reading things about Wilmon Sheldon, okay, all of the great philosophers. Then she comes up with this thing about Earth Day, and we're all kind of looking at each other because basically we're just ready to graduate and get on with our lives. Most of us were first-generation high school graduates. Not just first-generation college, but first generation high school graduates. Our big concerns at that point had been how to pay our tuition, how to get back and forth to school. Many of us came out of low-income housing projects, so when she starts talking about Earth Day, all perfectly dressed in white, we didn't dare wear white in those days you had to ride to city buses to get there, you got dirty. We just kind of looked at her like she was crazy. So I have to confess to you, I did not buy into the first earth day. I also have to tell you that I flunked non-violence. During the civil rights movement, in order to March in the civil rights movement, you have to attend classes on how to be non violent, and I flunked. They told me, "look girl you go home because you'll mess everything up". So those are two really big failures at that point in my life.

It wasn't until I went on to graduate school and learned more about how every part of how we live is interdependent on every other part, and when somebody finally

put it to me this way and got it. I said, “**Think of the earth as a spaceship, and we have everything we're going to ever get on that spaceship**”. So we have to make it last for the journey. It was until I came across that realization. So one of the first messages, I want to give to you is, **everybody is not ready because you are. Be patient with those who are not ready. But also be ready to teach them.** Which is part of the theme for this year's Earth Day celebration, environmental and climate literacy our commitment to students by 2020. That is the international thing. We are dedicated to ensuring that every student around the world graduates high school as an environmental and climate literate citizen, ready to take action and be a voice for change. You cannot imagine how important that is when the people who are making decisions about these kinds of things today are naysayers saying they don't believe in climate change. One of the more strong opponents of climate change was a US senator who did a complete reversal because his grandchildren helped him to understand. Now I really hate to say we might have to give up on the old people, because I'm one of them. But the fact that we are now targeting making our children especially literate about these subjects, before they graduate from high school, I think is a goal worthy of achieving. Now in past Earth days, for example, in 2010 one of the goals of Earth Day was to plant 1 billion trees, and that goal was a change, it was attained by 2012. So if our goal is to **make sure that all of our children graduated from high school are literate about the climate and the environment**, I think we can achieve that. You know, it is not rocket science. It is listening to the young people with the projects that they talked about here today and encouraging them and lifting them up. One of the assignments that we were given in that course was to read a book by Rachel Carson. How many of you are familiar with Rachel Carson? She's really the mother of Earth Day. In 1962, she published a book called *Silent Spring*. She had been working in the US Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, and she was one of the first people to make the connections, throughout the whole of our environment. Your SEALOEarth, your whole emblem up there is about how everything interplays on each other.

But let's back up a little bit further. Coming out of World War II, two of the biggest scientific things, can anybody chance to say what they might have been coming out of World War II. (I have two guess and I have not thought about this.) You do one. (*From the audience - One obviously, would be the atomic bomb, and other one might be the production of nitrogen.*) You're pretty close on the second one. The first one was absolutely the atomic bomb, but the second one was DDT, the pesticide. And if you go back and look at commercials and things from those days, you will be surprised what they were doing when they were testing the atomic bomb. They have people sitting in chairs, like it was a theater, not very far from what was happening with special glasses, because they said you had to protect your eyes, sitting and watching this, live. And similarly, they were going to, coming out of World War II, they developed DDT. And because a lot where we were fighting was in tropical places, to kill the mosquitoes, the ticks, the mites, the animals that gave diseases to the troops. Once World War II was over, then they started exploiting atomic energy to provide energy for electricity for our home, that sort of thing. I grew up in Memphis Tennessee. So I sound different, just because I'm from the south and we use the whole alphabet. We speak slowly. We put endings on words. I grew up with the Tennessee Valley Authority, where a series of dams were put along the rivers that were tributaries of the Tennessee River to generate electricity. And it was a very very efficient system, but all of a sudden with the atomic energy we could generate electricity with atomic energy plants. They were spraying DDT on everything, because once you kill the insects; the plants would grow bigger, faster. In the south, there are two growing seasons. The summers are so long, so that's one of the things that contributed to the growth of the south right after World War II. Move ahead a little bit though, to about the mid-50s, and people were still playing with the atomic bomb as a weapon, and anybody in this room old enough to remember the bomb drills is telling how old you are. For the babies in the audience, once a week, for one hour, we marched out into the hallways, set with our hands over our heads, supposedly to protect ourselves from the atomic bomb if the Russians dropped the bomb. Now being curious, I went

looked this thing up, and what I found out is that if they dropped the bomb, we all would just be dead. So this was a futile activity. Then I got worried about the teachers. I'm wondering why the teachers were wasting their time. Being a well-trained child, I did not tell them that. I cooperated, but these were things that progressed and that was this tug and this pull between the use of atomic energy for good or what atomic energy could do for bad. There was a similar tug then, between all the things that technology and science could do for the good. That is, to grow more food to make more money and I don't think we have solved that problem today. It is a tug. It is a pull. For those of us, and as I said, I was not always on the boat. I'm on the boat now, but for those of us, **who are on the boat of saving the environment**, saving this ship that we're hurling through space on. **It is so important then for us to help other people to understand that.**

My husband is a minister, and we constantly have conversations between the whole thing about faith and science. Okay. Once I discovered the hydrogen atom - one proton, one neutron, and an electron - and that if you throw that thing around kind of funny and hit another one the whole world would blow up. I said I knew there was a God because human beings couldn't have figured that out. We couldn't have figured out how to make that elementary atom, and how all of the other atoms when you put them together. You put two of those together you got Helium. You keep putting those things together and you got all the chemical elements that we need to make a world. I was blown away by that, so I was a convert to science very very early, in spite of the fact that I was totally educated under segregation. Does anybody know what segregation is here? You have seen in movies about that. What is segregation? You don't know what that is? That's when, by law, black people had to stay over there and white people over there, and we could not cross. If you've ever seen the movie, *The Help*, where they didn't want the lady to use the bathroom inside of the house - that was segregation. My big scientific moment was at the age of seven when I saw one pipe coming out of the wall dividing going to two water fountains and one said colored and one said white. I said, "but there's only one source of water". Conducting my first scientific experiment,

when nobody was looking, I drank out of the white water fountain. It was the same water. Science won the day, and thereafter, everything I did was to ask, why. No matter what I was told. Why? Why is it this way? How does it work? What? What are we doing? So coming into where we are today, it is very very important that **as a village, once again we start educating our children.**

Now I'm going to introduce something and I hope it doesn't offend my religious friends, the unholy trinity. You know about the Holy Trinity, whether you're a Christian or not, but I want to talk about the unholy trinity. The unholy trinity has a dollar sign at the top, and in another corner, there's power, and at the other corner there's information. In the unholy trinity, money can buy anything; it can influence anything. Power can control money and can control information, but information, accurate information, up-to-date information can influence power and can also influence money. I do not have any money. I don't have any power, but I have information. **Everybody in this room has access to information and how we use that information to affect change is purely up to us.** Now today around the world, people are celebrating their support of science. I think of a very very good thing. I think, scientists have stayed out of the conversation too long. The people with effects have tried to stay pure and out of the conversation, but it's time to support the science and for the scientists to speak. I am reminded of twenty years ago when doctors stayed out of the conversations and our healthcare systems evolved into what it is today, with businessmen, business people controlling it. **So as citizens of the world, as members on this ship hurdling through space, our own little village, it's going to take all of our efforts to effect change so that the 20th generation of that seed project will be around, so that there will be water, shelter, and food for everybody on the face of this earth.** I commend you in your celebration. Thank you so much for inviting me.

Video is available:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lytPYHxZwOc>

Westford Seed Library



William O'Neal
Middlebury College, Vermont, USA

What started with a single tomato plant at age 10 became a rather fruitful interest over the years, resulting in a six-raised-bed backyard vegetable garden. When thinking of possible Eagle projects, I kept coming back to gardening. I began to think of ways in which I could improve the Westford gardening scene, and realized that Westford, unlike several surrounding towns, lacked its own seed library. A seed library is a place where community members can donate seeds from plants they have grown, and also withdraw seeds that other people have donated. The goal was both to give the Westford community another gardening resource and to encourage the production of hardy local plant varieties. After determining that this project was feasible, I went to the J.V. Fletcher Library, which agreed to host it, and to the Westford Agricultural Commission, which enthusiastically agreed to maintain it after I got it up and running.

One of the cornerstones of my project was a card catalogue (I learned that these used to be very common, but were driven into hiding by the onset of the technology age), where the seeds would be stored. Fortunately, Craigslist came to the rescue and we found one for sale in Pawtucket, RI. I was able to obtain the card catalogue and all other necessary materials thanks to generous donations from the Westford Rotary Club and the Friends of the J.V. Fletcher Library.

Before the physical seed library could come into existence, I needed to raise awareness about the initiative and find community members who would participate in the initial stages. I held two community lessons on the seed-saving process and also distributed fliers around town advertising the new seed library and seeking seed donations. Seed donations



came in from many community members, and an even larger amount of seeds was donated by Weston Nurseries. With all these seeds, it took three seed-sorting sessions (which consisted of getting tiny seeds into tiny plastic bags and then getting the tiny plastic bags into slightly larger coin bags and then putting labels onto the slightly larger coin bags—not as easy as it sounds) to finish getting everything ready. In February of 2016, the card catalogue was finally full of seeds, with over 2,000 packets inside. The seed library is currently in operation!

The seed library has been successful so far, with all of the seeds having been checked out last spring. The return rate was modest but enough to keep it running, and hopefully it will continue to expand. Through the seed library, any community member is able to participate to any degree in local agriculture. Besides this, we are also able to preserve and aid in the creation of local varieties that are well-suited for our area; with the threats of global warming and food shortages, this goal is becoming even more imperative.

Reed Brook Erosion Protection



Taha Rangwala
Massachusetts, USA

In my project, I designed and lead the construction of a 14' boardwalk over a pipe in Reed Brook which is behind Blanchard Middle School. The Stream is located within the Northeastern Coastal Zone Ecoregion. The associated point location is within the Merrimack Watershed of United States. The reason that I decided to design a boardwalk was because the Reed Brook was in danger of erosion since there was a pipe that was covered up by some earth, and it was susceptible to some erosion because of ATVs going over it. The purpose of the boardwalk is to provide protection for the pipe so that it does not collapse and block the Reed Brook in any way.

In order to protect the brook, I lead the construction of this boardwalk with the help of some volunteers. It took about three workdays. The first workday consisted of mostly measuring out all of the wood that we needed and cutting the wood as well. The second and third workdays occurred on site behind the Blanchard Middle School where we assembled the boardwalk with nails and steel rebar as well. We assembled the skeleton of the boardwalk on the second workday, and then we actually finished construction on the third day.

The most rewarding thing about leading this project was watching the boardwalk being constructed from the first to last day. While designing the boardwalk and making

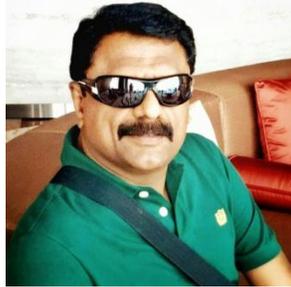


presentations for community groups, I was always excited to start building the boardwalk behind Blanchard Middle School. Educating the helpers and other people in the community was the main focus of this project, and knowing that people will benefit from this boardwalk is the best feeling of all. I always enjoy going back to the Blanchard Middle School and seeing the boardwalk in action.

Nature in your Neighborhood

Nagarahole Tiger Reserve
Karnataka, India

Nagarhole National Park – A Home to Wilderness



Praveen Siddannavar, India
Award winning
Natural history photographer
Wildlife conservationist

Karnataka is renowned for being one of India's richest states when it comes to wildlife and its biodiversity. A wildlife tour of Karnataka can be one of the most rewarding experiences for nature lovers. With a forest area of 38,720 sq km, more than 20% of the state of Karnataka is under forests. The Bandipur and Nagarhole parks actually form a part of India's biggest biosphere reserve called the Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve.

The Elephant is Earth's largest land animal, however they have been listed "endangered" by IUCN as their population has decreased by 50% in the last 3 generations. An elephant as seen in the image is a male with tusks and is known as a tusker. Females don't possess tusks unlike the African elephants. These animals simply love water and enjoy showering by sucking water into their trunks and spraying it all over their body. Interestingly the trunk can hold up to 4 liters of water. The loss of habitats have lead to human-animal conflicts and poaching for ivory is a major cause of concern.



Tiger are the largest living cats and by far God's most beautiful creation on our planet. They too are listed "endangered" by IUCN. However, with great conservation efforts especially in India, the tiger numbers have increased over the years. As seen in the image, tigers enjoy spending time and relaxing in water ponds.

Many of us have mistaken that black panthers are a species of their own; however these are from the same family of big cats with genes that produce dark pigment. Melanistic leopards are commonly known as black panthers. They exist in India, Central Asia, Africa and China. I was fortunate to spot black leopards on several occasions at Nagarhole.

Dholes, also known as Wild Dogs, are endangered as per the IUCN red list. They are found in packs and are ferocious hunters. They mainly hunt on the Spotted and Sambar deer.

The Indian Roller is designated as the state bird of Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, and Odisha. It is commonly spotted both in forests and agricultural farmlands. It is a very colorful bird with various shades of blue and hence is also known as the Blue Jay. These birds mainly feed on insects, earthworms, snakes, and rats. India has the highest populations of these birds.

The Malabar Whistling Thrush is known locally as the "Whistling Schoolboy" for their human-like whistling calls at dawn that one cannot miss. These residents of the Western Ghats are omnivorous, eating a wide range of insects, crabs, frogs, earthworms, and berries.

The Green Bee Eater, as the names suggests, is a richly green colored slender bird, and mainly feeds on insects and bees. They are common birds found in grasslands, thin scrubs, forests, and cultivated farmlands.

The Indian Paradise Flycatcher is one of the most fascinating birds that are native to the Indian subcontinent. It is amazing to watch this bird dive into the small water ponds to bathe and then fly back to the perch to preen their feathers. The males have an incredibly long tail known as a streamer.



Females are short-tailed with rufous wings and a black head. They feed on insects they capture in the air, often below a densely canopied tree.

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<https://www.facebook.com/PraveenSiddannavarPhotography?ref=hl>

The Human Epidemic



John Sturrock (17)
Massachusetts, USA

Eight hundred thousand birds. One thousand seven hundred turtles. Countless numbers of fish and invertebrates. All dead. What could have possibly led to this much devastation? A lost connection to the world around us. In 2010, BP's offshore oil rig, Deepwater Horizon, exploded, leaking close to five million barrels of oil into the sea and polluting over one thousand miles of shoreline, devastating the surrounding ecosystem (Pallardy). This is just one example of the human caused ecological nightmares that are becoming far too common and taken far too lightly. People have lost compassion for other life and have become obsessed over materialistic matters, and grown out of touch with their surroundings. Humans are the most complex and advanced animal ever to walk upon this planet, yet unable to see the harm they cause to other life. Multiple solutions have been offered to solve this growing epidemic before it is too late, however, as mankind fails to recognize the gravity of the situation, the consequences are piling up. Species are being hunted into extinction, such as the West African black rhino as of 2011 ("West African Black Rhino"), and environments are being contaminated with garbage and pollution. Changes must be made. Humankind must regain connection to the natural world. In order to save this beautiful planet from the disastrous fate looming in the shadows of our actions and reverse the

catastrophic repercussions of this human epidemic, we must learn to appreciate other organisms and work to change society's values.

All living things have amazing abilities that are still being discovered and are fascinating scientists today. If more people could be made aware of these incredible features, they may begin to care and invest more of their time into the study of other species besides their own. More public television exploring the wonders of nature could be made available to everyone, and classes on the other organisms of Earth could be offered to grade school level students. Many animals have hidden features and abilities that are still fairly unknown to humans. Scientists have known for a long time about the ability of bats and whales to navigate their surroundings by use of echolocation, something that humans have integrated into technology like sonar and radar. New findings suggest that similar abilities may exist in other species besides bats and whales. Elephants have an uncanny ability to detect a thunderstorm well before it reaches them. They rely on infrasound noises which are inaudible to the human frequency range. This increased range means elephants can hear things that people cannot. Studies of this intriguing ability, led by Andre Kotze, show that when elephants hear infrasound noises of an approaching thunderstorm, they are able to determine the direction the sound is coming from and cluster together for safety ("Mystery of Elephant"). Further research into this subject "[...] might explain a great mystery of the natural world; how elephants know where to go when they migrate vast distances in search of water" ("Mystery of Elephant" 2:55). More examination into areas such as this could lead to profound discoveries such as the mystery of animal migration navigation and possibly even new technology. If more people knew about the abundance of fascinating new knowledge to be discovered in other species, rather than slaughter them for consumerist things like clothing or decor, maybe people would begin caring for those species, and begin to feel that connection once again.

The largest reason that society has lost its relationship with wildlife, is because of the same reasons wars have been

fought for centuries: humans cannot connect with things that are different or those that they don't understand. The only solution to fix this issue is to focus on what we have in common rather than to only see our differences. Conservationist, Carl Safina, mentions a few species not commonly thought of as similar to humans at all, such as octopuses and their ability use tools and recognize faces, and crayfishes' very human-like anxiety issues. ("What Are Animals" 2:12). But our similarities extend far beyond our intelligence. Many species display an emotion all people know; love. A walk in the wild will show anyone the relationships that so many animals have with each other. Family is not unique to humans. Baby whales can be observed swimming alongside their mothers, learning how to care for their own child someday, and wolves can be seen travelling in packs, trusting each other to stay alive ("What Are Animals"). As humans, we often struggle to display compassion with one another, but fall even shorter when it comes to other species. We must learn to overcome our differences and find common ground. We have to learn that "[...] We are [all] kin under the skin" ("What Are Animals" 6:36). We can fix this growing issue if we learn to appreciate the wonders of nature and have a little courage to make changes that do not only aid our own personal agendas. Many people have pets and as Carl Safina points out, using his dog as an example, it is clear to see that there is a real bond that extends beyond a mutual agreement of survival ("What Are Animals" 0:24). A trust is formed between owner and companion that shows animals are also capable of compassion, maybe even more so than humans. Two different species, physically different, with different goals and desires in their lives, are capable of trusting and loving each other as if they were a real family. But why does this connection stop at domesticated animals? If people start spending more time outside, and see all of the similarities that they have with other species, a deeper connection to nature will begin to be reformed, but there is still much more that has to be done.

If society does not learn to change, then we are doomed to destroy our planet. A lack of compassion for other life will lead to the extinction of various organisms, and throw

our ecosystem off-balance, eventually leading to our own demise. A phrase that gets tossed around very often is global warming, and it seems to be a very divisive topic. Many people refuse to believe that climate change is being caused by humans, or they do believe it, but do not know how to, or simply do not want to attempt to fix this issue. The reason for this rapid increase in global temperature has to do with a subject known as the greenhouse effect. Similar to how the glass panes on a greenhouse trap in the sun's energy and heat up the inside of the structure, gasses in the atmosphere, specifically carbon dioxide, methane, and nitrous oxide, heat up the earth. Human operations such as deforestation, the burning of fossil fuels, the spreading of pesticides, and the abundance of landfills increase the levels of these gasses (Shaftel). If greenhouse gasses are not reduced and temperature rise is not slowed down, the results could be disastrous. Sea levels have already risen due to the shrinking ice caps, changing the ecosystems of hundreds of species. So why do humans still rely on these harmful methods when the evidence is clear that they are hurting the planet? The answer is simple: people are tied to their money. Technology for alternative energy sources already exists, such as solar and geothermal energy, however, the oil industry is massive and the economy relies heavily upon the success of fossil fuels. Alternative energy sources are currently more expensive for the consumer because oil prices are much cheaper in comparison. One way to solve this issue is for people to be willing to spend the extra money for clean sources of energy, and take a stand to protect this planet. Children must be taught good habits at a young age, like recycling and waste reduction, and more funding should be granted towards research and development for cheaper and cleaner energy sources. During the Cold War, the United States was losing an intellectual battle to the Soviets during the Space Race, because Russian children were taking advanced math and science classes, providing the country with more engineers. To solve this issue, President Eisenhower made major educational reforms to provide better education to the youth of America. Children were inspired from the futuristic and amazing technology being developed and became interested in learning more about space and science.

This eventually led to more passionate engineers and helped the United States land the first human on the moon before the Soviets, winning the Space Race (Kuhn 15). Even though this seems completely separate from saving the environment, the concept is the same. Children must be inspired. The children of this country are the future of this country, and to solve this growing issue starts with teaching the youth good habits and inspiring them to become environmental activists and scientists. If society recognizes the significance of making a few minor changes, this biotic orb we call home may still have a chance.

To save this planet from the calamitous course it is set on, society's values must change and we must learn to appreciate all other unique species to prevent the degradation of the planet that we, amongst millions of other species call home. What if people spent more time outside, discovering all the unique abilities of other organisms and all the similarities that they have? What if children were inspired at a young age to discover cleaner energy sources and solutions to saving this planet, developing good habits of recycling and waste management as they grow? Could this be the generation to reverse the effects of hundreds of years of environmental poisoning? The opportunity is here. The choice is ours. Whether we choose to act or sit idly by and watch our planet wither away, is up to us. The only determining factor is whether we are compassionate enough to see through the smog of our own pollution and realize that life on Earth is worth saving.

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The Great Barrier Reef

"The Great Barrier Reef is one of the world's natural wonders and is the largest coral reef on Earth. It was placed on the World Heritage List in 1981 in recognition of its superb natural beauty and biological diversity. But like other reefs throughout the world, it is under pressure. Building on decades of management, the Reef 2050 Long-Term Sustainability Plan is the shared blueprint for protecting the Reef over the next few decades in a partnership approach involving governments, scientists, Traditional Owners, community and industry."

Australian Government

Department of the Environment and Energy

Source: <http://www.gbrmpa.gov.au/managing-the-reef/reef-2050>

Images of Change



Great Barrier Reef: Coral (healthy vs. bleached)

Source: Gary Bell (left) and Roger Grace (right).

Connected as One



Danielle Milanette (17)
Massachusetts, USA

Humans are the most compassionate, intelligent, and creative beings on this earth, yet we are also considered the most destructive ("What are animals" [0:16:47]). We can learn from the plants and animals that live with us on this earth about how to take care of this beautiful ball of mass we call home. While many believe that consciousness, intelligence, rationality, creativity, empathy, and love are unique characteristics of the human brain, evidence suggests that they are not. Studies have shown that animals such as elephants and dolphins show similar emotions and thought processes. In addition, science has shown that the physical structures of the brains of humans and animals have similar traits. As stated by Carl Safina in a TED Talks discussion, "There was love on this earth before us, and there is love on this earth beside us" ("What are animals" [0:17:08]). We are not the only ones who care about our mates, our children, our earth. Humans need to unite with other species and understand that we have many of the same traits. Our experiences on this earth, and our ability to learn from those experiences, would not be the same without a strong connection to all species.

While direct communication with animals is not possible, much has been learned from observing, listening, and study animals in their natural habitat. These observations have shown similarities across all animals and humans. For

example, evidence of an elephant's consciousness and intelligence can be seen in an experiment focused on their extraordinary sense of hearing. A BBC Earth study performed an infrasound experiment that created sounds of a thunderstorm that were below the range of sounds that humans can hear. When this sound was turned on, the elephants instinctively all turned towards the sound, froze their movement, and communicating with each other with grunting sounds to discuss the incoming danger ("Mystery of Elephants" [00:00:20]). Experiments have also shown that elephants react differently and can distinguish between tourist voices that are non-threatening and threatening hunter's voices ("What are animals" [0:05:36]). They instinctively show their intelligence by knowing to change their behavior when danger is near, they know where to go for water even when it is far away, and they react to sounds that humans cannot hear. Similarly, dolphins have shown their intelligence, empathy, and compassion through the different sounds they make based on their emotions. Laughter and playfulness are also not uniquely human. Dolphins will show their emotion through their use of sound. They have been observed making giggle sounds when play fighting with other dolphins, indicating they are happy and in a playful mood ("Dolphin Expresses" [00:00:54]). A happy dolphin can be heard squealing with glee like a young child in a tickle fight with their sibling.

We are connected from a physical standpoint as well. Evolution has shown that the same neurons that are in our brains were inherited from other species; species that lived long before humans came along. Neurons sending messages to and from the brain of a crayfish, a bird, and a human all look the same. Similarly, science has shown similarities in human and animal hormones ("What are animals" [0:01:45, 0:09:28]). In fact, the brain of a dolphin is bigger than a human brain. The area of a dolphin's brain used to process sound is ten times as large as the same human area in the brain ("Dolphin Expresses" [00:00:17]). The same part of our brain that helps humans solve problems, is the same part of the brain that helps otters and octopus figure out how to use tools to get what they want ("What are animals" [0:02:45]). A dog's sense of smell is up to 100 times more powerful than a human's. It is believed

this sense of smell enables dogs to detect hormones called pheromones that are released when humans are scared, anxious, or sick. This ability has been used by humans by having dogs locate missing people, alert you when someone is ill, or even show compassion to a human when they are anxious ("Dog of Death-" [00:02:54]). In one way or another, we are all the same.

Destruction is a human trait that is undesirable and unwelcome and can't be ignored. Unfortunately, our coexistence with plants and animals is not always peaceful. Too often our belief that humans are superior to animals leads to this type of destructive coexistence. Carl Safina asked, "Why are we such narcissists?" and "Why don't they hurt us more than they do?" ("What are animals" [0:0:51, 0:14:28]). We hunt animals for fun, we eat animals, and we take over their habitats. Humans have continued this destructive behavior even though many animals are stronger and bigger than humans. Animals have also been known to hurt humans, but observation has shown that they often times choose to leave us alone when they could harm us. Killer whales have been known to kill and eat seals in the presence of similar sized humans but they don't go after the humans. Rather than attacking humans or their boats, those same killer whales have been shown to guide those humans lost in fog to their home port ("What are animals" [0:14:20]). Humans need to show the same level of compassion as displayed by many animals. Humans can help protect our own habitat by protecting animals and their habitat. Why is this so hard for us? (rhetorical question) We can make sure that we aren't eliminating species through hunting, hurting them with our trash, plastic waste, or chemicals, or disturbing their habitat through our construction efforts. Acceptance of our similarities leads to compassion. Compassion leads to interconnectedness. Interconnectedness leads to peaceful coexistence.

The qualities of intelligence, consciousness, and creativity are not uniquely human. The qualities of sympathy, empathy and compassion create bonds that are not uniquely human. Coexisting on earth requires that we practice these qualities across all species, not just within our own. While we

coexist, we can remain connected by watching, listening, loving, and learning from our cohabitants on earth. The feeling of connectedness leads to greater compassion, sympathy, and empathy. When this happens, we will all be successfully connected as one.

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Carl Safina



Source: TED Speaker

Carl Safina's writing explores the scientific, moral and social dimensions of our relationship with nature.

The Earth and Crisis: Using What We Have to Save the Planet



Chanratha Pros (20)
Phnom Penh, Cambodia

It is wrongly thought that the future of our planet is in safe hands. Might it be scaring you yet it is no longer a secret that our fellow animals and the Earth are being in grave danger. The last two centuries' destruction alone has sent the planet to experiencing for now a fast pace of deforestation, depletion of the ozone layer and extinction of animal and plant species, all plunging the planet into the midst of climate change and an ecological crisis that never be experienced in ancient times. In Africa, elephants accounted for over one million in 1980 have been roughly reduced to about half a million in 2012 (Safina). The rainforests, once blanketed much of the Brazil's ground, now find themselves reduced steadily to a worrisome amount. It is us, humans, against the natural world because we threaten them, we burn fossil fuels and chemicals, we pollute the air and that is not enough; we pollute the oceans, we fall down the trees and we send those species to a never-comeback.

One might be convinced when it comes to understanding the way nature itself operates. Carl Safina, in his TED Talk, proved that there are similarities between us and animals, believing the former and latter share consciousness, empathy, love and just named a few (Safina). Animals have

some (unique) qualities humans do not have; for example, elephants have a super earring sense that they use it to detect impending storm (Mystery of Elephant Infrasounds Revealed - Animal Super Senses). Nonetheless, what makes us distinguished from them is that we are super animals who are the most passionate, violent, creative and destructive (Safina). It is yet enough to eye only animals but plants. Plants have incredible self-regulating complex systems; they can communicate, survive, self-protect and even wage war (What Plants Talk About). That can be implied from here is nature is complex and dynamic. And, we, humans, mistreat them. Nonetheless, we should be the ones to mend our fences, given the fact that they and our dignity require each other. Therefore, it begs this question: "Are we capable of using all what we have to make all life on Mother Earth continue (Safina)?" This essay does not directly create its own solutions yet it assumes what people have been doing to save this planet are themselves solutions.

Are humans conscious, empathic and caring of planet Earth? This is a tough question. Yet, it is understandable to say ecologists and some people possess these qualities while some others focus on their own economic interests. Of great concerns here is whaling. Basically, this act refers to hunting of whales in order for meat, oil, blubber, and scientific research. These purposes join together to doubt the future of whale populations. Noticeably, Japan, Iceland and Norway are the three included to the top's list of countries whose activities are perceived as against whale reservation. While whaling has been condemned by people elsewhere, humans still continue, consider no after-effects and leave behind the future of living environments of native species. Are we conscious, empathic and caring? This question deserves repeating. Many of us are not enough conscious, empathic and caring. Notwithstanding, some others are. Ecologically conscious people are not the ones who shamefully mistreat the environment but those who advocate against activities in their opinion threaten the stability and living of all life on Earth. They are, for example, the Green Peace, actively involving in anti-whaling campaigns and especially with their complaints against the Japanese government that keeps hunting whale for scientific research.

Humans are emphatic when it comes to a worst whale stranding in New Zealand recently (Mullany). About 250 pilot whales died and we feel sad for them. We have been increasingly caring about the future of species in the lower Mekong after the government of Laos planned the construction of the Don Sahong Dam which endanger Irrawaddy Dolphins and threaten biodiversity in the river (Report raises concern over impact of Don Sahong Dam on Irrawaddy Dolphin). Some may propose planetary consciousness, given that humans belong to the planet as much as they belong to their nations. Therefore, some of us are conscious, empathic and caring of this planet. We want all life to continue.



Source: Ross Wearing/Reuters

Do humans have the virtue of rationality to let life on this planet survive? It needs no hesitation in an attempt to answer this question. Many social ecologists blame the capitalist system for allowing big corporations to erode environmental standard. Eco-feminists, on the other hand, point out that men are the root cause of environmental degradation. Benjamin Franklin, for instance, is to be blamed for inventing the electricity. Nonetheless, inside humans' mind, there is a rational structure; we humans have reasons and we tend to cooperate to facilitate those reasons. To explain this, examples must be cited. Kyoto Protocol was convened for state parties to reduce greenhouse gas emissions; Rio Earth Summit and the 2016 Paris Agreement were also based on this logic. Various environment and sustainable development agendas have been agreed by environmentally conscious governments at United Nations and regional organizations.

International Whaling Committee (IWC) was installed to regulate the conduct of whaling. All of these provide the ground that humans are rational and cooperative to in terms of addressing the issues that concern the vitality of all life on this planet. Yet, there is another question. Can humans use their creativity and intelligence to let them survive?

Of course, humans' creativity and intelligence play a starring role in easing the planet's stress. Too often, people make use of their ideas to put a decline to the crisis. As Carl Safina put in, humans are the most creative animals that have ever been on Earth (Safina). By repeating this, it needs no details that they can invent environmental friendly products, replace plastic bags with reusable bags and use possible transportation means that do not upset the environment. One example may spark your interest. In October 2016, Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies published a special article. The title used 'Can We Save the Oceans by Farming Them?' was particularly not ignorable (Schiffman). In here, groups of people are creating their sea-farming operations that produce food, ecologically sustainable. They create multi-species hanging gardens and believe they will contribute to the restoration of ecosystems and mitigate the impacts of ocean acidification; it is a proactive approach to the conservation of marine species and partly helps to revitalize the ecosystems that have been degraded (Schiffman). If sea farming zones reach at their peak in the near time frame, it is believed that the future of species below the sea can be assured.

In conclusion, we have to admit that we are living in both the era of industrial development and that of environment destruction. The main problem is consciousness. Not only must ecologists be conscious of the environment but also everyone. Each and every single life on this planet urgently needs help from us humans, given that their future is in doubt. We are the smartest creatures on this planet so that we are entitled the responsibility to take care of our company. Despite of being the smartest we must not behave like we are exceptional or that we are superior to the rest of nature. Instead, we should

encourage ourselves to figure out ways to make this planet a secured and a better place for all.

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James C Cahill



Source: University of Alberta

Himalayan Glaciers are Granted “Rights of Human Beings” for Protection

Public Radio International

“An Indian court has recognized Himalayan glaciers, lakes and forests as “legal persons” in an effort to curb environmental destruction, weeks after it granted similar status to the country’s two most sacred rivers.”

“The court also extended the status of “living entity” to swathes of the Himalayan environment, including waterfalls, meadows, lakes and forests.

“On March 20, the same court ordered that both Ganges and Yamuna rivers should be given “living entity” status to conserve them”

“New Zealand earlier last month recognized its third-largest river, ancestral and spiritual waters for its Maori people, as a living entity.”

Source: <https://www.pri.org/stories/2017-04-01/himalayan-glaciers-are-granted-rights-human-beings-protection>



Source: Google Images

Saving Earth: Humanity's Position in the Struggle of the Animal and Plant World



Beaton Galafa (27)
Zomba, Malawi

It is argued by some quarters that humans lack what it takes to let wildlife co-exist with humanity on earth. Weighing such a proposition on the basis of personal experience, one would be tempted to agree. However, accepting such an assertion is cynical and self-destructing. It means acceptance that we cannot manage to protect the very components of our surrounding environment which we rely on for survival. This essay therefore aims at proving that despite all the ills we are committing against wildlife, we still have some consciousness, intelligence, rationality, creativity, empathy and love remaining that might turn the tables around if properly tapped into, and let life on earth survive.

To begin with, wildfires, poaching, illegal fishing and many other manifestations of humanity's stoicism towards nature are what convince people to stand by the assertion that we have failed to be accommodative to wildlife. Despite resounding evidence that wildlife behaves in manners systematic as those of humans in so many ways, we sadly fail to apply principles of egalitarianism in our treatment of these fellow occupants of the planet. We have enslaved animals and plants for thousands of years because of erroneous postulations on the relationship between humans and animals. For example, Plato and Aristotle used human rationality and intellect as a basis to provide a privileged and separate status for humans (Vining 89). On the 'Scale of Nature,' humans were at the top rung, with plants and other animals on the lower rungs. In

addition, early Christianity brought a lessened concern with the material world and an even more privileged status for humans (Vining 89). In the current century, as Professor David Fraser notes, we affect animals by destroying their habitat, polluting their environment, introducing invasive species into their ecological systems, building structures in flight-paths, tilling the land, cutting trees, driving cars, burning fuel, and on and on (Mellor, Hunt and Gusset 6).

However, it must be noted that it is virtually impossible for mankind to be empathetic towards animals and plants without knowledge of their likeliness to humans. Our co-existence with wildlife has led to many discoveries about the animal and plant world. We now understand that both animals and plants also have families they care about. This knowledge has been substantiated by instances of wild animals attacking humans in acts of vengeance after falling prey to attacks themselves, by humans. This reactive mood is not different from humans' hearts of revenge and vengeance. Also, just as humans seek asylum in different countries or regions to evade wars, famine and droughts, so do animals in parks and jungles in search of food, conquest and new free territory.



There are also instances of animals demonstrating their affection for humans beyond understanding of the uncritical mind. In 2012, Huffpost reported that a dog belonging to Manuel Guzman had stayed by Guzman's tomb for six years when he passed on in 2006 (Medina huffingtonpost.com). The pet, Capitán, ran away from home after Guzman's death and was staying at the cemetery, forcing

cemetery authorities to start feeding and taking care of him (Medina huffingtonpost.com). The Guzmans' decision to let the dog roam freely in the cemetery, guarding its master, and the authorities volunteering to take care of the dog show the remarkable bond that exists between mankind and animals that accorded Capitán the liberty to wander about freely at the place he loved to be. Capitán's continued loyalty also depicts the love with which Manuel Guzman treated him when he was alive-and the dog's ability to recognize and reward him for it. A reciprocated demonstration of the bond between humans and animals is also exemplified through the encounter of a Lithuanian, Darius Sasnauskas, who saved an injured baby deer that couldn't keep up with its family as it limped behind, rendering it vulnerable to potential predators (Televičiūtė, boredpanda.com). After recovery, the deer refused to wander away into parks or woods, always following Darius instead. This is a manifestation of love and empathy that human beings can still show to the world. If properly exploited, we would create a world free for all-humans and animals alike.

In addition, man's increased efforts in understanding the communication systems of the animal and plant world is symbolic of the ticking love, empathy and rationality at the hearts of humans. Though the caging of animals in zoos demonstrates, to some extent, humanity's egoism and materialism as similar savagery has been demonstrated in history through wars, slavery and murder, environmentalists and animal rights' activists find solace in the numerous researches that people in different fields conduct in attempts to discover the possibility of animals learning some human attributes. For instance, there have been studies focusing on the communication system of different animal species. Research has shown that in their natural habitat, chimpanzees, gorillas, and other nonhuman primates communicate with each other through visual, auditory, olfactory, and tactile signals (Fromkin, Rodman and Hyams 306). Many of these signals seem to have meanings associated with the animals' immediate environment or emotional state. They can signal danger and can communicate aggressiveness and subordination (Fromkin, Rodman and Hyams 307). Dolphins again have been proved to have a more sophisticated sound system which is very

advanced and dynamic for communicating emotions ("Dolphin expresses emotion through sound" BBC Earth). Dolphins also giggle just as young humans when sparring to communicate to each other that they are just play-fighting ("Dolphin expresses emotion through sound" BBC Earth). Such discoveries bring forth an understanding that animals experience pain, danger and love among many other things just as humans. This revives love and empathy towards the animal world. This empathy has often bred positive ideas, such as animal rights and animal liberation, which oppose all ownership and use of animals. It has generated concerns about the welfare or 'quality of life' of animals in human care, and to a combination of scientific and philosophical attempts to understand what constitutes a good life for animals (Mellor, Hunt and Gusset 6).

It has also been discovered that humans are not always superior to animals in all cognitive areas, contrary to earlier beliefs. According to Dr Arthur Saniotis, "science tells us that animals can have cognitive faculties that are superior to human beings." ("Humans not smarter than animals, just different, experts say" Phys.org). For example, a dog's sense of smell is a hundred thousand times more powerful than that of humans ("Dog of Death - Extraordinary Animals" BBC Earth). In justifying the research findings, Maciej Henneberg, a professor of anthropological and comparative anatomy from the School of Medical Sciences, says animals often possess different abilities that are misunderstood by humans ("Humans not smarter than animals, just different, experts say" Phys.org). The importance of such findings is that they positively change humans' perceptions towards wildlife. Humans become aware that they are dealing with beings that are equally delicate, complicated and sophisticated.

Similarly, a research on plant behavior by University of Alberta Plant Ecologist James Cahill discovered that plants behave in the same way as animals. One needs to simply observe plants in their immediate environment from the day they sprout to the day a cow tramples on some green grass or the day a farmer passes around the field with a hoe. Often, farmers will cite competition for food between their growing plants and the unwanted grass as the main reason behind

weeding. The animal and human worlds have been marked with exactly same kinds of struggle, sometimes leading into family and tribal wars over food, water and grazing land. According to Dr. Cahill's research findings, plants also fight for food, eat living organisms for survival, and even call for help from insects that prey on the plants' predators when under attack ("What plants talk about" Nature). Such obsession with animal and plant behavior by humans such as Dr. Cahill creates the impression that wildlife slavery is already being challenged by its abolitionists through educative efforts taken by scientists from their researches. This is a right path in defeating stoicism towards plants and animals.



Lastly, the stiff legislative measures enacted worldwide in defense of the animal and plant world are proof of humans' desire to protect nature. In as early as the 19th century, at a time when blood sports and blatant acts of cruelty against animals seemed normal, usual and perfectly legal, reformers sought to stamp out cruelty as part of a wider program of social progress (Mellor, Hunt and Gusset 6). Mellor, Hunt and Gusset (6) note that this led to the criminalizing of deliberate cruelty and the banning of recreations such as bull-baiting and dog-fighting in many countries. A very recent example of wildlife protection is Malawi. The legislature passed amendments to its Wildlife and National Parks Act in 2016, the first in over twenty years, to deter poaching and illegal wildlife trafficking ("Malawi stiffens penalties for poachers, traffickers" Internationalconversation.org). A maximum sentence of thirty years imprisonment now awaits poachers and wildlife traffickers. Though enforcing laws is a problem in porous third

world societies, the passing of the bill is a positive gesture and it demonstrates that there is still love, empathy and consciousness in humanity. It just needs to be translated into action through enforcement of the laws.

In conclusion, the efforts that humanity is undertaking to let wildlife survive are worthy applauding, however slow the pace appears to be. They are a sign of affection for the plant and animal world that refuses to fade out. It is apparent that with full focus on the strides undertaken by scientists, lawmakers, scholars and other people in understanding and protecting wildlife, earth can drive itself towards a future where nature will not worry much about extinction of some life.

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The Inhumane Humanity: An Investigation into the Lack of Human Care for Planet Earth and its Effect on Tomorrow



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“Imagine if trees gave off Wi-Fi signals. We would be planting so many trees and we’d probably save the planet too. Too bad they only produce the oxygen we breathe” (Mudabbir Khalid – The Huffington Post). Since the inception of mankind, humans have had an immeasurable desire to discover, invent and build. Our future depends on us furthering these ideas and expanding our potential. However, with every human breakthrough, humans also cause consequences to the world around us. After 200,000 years of inhabiting this planet, we question our responsibilities as humans and stewards of our only home. Nevertheless, we need to understand that ever since the evolution of mankind, we have treated all forms of life differently, proving that we lack the basic human characteristics of consciousness, intelligence, rationality, creativity, empathy, and love, to let life on Earth survive.

A dog is a man’s best friend. These animals play a crucial role in various parts of society, aiding in the therapeutic recovery of patients to rescuing people in situations beyond the capabilities of humans. These jobs are performed with tenacity and determination, simply because they care. Empathy is the characteristic that defines a human. A characteristic that divides society from barbarians. However, through the treatment of animals, plants, and each other, we have proven

that we truly lack this vital trait that gives us the ability to not only recognize, but interpret the feelings and emotions of others. As Dr. Carl Safina, author and ecologist, reveals in his TED Talks presentation, “human empathy is far from perfect. We round up empathic creatures, we kill them and we eat them. Now, maybe you say OK, well, those are different species. That’s just predation, and humans are predators. But we don’t treat our own kind too well either” (Carl Safina TED Talks). We do not judge two dogs differently based on their breed or color. On the other hand, discrimination continues to be one of the paramount issues to this day. Not only do we enslave our own kind but we also harm other, sometimes even endangered species, simply for the thrill of the hunt. We are being oblivious to the fact that hundreds of species become extinct everyday and if we continue to be apathetic towards the other forms of life on Earth, our own extinction will indefinitely ensue.

We often look to the stars and wonder if there is any planet out there which has signs of intelligence. However, we first need to understand that we, ourselves, lack the intellectual capacity to allow life on Earth to survive. Although there is a small minority that advocates saving and promoting awareness about the dire conditions of the environment, the majority of humans exploit these resources and animals, in spite of knowing the disastrous ramifications of their actions. As Safina reveals, “elephants once ranged from the shores of the Mediterranean Sea all the way down to the Cape of Good Hope. [...] And now their range is shattered into little shards. This is the geography of an animal that we are driving to extinction, a fellow being, the most magnificent creature on land” (TED Talks). Although we are making scientific breakthroughs that redefine us as a race, we continue to be ignorant of the detrimental effects that we have on the other species. Since the beginning of history, we have thought that humans were the only species that could think. Recently, studies have been conducted to show the mental capacity of other animals. Dolphins, for instance, are obviously incredibly intelligent, yet we have them imprisoned for our own entertainment, which may lead to suffering and sometimes even death. Some establishments genuinely strive to take care

of their animals, but there have been numerous cases of animal abuse all over the world. There have been various films and documentaries featuring the mistreatment of animals to help raise awareness of this issue. On another note, our misguided judgement also stems from us as consumers. In ancient times, we have respectfully utilized animals to the fullest, but this has drastically changed as currently, we predominantly use animals for fashion accessories and exquisite delicacies. We have lately discovered that animals use each other to survive. For instance, a grouper often signals the moray about any nearby fish in order to corner it (TED Talks). This teamwork results in the survival of both species. As Carl Safina brilliantly states, “the use of animals is an ancient partnership that we have just recently found out about. How do we celebrate that ancient partnership? Mostly fried. A pattern is emerging and it says a lot more about us than it does about them” (TED Talks). Everyday, new and improved technologies arise, helping us discover our full potential. However, there are still an alarming amount of people who prefer to live in their own ‘bubble’, ignorantly killing and sacrificing animals in the name of something that is absolutely selfish, unreasonable, and undoubtedly impractical. This portrayal of our lack of intelligence renders us as incapable of letting any life survive on Earth.

Over the past century, us humans, the authoritative species, are continuing to expand our knowledge. From hunting animals for food to travelling to communicate with people far away, we have evolved into a society where grocery stores are accessible and people across the globe can be reached with our personal mobile phones. By inventing and innovating to solve our problems, humans have vastly profited from the industrialization era, making us more efficient, yet we choose not to address the consequences. We know that renewable energy is much more eco-friendly, yet we continue to use fossil fuels for our daily needs without thinking about the repercussions it has in the long run. Numerous fossil fuel companies are perfectly capable of switching to more renewable means of energy generation, but the idea of a potential financial setback seems to outweigh the fact that the Earth is dying. Ironically, living in a world run by money, we

will never know the worth of water till the well is dry because most people tend to be careless and forget about the appalling conditions of the environment. Accordingly, millions of ecosystems cease to exist each year due to our immense amount of pollution. The 26-million-square kilometre wide hole in the ozone layer and the garbage on the ground which we are too lazy to dispose properly, all add up to our environmental crisis. With an emphatic reference, Safina summarizes that “every one of those animals in every painting of Noah's ark, deemed worthy of salvation is in mortal danger now, and their flood is us” (TED Talks).

Unfortunately, our love/hate relationship with the environment is parallel to our love/hate relationship with our own species. Love is one of the most important traits which truly defines a human. While we all want to be loved and love others, we have shown in the past few decades that we have not only ceased to express love to our environment, but we have stopped loving ourselves. Racism and other forms of discrimination are one of the most popular and pressing issues in today's world. Discrimination turns into hate and hate is the primary cause of war. As Carl Safina professes, “humans not only can feel grief, we create an awful lot of it” (TED Talks). But we need to realize that “love is not the thing that makes us human. It's not special to us. We are not the only ones who care about our mates. We are not the only ones who care about our children” (TED Talks). Animals and species have learnt to co-exist in difficult environments, surviving mankind's oppression. Just as elephants gather together to face an impending storm (BBC Earth), we, as humans, need to learn to gather together, regardless of age, gender, race, faith, or income, to face the very-real and impending predicament. How can we save and love the environment, when we, the most ‘advanced’ species, cannot even love ourselves? We choose to think of our short-term benefits rather than our potential long term demise. As our population density increases, our resources have become scarce, which then leads to inequality. This inevitably causes humans to attack and hurt each other with no regard of the ramifications our actions have on our future, as well as the environment. If we are incapable of loving each other, we are incapable of surviving. Therefore, if

we continue to mistreat the environment, animals, and ourselves, it is truly impossible for life on Earth to survive.

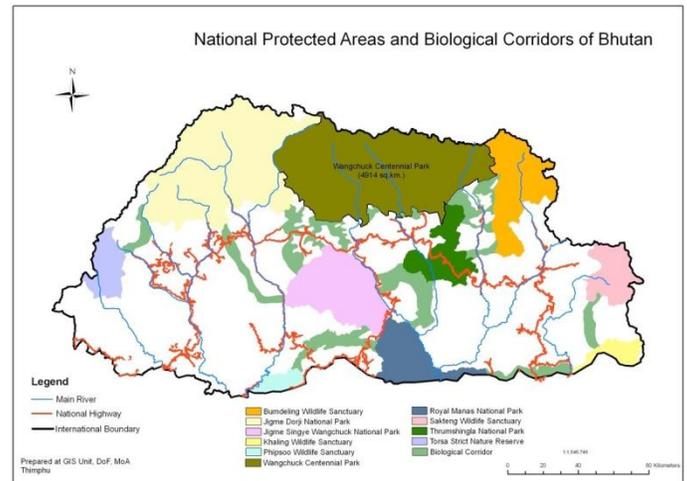
It is an understatement that human beings are selfish. Currently, we worry if our clothes match or if our phones are charged, but there are people in third-world countries who worry about having food every day. We are too lazy to use a flight of stairs while people in poverty walk miles every day for water. People who live with comfort tend to be blissfully unaware of the other side of the world. The side where people lack the five basic needs of survival and wonder if they will be alive the next day. We believe that there are specific traits like consciousness, intelligence, rationality, creativity, empathy and love that separates us from ‘them’. However, if we do not have enough of these aforementioned traits and use it to the full extent, we will not be capable of preserving life on this planet. Furthermore, the very denial of this obstacle is a grave mistake. We need to open our eyes and escape the illusion set by modern society that everything is going to be okay. If we act now, we still have the ability to create a world where our grandchildren and their grandchildren can live with prosperity and sustainability. In order to let life on Earth survive, one must help another, protecting the environment, animals, ourselves and our future. We need to act now, because whether we choose to save or abandon our home planet, the fate of the human species is at stake.

All of humanity is on the same boat and this boat is sinking.

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The Biological Corridors in Bhutan



“Bhutan has 10 formally protected areas covering more than half of the total area of the country. The biological corridors in Bhutan were introduced in 1999 to connect all protected areas together into a single uninterrupted area providing free mobility to wild animals. Isolated populations of wildlife or plants are less genetically viable and at much greater risk than connected populations. Many species must migrate with seasons, roam to find mates, or change habitats to locate new sources of food. Fragmented populations are forced to inbreed, degrading their genetics. Fragmentation also halts plants that rely on animals to widely disperse their seeds and pollen.”

Royal Society for Protection of Nature

Source: <http://www.rspnbhutan.org/protected-areas-of-bhutan/>

What Is Needed For Us To Save Our Planet



Andrew Twombly (17)
Massachusetts, USA

One. We only get one planet, and as of right now, we are doing a great job at turning mother earth into an unlivable piece of garbage, fling through the seemingly lifeless cosmos. We do not have other options. We can not go and colonize a nearby planet. We have to make this one work, and we can. As of right now, humans are facing the biggest crisis not just us, but this planet has ever seen. Temperatures are rising, seas are rising, and the stakes are rising. We do not have time. Like none. Zero. Zilch. Zada. No time. We need to get moving. This movement towards helping to reverse the effects that humans have had on this beautiful planet are great, but nothing will change until we can all unite as one. Until we, as the human race, can join forces, nothing will get done. And if nothing gets done, the consequences will be extreme. To fix this issue, multiple steps will need to be taken, first, people need to acknowledge that there is a real problem going on, and that starts at the top of ladder. Then, people need to be educated, and lastly we need to act.

To start to make a change in the way the majority of our country perceives and looks at the environment, and to get to a point where we can make a difference, people in charge need to acknowledge that there is a problem. Fifty-four Billion Dollars. That is the amount of money, as of March first, 2017, that the current president of the United States of America is

planning to add to the previous military budget. One might ask, “Okay, but what does that have to do with the environment?” and the answer is a lot more than it initially looks. See, to add that amount of money into our “depleted military”, as Mr. Trump refers to it, the funds will have to be taken from some other departments, and based on the new budget that the president has fabricated up, one of the places that the money will come from is the Environmental Protection Agency, also known as the EPA. The EPA is a government organization that is there to protect human health and the environment, and to accomplish this goal they develop and enforce regulations, give grants, study environmental issues, and teach people about the environment. However, with these budget cuts, it is scary to think about what can happen. In a recent CNN article addressing the recent news it was written that “Two sources told CNN Monday that the cuts are expected to slash as much as a quarter of the Environmental Protection Agency's budget, a cut that one former EPA official said would be ‘devastating’ and a current employee at the agency said would weaken the agency to the point where it can only do its most basic functions”. This is terrifying, but not the only issue when it comes to the people that are supposed to be looked up to in our government not acknowledging the importance of the environment. When a new president is elected to office, he needs to select people for his cabinet, and one of those cabinet seats is for the head of the EPA, and the new president decided that Scott Pruitt, the former Attorney General of Oklahoma, deserved that seat, and that is one interesting decision. The problem is not just that he is not qualified, it is that Pruitt literally describes himself as “a leading advocate against the EPA’s activist agenda” on his LinkedIn page. What? So Donald Trump put someone to be in charge of the EPA, that is very much against the EPA, and in fact as made it a priority to sue the EPA as much as humanly possible? Yep! This is like appointing someone who has never stepped foot in an American public school system to be Secretary of Education. Oh wait, never mind. Overall, with the fact that the people running the government are not concerned at all with the environment, how can one expect an American who voted for them to be concerned? If we want this issue to be taken

seriously we need them to take it seriously, and this starts with Mr. Trump. Without the acknowledgment of manmade climate change, nothing will change in this country.

Let us imagine, that somehow, someone got Mr. Trump to admit that manmade climate change is not a hoax fabricated by China, the next step is to educate the American public. This is when one would be able to teach someone who has had no clue about the environment, that the organisms around them in the world are actually not that much different than them, which in return would hopefully help grow empathy for the environment and the different organisms in it. One example of an organism in the environment that is not much different than humans is the daughter vine, that is displayed wonderfully in the documentary What Plants Talk About. The Daughter vine is a plant that is completely dependent on a host plant for it to be able to survive, and if it does not find its host plant in 72 hours, it will die. The crazy thing about this plant is that scientist have concluded that the plant can almost choose and pick which host plant it wants to lash onto to most benefit it, almost making a decision, like a human. “No doubt there is choice” says Dr. James Cahill who is an Experimental Plant Ecologist at the University of Alberta, the plant is able to sense in the air a chemical released by their favorite victim, tomato plants, and is able to nine times out of ten, correctly latch onto anything that releases that chemical, even if it is not a plant at all. In the animal world, someone who is just learning about how other organisms in the environment are not so much different than them, could learn about dolphins. In the short clip about dolphins uploaded to BBC Earth, the dolphins “language” is compared to a human's. This would do a magnificent job when explained to someone who is learning about the environment to build up empathy for other organisms in the environment, not just other humans. After one understands that other organisms in the environment are not all that different from humans, they may be able to make the connection that we need to help these other organisms to survive.

Lastly, we need to act, and we need to act fast. Now, for us to act and make an impact, we need to unite as one, and

us uniting will depend on the two prior topics, first that people that run the government and are looked up to need to see and admit that there is an issue, then we need to educate others on the environment and how we can help it. After this is done, we need to act. We need to help this planet. There are so many ways that one could help this earth, but it starts very simple. One amazing way to help the planet is by trying to cut down on the amount of plastic we use in our daily life. This process of using less process is illustrated fantastically in the film Bag It starring Jeb Berrier, who learns about the different ways one can help the environment and it completely ends up changing his life. Another amazing way that can help our environment is if we all moved towards driving cars that were less hurtful to the environment, and now luckily this is becoming more and more available with companies like Tesla coming out with great solutions to help save money over time along with the environment.

Recognize, educate, then act. This three step procedure will help us, as human people save the one and only planet we have. First the people in power, the ones a large part of the country look up to, need to recognize the issue. Which, if done properly, will directly lead into the education of millions upon millions of Americans about the environment and how the different organisms that they are currently killing are actually not far different than the human race. Only, and only after those two things happen, will we be able to act effectively, together. As one unit. We as a people, are very powerful and smart, and with all the great minds put together, there is no doubt, in the mind of scientists, that we can, and will find a long term solution for our one and only planet.

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United Nations Grants SEALOEarth Special Consultative Status

The United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) adopted the recommendations of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) at its Coordination and Management meeting of April 2017 to grant **special consultative status** to SEALOEarth. Heartfelt congratulations were conveyed on behalf of all staff of the Non-Governmental Organizations Branch/OESC/DESA.

Consultative status for SEALOEarth enables it to actively engage with ECOSOC and its subsidiary bodies, as well as the United Nations Secretariat, programmes, funds, and agencies in a number of ways.

This relationship offers unique privileges and obligations.

Privileges and benefits of consultative status include providing information or advice to the Council or one of its bodies, attendance at meetings and access to the United Nations, written statements, oral presentations, consultations, and use of United Nations facilities.

Responsibilities and obligations include submitting a report on the activities in support of the work of ECOSOC and the United Nations.

SEALOEarth welcomes the opportunity to work with United Nations.

SEALOEarth is one among the 49 organizations around the world to be recognized by the Council at the United Nations.

SEALOEarth was founded and its symbol was adopted on March 20th, 2012. It marks its fifth anniversary in 2017.

In September 2012, SEALOEarth was invited to the 14th Global Development Village kick off meeting at the United Nations Plaza in New York City.



Source: World Scout Organization

During the World Scout Moot 2013 in Canada, it was an honor to be with Ms. Lois Brown, Minister of International Cooperation (Canada), and Ms. Corinne Woods, director of the United Nations Millennium Campaign. SEALOEarth offered 12 two-hour interactive workshops on “Human Beings and Their Environment”, alongside the United Nations Environment Programme, Youth and United Nations Global Alliance, and many others.



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Source: UN Meeting Coverage. (1 February 2017)

<https://www.un.org/press/en/2017/ecosoc6810.doc.htm>

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SEALOEARTH's mission is to heighten awareness of the responsibility of all people to manage global resources in a sustainable way, regardless of an individual's country of origin, cultural background, spoken language or religion.

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