

Part 2: Sustainable Society

“Earth Village”

“We still have a chance. But we don't have time to make the same mistakes again.” (Earth Summit, July 14th 1992)

— Morris Strong, Ex. Secretary General, UNCED

We still have a chance, but our society must be converted into a sustainable one as soon as possible. For that to happen, our consciousness and values must change. But if we don't change, our society doesn't change. If we change, those around us change and the world changes. Wouldn't it be a wonderful thing to be one of the people who inspires great change?

We can create change.

Fundamental Causes of Environmental Destruction

The single main cause of global warming is attributed to the increase in the level of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. Why can't we reduce these levels? Why can't we abolish the usage of CFCs which destroy the ozone layer? Why don't we collect appliances using CFCs and dispose of them correctly? In Japan we have all the food we need while in Africa 30,000 people starve to death each day. Why don't we send aid to them? What are the fundamental causes of environmental destruction?

- **A cycle of massive-production, massive-consumption and massive-waste:**
 - ➔ Waste of resources and energy, increase in waste, and environmental destruction and pollution.
- **Convenient and comfortable lifestyle:**
 - ➔ Waste of resources and energy, increase in waste.
- **Chemicals, technology and civilization:**
 - ➔ Environmental pollution, development and then further environmental destruction.
- **Overpopulation:**
 - ➔ Increase in consumption of resources and energy, food shortages.

Are these the fundamental causes of environmental destruction?

Why do we produce and consume on such a massive scale?

Why do we increase our population and sacrifice the environment necessary for our survival?

Why do we pursue this convenient and comfortable lifestyle even though it is destroying the environment?

Are there any other living creatures like us?

Economic growth

- Why must we have economic development?
- Can the economy really continue to grow endlessly on this finite earth with its limited resources?
- Is the reason behind the pursuit of economic growth solely “the desire for money”?

Money

Most environmental destruction's cause can be traced back to money, as can the most causes for war, crime and corruption. Academic background, job promotion, sales, wages and savings are also oriented towards money. Certainly money is the problem (environmental destruction, war and crime, etc). So why are we so preoccupied with money? There aren't other fundamental causes to our problems, are there?

Do we really need Competition?

In today's society, we are led to believe that competition is necessary for our advancement. **But is it really true?**

At my company, for example, we used to invite several teams to compete against each other for development projects, but we don't do that now. Doubling the investment did not double speed development. Doubling the energy invested did not double the speed of development. The higher the expenses for personnel and research, the heavier the burden placed on our company management was. Can we imagine how much waste is created nationwide or even worldwide by this practice? Such pressures in company management have translated into the exhaustion of natural resources, environmental destruction and pollution. If we had company managers who could see larger picture then we probably wouldn't have such foolish policies.

Environmental Degradation in Socialist Countries

Environmental pollution in Russia, Eastern Europe and China is extremely serious. Moreover, economic progress without capitalism in socialist countries has been retarded and environmental pollution has increased. Yet, it is this so called "progress" which has led to severe environmental pollution. The very speed with which developed countries found economic wealth has allowed them to react quickly to environmental pollution. However, it is only after problems reach tragic levels similar to the smog in London, the pollution in the Rhine, the smoke pollution that resulted in law-suits between the U.S. and Canada, and the environmental pollution in the Minamata case in Japan, that governments and corporations began to take action. However, the essential problem remains unsolved. For example, they fail to employ countermeasures which are often unprofitable and end up transferring their problems to developing countries.

What about in the Natural World

It is said that severe competition rules the natural world, but is that really true? For example, a hungry lion devours an antelope and its leftovers are consumed by scavengers. But is there a lion which tries to eat more than other lions? That tries to eat two antelopes at once? Have you ever seen a lion chasing prey after eating too much meat? Is there a lion which lives in comfort by saving antelope meat? No. No such lions exist. If there had been such lions, antelopes would have disappeared, then lions as well as hyenas and vultures would have become extinct.

The Natural Rules

In nature only consumption for survival is permitted. This is the basic rule of survival. Even humans cannot survive in the natural world without following this rule. We must choose: live by the natural or unnatural rules. Our choice will determine our fate.

Changing of Our Values

1. The Sinking Titanic: Spaceship Earth

The environment is being destroyed, resources are being depleted, there is little time left before catastrophe. We are destroying our environment. Unless we change our actions, our societies will not change. For our behavior to change, our consciousness and values must change.

2. Present Values

Success, money, assets, competition. Only *my* benefit, only *now*. Do we really need these values? Are we really satisfied with them? These values will never give us true satisfaction. This dissatisfaction and worry further drives even more competition.

3. Future Values

For what purpose were we brought into this world? Isn't it to be happy? Shouldn't our future be joy and happiness?

4. What is Happiness?

I am happy when everyone is happy,
when we all are good friends,
when we all are free,
when peace is everywhere,
when we need not worry about the future,
when I can feel that I am alive,
when I feel I am being helpful,
when I sense that everyone appreciates me,
when I can believe that we will leave a better world and a better future and our children.

The greatest happiness is when whole world is happy.

**People don't enormous cars; they need respect.
They don't need closets full of clothes; they need to feel attractive and they need excitement and variety and beauty.
People need identity, community, challenge, acknowledgement, love, joy.
To try to fill these needs with material things is to set up an unquenchable appetite for false solutions to real and never-satisfied problems.**

Donella Meadows, Dennis Meadows and Jorgen Randers, *Beyond the Limits*

**The result is worry and dissatisfaction which only further reinforces our extremely materialistic mindset.
Isn't it time we think seriously about what we truly need?**

From Competition to Co-Existence

Do We Look After Ourselves Without Anyone's Help?

I had always thought that I could look after myself, until, that is, I became bed-ridden after a motorcycle accident. Only then did I become aware of the other forces that were keeping me alive. In my bed-ridden state, it was natural to feel this way, but the more shocking realization was that even in my normal state of well-being, the reality was still the same: other forces were keeping me alive.

Micro-cosmos

I saw some spherical glass containers filled with water at a department store. The label read, "place in the sun." There were some water weeds, water fleas and a few shrimp swimming in the containers.

I was surprised to see how living creatures could survive in these airtight containers. They can apparently live for two or more years in this environment. There is a delicate balance in the photo-synthesis and the food chain within these containers, and if just one aspect of this delicate balance is broken, everything dies. I was impressed with the innovation behind this product, but at the same time, I was deeply disturbed by the realization that our earth is no different from the glass sphere.

Everything Is Mutually Supportive

Whether we recognize it or not, everything is mutually supportive. Humankind's reckless complicity in excessive fishing, hunting and farming has resulted in the extinction of many species. What are more contemptible are the selfish excuses we give for such actions:

they are pests; they make us itchy; they hurt us; they make us feel uneasy; they are dirty; they sell well; they are a good source of income; they look pretty; they are convenient; they taste nice and so on.

We fail to understand how closely each and every life form is related to our own existence. If colon bacillie, the mitochondria, enzymes and micro-organisms in our bodies die, we too die.

Our bodies are already so polluted that life forms, which we call parasites, can no longer live within us. We now suffer from higher rates of cancer, allergies, atopic dermatitis (eczema), immune deficiency, AIDS, Ebola virus, 0157 bacteria, melanoma (skin cancer) and hospital acquired diseases than ever before.

Sharing

If ten people fought over food for ten people, how many people would have enough to eat? Everyone will probably get hurt and no one is likely to have enough to eat. But if the food were shared, ten or even twenty people would be able to eat peacefully. If one person tries to survive, at the cost of everyone else, everyone dies. The way we all survive is to help each other and to give to each other.

From Confrontation to Non-Confrontation

Never-ending Wars

We all hope for peace and yet we there is always war. Religions preach but often cause war. Governments are supposed to protect nations but kill a lot of people. Is there any truth in phrase “fighting for peace” or “fighting for justice?” Many wars fight for justice each other “peace” and “justice” change the definition depending on the situation.

The Illusion Of Thinking I Am Right And You Are Wrong

What would happen if you protest or demand something of a person whose position is different from yours? Obviously, there would be conflict. Protests and demands invariably bring retaliation. Your problems therefore will never be solved through protests or demands.

Awareness

- We cannot change people.
- People cannot change unless they become aware of themselves.
- The important thing for us is to provide opportunities for people to be aware.

Providing Opportunities For People To Become Aware

When talking to someone, let us put ourselves in that person's shoes and think about how that person might think. We would not want to listen to a person who protests and makes demands of us. We would not listen to a person who accuses us, is arrogant, ridicules us, is insistent or is difficult.

We should therefore put ourselves in the same position as those we are talking to by asking if they know about a particular issue, what they think and why. We must be amicable and take a non-biased stance to solve the issue together.

By changing ourselves, we provide the possibility for other people to become aware. Protests, demands, doctrines and assertions can get in the way of awareness. Facts are very persuasive. Give the facts and then listen carefully to what others have to say. Be accepting. Be a good listener. Afterwards ask, "Will that be okay?" or "What can we do?" We must reserve our own opinions or proposals until after we hear other people's points of view.

Personal change, and self-example is very persuasive.

Green Society

We hereby state that a “Green Society” aims to decrease the waste and environmental destruction of today’s society while maintaining the current economic system based on capitalism and free competition.

1. Principles

- The obligation of protecting the environment. ⇒ The cost of environmental protection is included in the product cost. (“green cost”)
- Resources and waste must be re-used and recycled ⇒ These costs are also included in the product cost. (“green cost”)
- Manufacturers protect the environment, consumers bear the cost.

2. Results

- Dramatic increase in product prices (~10x)
 - ➔ Reduction in production, consumption and waste
- Products that cannot be properly managed or are extremely dangerous can not be produced.
 - ➔ Reduction in number of nuclear power plants and nuclear weapons.
Dramatic reduction in agricultural and other chemicals.
- Massive drop in energy production and a sudden jump in cost of energy
 - ➔ Massive decrease in automobiles, electric appliances, etc
- Dramatic turnaround from industry to agriculture
 - ➔ Revival of agriculture, increased number of municipalities aiming at self-sufficiency

3. Remaining Problems

- A Green Society will not become a reality if many countries, companies and individuals do not adhere to these principles.
- Even if a Green Society is achieved, the gap between the rich and poor will not disappear. The rich will continue to accumulate wealth and live luxuriously while the poor will continue to suffer from starvation and poverty. The possibility of war will still exist.
- In a Green Society, the waste of resources and environmental destruction can be reduced, but never stopped. This means that a Green Society is not a truly sustainable society.

This is because the current economic system that is based on money, possession, inheritance and competition creates the wealth gap and is constantly contriving to increase the consumption.

Green Economy

The fundamental cause of environmental destruction is our current economic system. This economic system aims at "infinite growth," yet really there is no aim, nor limit or end-point, in "infinite growth." The result is environmental destruction. To stop environmental destruction, we must correct our economic system.

Green Economy

In order to have "infinite growth," we must constantly invent new ways of making money. Through newspapers, television and other forms of mass media, fashions and desires are created, which spurs the invention and consumption of new products and environmental degradation. This economic system must be reformed:

- Precedence given to the economy; the environment is sacrificed
 - ➔ Precedence given to the environment; economy held to a minimum
- Economy aimed at invite growth
 - ➔ Economy aimed at stability and sustainability
- Focus on material riches
 - ➔ Focus on mental and spiritual riches
- Myself, now
 - ➔ Everyone. Being happy forever.

Green Cost

In a green economy, environmental preservation is our first priority and everyone is aware of this responsibility. All manufacturers will include the total cost of environmental preservation into their products and the consumer will bear these costs. An item's green cost is its current cost plus the cost of preserving used resources and the affected environment and the cost of recycling the item. Green Cost will cost over tens times more and will slow down waste and environmental destruction.

Changing our Sense of Value

In the current society, wealth is honored while poverty is regarded as shameful; however, in a green society, the environment (life) receives top priority, and being rich might even be regarded as shameful. What is shameful and what is envied, etc, depends on what is valued, but whether something is natural or unnatural, long lasting or temporary not, does not depend on one's values. What is natural is sustainable; what is unnatural is unsustainable. Which do we want?

- Natural or unnatural?
- Sustainable or unsustainable?
- Happiness for everyone or not?

TOWARDS A SUSTAINABLE SOCIETY

1. MODERN DAY IDEOLOGY MUST CONVERT.....

- From economic expansion to a sustainable society
- From materialistic wealth to the bare essentials
- From competition to harmony and cooperation

2. MODERN SOCIETIES MUST CONVERT....

- From an emphasis on economic growth, higher sales and money to the preservation of life, health and safety, and the future
- From economic expansion to a sustainable society
- From manufacturing and urbanization to decentralization, a dissolution of the "city" and a return to an agricultural-based society
- From consumption and import economy to self-efficient and **circulation** economy.

3. MODERN ECONOMIES MUST CONVERT....

- Reduce consumption levels and restore self-sufficiency
- Promote home vegetable gardens and focus on agriculture
- Energy sources must focus on solar-power, hydropower, wind-power, geothermal heat, and electricity generated from waste disposal
- Laws must be enacted to force citizens to preserve the environment
- Regulations must be introduced to ensure resources are recycled

4. THE GREEN COST

- We should all be obligated (by law) to preserve resources and the environment, for the sake of the economy
- The cost of this preservation should be included in a product's cost

5. A GREEN ECONOMY

- An economy which is obligated to preserve the basis for existence (resources and forests, water, soil, air)
- A "Green cost" must be incorporated for environmental and resource restoration
- An environmental assessment must be introduced to evaluate environmental destruction and oversee its restoration
- A program of resource recycling must be incorporated to collect industrial waste, reuse resources and ensure resource use is monitored within sustainable levels.
- Corporations importing resources must (by law) be obligated to ensure the exporting country's environment is preserved in tact and reforestation

programs are employed.

6. TOWARDS A SUSTAINABLE SOCIETY (Earth Village)

- Material (resources and energy) consumption must be reduced to 1/10 of current levels
- Agriculture must become the primary form of self-sufficiency
- Resources must be recycled, waste must be minimized and the environment must be preserved
- Cease economic expansion and move towards a stable, sustainable society
- Abolish nuclear power, nuclear weapons and insecticides
- Our reason for living must be a happy one and to make others happy
- Abolish competition, wars and environmental destruction
- Our ultimate target is the happiness of all (peace and sustainability)

Part 3: Network Earth Village

* As the one of the example achieved in Japan

When people see not only the environmental problems that we have, but also their ultimate causes, society as a whole will awaken to this and people will think to themselves, “there are things that I can do,” and they will start changing the world.

We don't believe that we can change society through protests or demands. Rather, we hope that through realization the world will find peace.

.imagine

John Lennon

imagine there's no heaven
it's easy if you try
no hell below us
above us only sky
imagine all the people
living for today...

imagine there's no countries
it isn't hard to do
nothing to kill or die for
no religion too
imagine all the people
living life in peace
imagine no possessions

i wonder if you try
no need for greed or hunger
a brotherhood of man
imagine all the people
sharing all the world

you may say i'm a dreamer
but i'm not the only one
i hope someday you'll join us
and the world will be as one

What is the “Earth Village”?

1. The Phenomena behind the Need for the ‘Earth Village’

- Mass production, mass consumption and mass waste
- The incorrect idea that the economy must grow
- Excessive competition, comparison and attachment to money
- Thinking only about the short term and the needs of the moment

2. The Need for Numerous People to Become Aware

To avoid a catastrophe, numerous people must become aware of the fact that a catastrophe cannot be avoided if the status quo is maintained. People must change their own awareness, values and actions.

It will be possible to achieve a Sustainable Society when many people begin to do the following:

- Find out the truth
- Become aware of the fundamentals
- Find out about the future vision of a Sustainable Society: a society in harmony with nature, a peaceful society and a world full of freedom, happiness and joy!
- Become aware of what they themselves can do to achieve the above.

3. What is the ‘Earth Village’?

The Earth Village was established with the hope of seeing numerous people become aware.

Certain types of environmental activities would not be able to stop a catastrophe. What is required for us to think and act together? Together, we need to think of an answer to this question.

The following is the fundamental philosophy which should be the basis of our thought process.

4. The Fundamental Philosophy of Non-confrontation

It will be impossible to solve our enormous problem through the conventional methods of doctrines and advocacy or protests and claims. The enormity of the problem which makes the interest, the awareness, the participation and action of numerous people essential.

Of course, when you put it to them plainly, no one will say they oppose the protection of the global environment or the avoidance of a global catastrophe. But people who are destroying the environment are not aware of what they are doing. What is important is for them to become aware. Non-confrontation must be the most valuable way of getting people to raise their awareness. Non-confrontation is the basis for being open and unbiased and for thinking together on the question of what is necessary and becoming aware together.

Non-confrontation is our last hope for peace. Non-confrontation is our last peace movement.

Non-confrontation is not just a methodology. It is surely a new way of living and a new way of being for each one of us.

5. Where is the 'Earth Village' and Who Forms it?

The 'Earth Village' is in the hearts of the people who become aware.

In the 'Earth Village', people who become aware change their way of living (their awareness, values and action) and influence the people around them. Many people in turn become aware and change their way of living. Then the world will change and the future will change.

The way of going about this is wide and varied. You have your own way of doing this.

You can use your own method to change the world and to change the future.

Network Earth Village

“Earth Village” is a network of people who have noticed the seriousness of global ecological decline, are wishing and willing to create a sustainable society in harmony with the earth. In order to realize a sustainable society, it is necessary to increase the number of “green consumers” who practice what they can toward the creation of the society in a peaceful manner. We are raising public awareness, suggesting what to do toward the realization.

Basic Ideal: Non-Confrontation

The basic ideal of “Earth Village” is non-confrontation, meaning:

- Not criticizing, not protesting and not demanding;
- Listening carefully, thinking together, and waiting until people awake by themselves;
- Practice what we can, not forcing ourselves to do anything.

Activities:

- Promoting awareness-raising about global environment degradation, nurturing green consumers, suggesting the changes of life-style through lectures, seminars and workshops;
- Spreading information on the global environment, a sustainable society and life-style through a monthly-newsletters, textbooks and cassette tapes and videos of the lectures.

Please join us. Be a “Green Consumer!”

- Annual membership fee:
Regular member: Yen 5,000 (Yen 4,000 from the second year on)
Family member: Yen 1,000 (One time only, no need to pay from the next year on)
*The family of regular members can enter as a family member. As long as the regular member stays as a member, the family membership keeps valid for free of charge. Send us the name and the address of your regular member to be a family member!
- Postal transfer: #00900-0-252010 “Chikyu-Mura”

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●Good Practices of Network Earth Village●

www.EarthVillage.jp

☀ Lectures

We have organized 3,000 lectures around Japan on the state of the world, its root causes, under the title of "A Beautiful Earth for our Children", "A World of Peace to our Children". As a result, we have currently over 120,000 memberships.

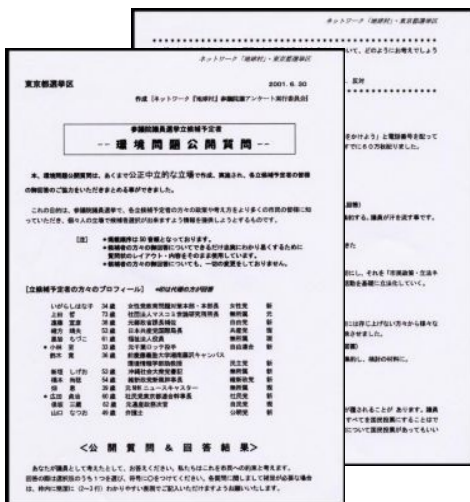


☀ Town Meetings in Local Areas

We hold weekly town meetings at each of 180 local branches, discussing deeply about many issues, and its root-cause with the members.

☀ Humanitarian Support for Afghanistan Refugees

Not only have we urgently supported the Refugee camps with basic needs to survive, but we also assisted reconstruction of the country in the beginning of 2002. We vastly communicate the current state of the refugees, together with the root-cause of starvation and poverty.



☀ Open Questionnaires to Political Candidates

Since spring '01, we are carrying out an open questionnaire to candidates for State Governor elections, House of Councilors election, re-examining public works issues, environmental issues, nuclear energy plans, etc. of each candidates' policies. As a result of opening the answers to the public, we have been successful to increase the number of green conscious politicians in the country.

☀ Stop! Global Warming Campaign

This campaign aims to stop global warming from what each citizens can do at their homes. It aims at reducing CO2 from each households by plotting down energy consumption amount onto an environment housekeeping book. The project team will examine how much reduction was possible in 1 year, nation-wise, utilizing the internet.



Lecture Topics: Global Environment

1. **The Earth Now** – A lecture on the issues of wastes, dioxins, endocrine disrupters, food, energy and other issues close to home as well as the future of the earth.
2. **Ozone Layer Depletion** – Reduce the time you spend outside on days with strong, direct sunlight. Wear a hat, long sleeves, sunglasses and sun screen.
3. **Climate Change** – A lecture on abnormal weather patterns, rising of the sea level, food shortage, mass refugees and other issues. Measures to counter global warming such as reduced use of personal vehicles and saving of electricity and gas are also discussed.
4. **Deforestation (Acid Rain)** – The speed of deforestation is several times faster than the speed of forest growth. All forests in the world will be lost in 100 years if nothing is done.
5. **Extinction of Species** – Human beings are starting to destroy the ecosystem and human beings will not be spared from the damages.
6. **Population Explosion and Poverty** – Poverty is not a cause of population explosion but is a result of it. Find out the mechanism of population explosion and take a new look at our lifestyles.
7. **Environment and Economy** – The current system of economy inevitably depletes resources and destroys the environment. Mass consumption and mass waste must become phenomena of the past.
8. **Sustainable Society** – We must re-instate the self-sufficiency of the earth as a whole. The way society should be in the near future and the necessary change to our sense of values are discussed.



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