

**A Planetary Context for 21st Century
Education:
The Earth Charter and Education**

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Themes



- 1. The significance of the Earth Charter in our present planetary situation**
- 2. Crisis and hope for achieving Earth governance based on ecological principles**
- 3. The creation of a noosphere of wisdom in the current stage of Earth's evolution.**
- 4. Educational uses of the Earth Charter and some pedagogical implications**
- 5. Tasks ahead**



**A Planetary Context for 21st Century
Education**

**The Earth Charter
Fundamental Premises**

Theme 1



The Significance of the Earth Charter



“We urgently need a shared vision of basic values to provide an ethical foundation for the emerging world community. Therefore, together in hope we affirm the following interdependent principles for a sustainable way of life as a common standard by which the conduct of all individuals, organizations, businesses, governments, and transnational institutions is to be guided and assessed” (*Preamble*)

The Earth Charter' Rationale

We are in a critical moment
in Earth's History



“In the midst of a magnificent diversity of cultures and life forms we are one human family and one Earth community with a common destiny”



**We must join together to bring forth a
sustainable global society founded on:**

Respect for nature

Universal human rights

Economic justice

A culture of peace

“Let us work together”

Youth of Rincón Grande de Pavas



“Dominant patterns of production and consumption are causing environmental devastation...”



Communities are being undermined.



“The benefits of development are not shared equitably and the gap between rich and poor is widening...violent conflict is widespread...”



“These trends are perilous—but not inevitable”

“The choice is ours: form a global partnership to care for Earth and one another or risk the destruction of ourselves and the diversity of life”



**“Public institutions
exist to benefit us, we
should care for them”**
*Youth of Rincón Grande
de Pavas*

“Fundamental changes are needed in our values, institutions, and ways of living.”

“We must realize that when basic needs have been met, human development is primarily about being more, not having more.”



“We must decide to live with a sense of **universal responsibility, identifying ourselves with the whole Earth community as well as our local communities”**



“ The Sun shines equally for all, therefore we should treat one another as equals.”

Youth of Rincón Grande de Pavas



The **principle of differential responsibility**:
“2.b...with increased freedom, knowledge, and power comes increased responsibility to promote the common good”.





**2. Crisis and hope for achieving
Earth governance based on
ecological principles**

Theme 2

Preferable, possible, and probable worlds



Three scenarios for 2050:

- **Market world**, in which current patterns continue
- **Fortress world**, which reflects fundamental but undesirable social changes
- **Transformed world**, reflects fundamental & desirable social change

(Allen Hammond, *Which World?*, 1998)

The U.N. Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-violence for the Children of the World (2001-2010)



The U.N. Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-violence for the Children of the World (2001-2010)



1. Education for dealing with conflict
2. Economic and social sustainable development
3. Respect for human rights
4. Gender equity
5. Democratic participation
6. Comprensión, tolerance and solidarity
7. Participative communication y free flow of information and knowledge
8. International peace and security

Mid Term Evaluation of the Decade for a Culture of Peace



*Civil Society Global Report
(Fundación Cultura de Paz, 2005)*

“¿Why, if there had been a statement of true will amongst the nation states who are members of the U.N., all of whom are committed to this campaign, is there this lack of reactions, means and achievements?”

Two axii of the culture of peace concept



“Peace is a condition in which individuals, families, groups, communities and/or nations experience low levels of violence and enjoy mutually harmonious relationships” (Anderson, 2004)

Two axii of the culture of peace concept



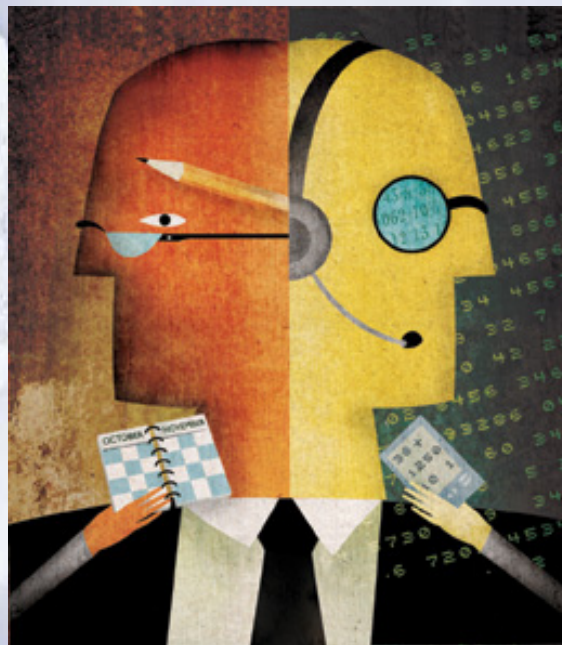
a) non-violence (negative peace--
semantically equivalent to
security)

b) harmony (joy, achievement)



Principles for fostering integral peace: understanding and dealing with our aggressive side

- Defensive aggression & predatory aggression
- The challenge of capitalism's predatorial accumulation
- The commercialization of sadism in our culture



Principles for fostering integral peace: reflecting on meanings of happiness?



“It is my belief that the lack of understanding about the true cause of happiness is the main reason why people inflict suffering on each other” (The Dalai Lama, 1993)



Principles for fostering integral peace:

In the **fortress world** the security orientation makes us lose sight of the peace as harmony dimension: example of Central America

As the civil wars were resolved and 'peace' (negative) was achieved, the doctrines of national security were substituted by policies based on democratic or human security (*Tratado Marco de Seguridad Democrática en Centroamérica, 1995*)

Integral peace loses culture importance in the name of security.

In the name of public security, some regimes violate human rights to confront phenomena such as the Maras.



Dynamic components of dos systems of emotional activation (Zautra, A. J., Emotions, Stress, & Health)

Components	Negative affective dynamics	Positive affective dynamics
Motives	Reduction of aversive states	Promotion of positive states
Behavior	Avoidance, retreat, defense	Approach, goal pursuits
Emotions	Fear, anxiety, anger	Interest, excitement, joy
Thoughts	Pessimism, worry	Optimism, hope
Hopes	Freedom from fear	Happiness
End-state	Security, safety	Fulfillment

Liberating potential of the Earth Charter's 'peace' concept




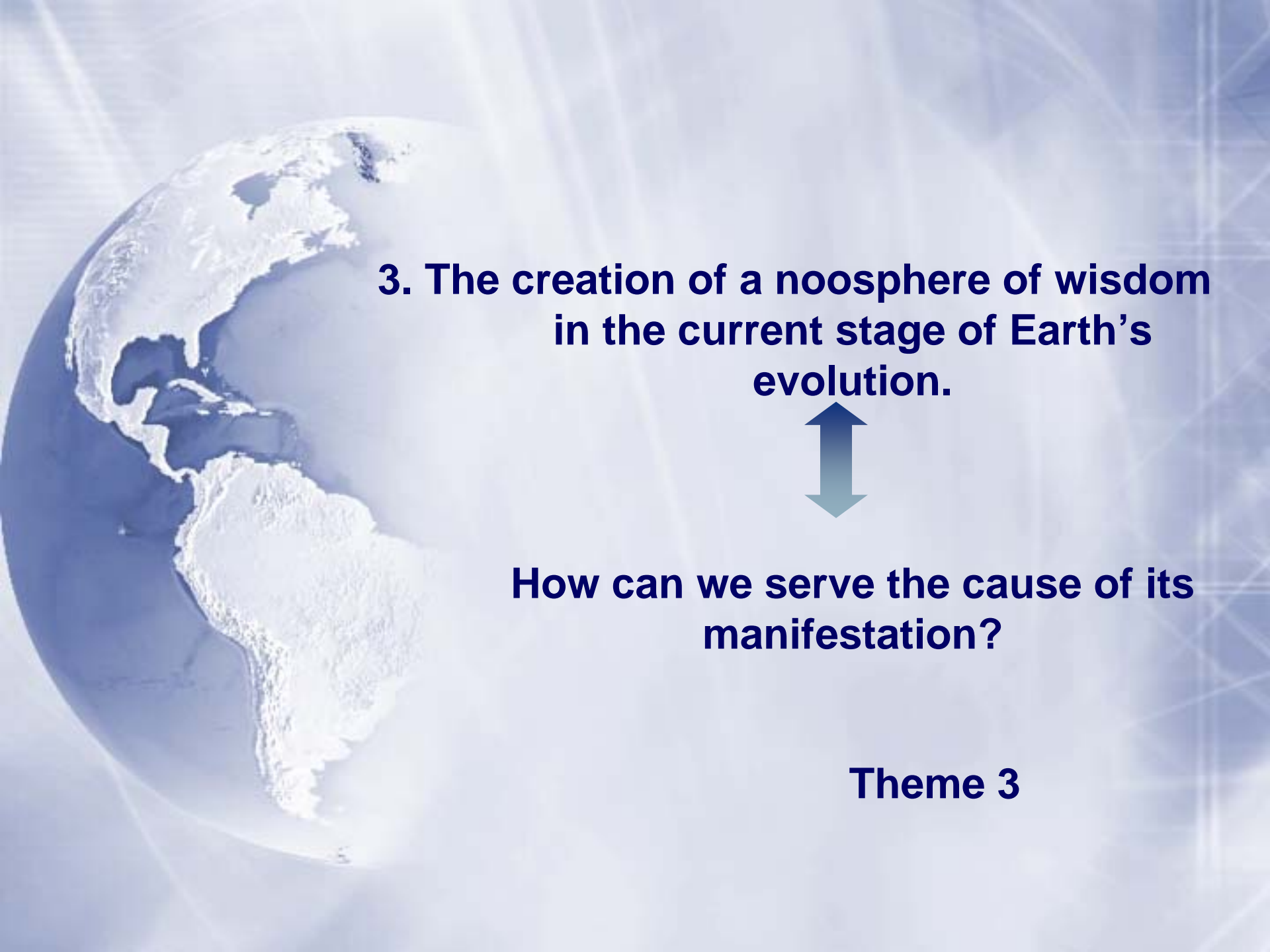
- The *Charter* presents an integral and positive peace concept, based on the Self-realization of persons and communities oriented towards by principles of generosity and joyful harmony:
- “Recognize that peace is the integrity created by right relationships with oneself, other people, other cultures, other forms of life, Earth and the whole of which we are all a part.” (16f).



The Earth Charter: Four basic principles



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1. Respect Earth and life in all its diversity.
 2. Care for the community of life with understanding, compassion, and love.
 3. Build democratic societies that are just, participatory, sustainable, and peaceful.
 4. Secure Earth's bounty and beauty for present and future generations.



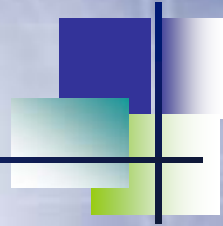
**3. The creation of a noosphere of wisdom
in the current stage of Earth's
evolution.**



**How can we serve the cause of its
manifestation?**

Theme 3

Earth, within the solar system, is a community

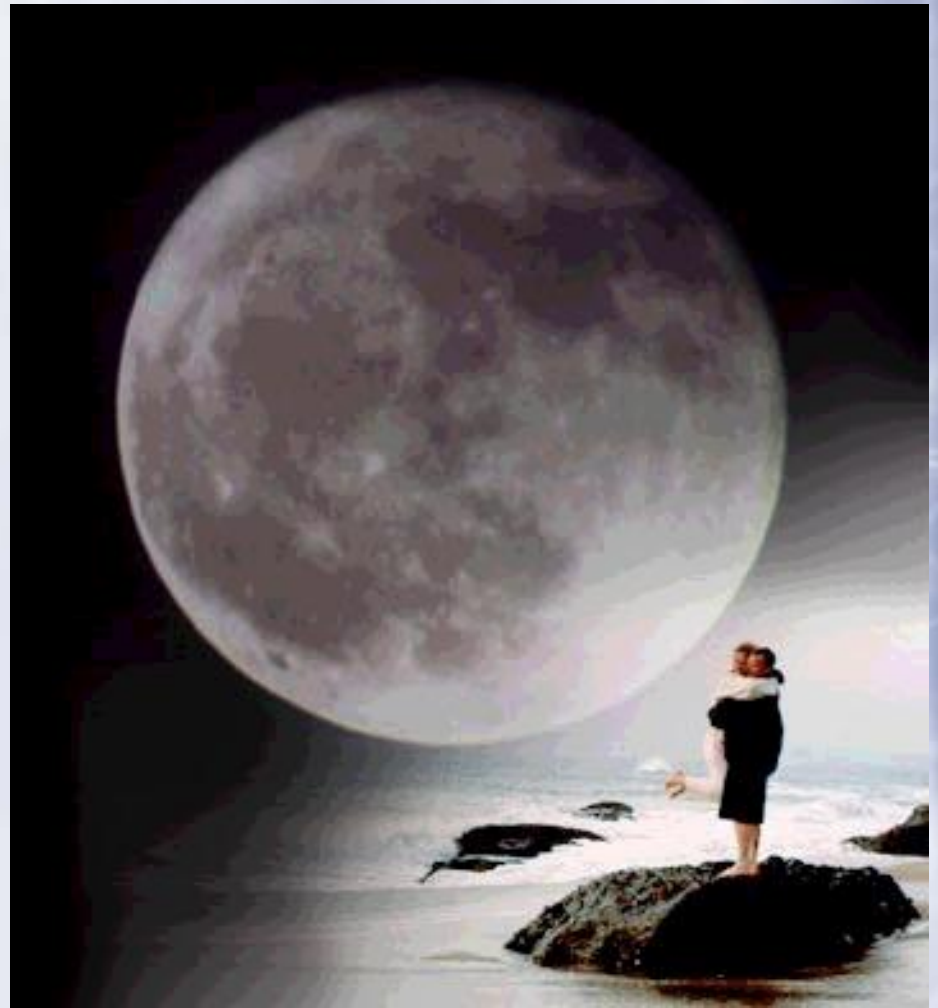
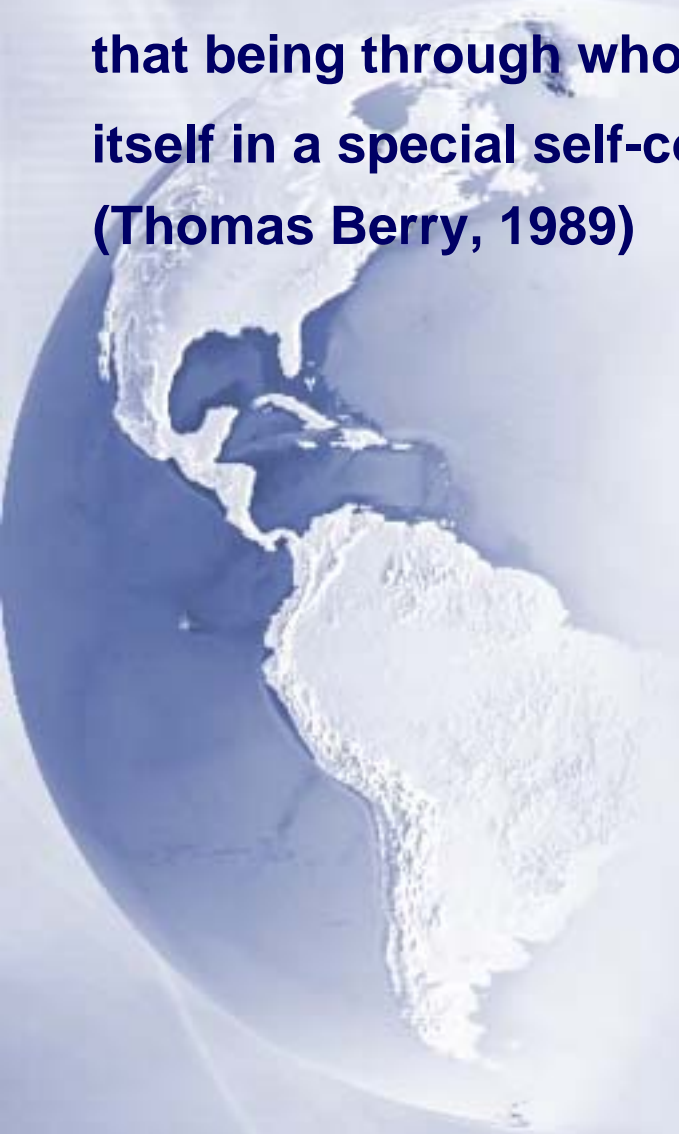


- Self-emergent,
- Self-propagating,
- Self-nourishing,
- Self-educating,
- Self-governing,
- Self-curing and
- Self-realizing.

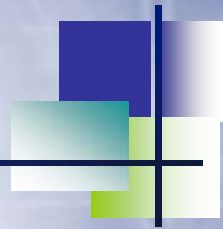
“All particular life systems must integrate their functioning within the larger complex of mutually dependent Earth systems”. (Thomas Berry, 1989)

“The human being emerges within the life systems of Earth as that being through whom the universe reflects and celebrates itself in a special self-consciousness”.

(Thomas Berry, 1989)



“In reality there is one single integral Earth Community which includes all of its human and non human members.”



“In this community each being has its own role to play, its own integrity, its own spontaneity.

Each being has its own voice.

Each being declares itself before the whole universe.

Each being enters into communion with other beings.”
(Thomas Berry, 1999)



The United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (2005-2014) and the *Earth Charter*



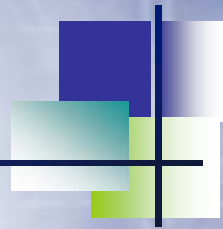
In 2003 UNESCO resolved:

“To confirm the intention of Member States to use the *Earth Charter* as an educational instrument, specially within the framework of the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development”

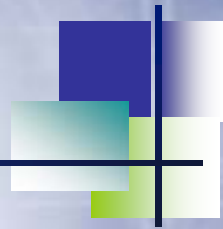
<http://portal.unesco.org/education/es>

The 7 strategies of the *International Implementation Plan of the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development*

1. Vision building and advocacy
2. Consultation and ownership
3. Partnerships and networks
4. Capacity-building and training
5. Research, development and innovation
6. Use of Information and Communication Technologies
7. Monitoring and evaluation



The *Charter's* fundamental ethical principles: *Universal and differentiated responsibility*



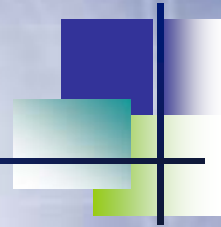
*“...we must take the decision to live according to a sense of **universal responsibility**, identifying ourselves with the whole Earth community as well as our local communities...Everyone shares responsibility for the present and future well-being of the human family and the larger living world. ...”*
(Preamble, prg.4)

“The sun shines equally for all, therefore we should treat one another as equals”

Youth of Rincón Grande de Pavas



Differential responsibility



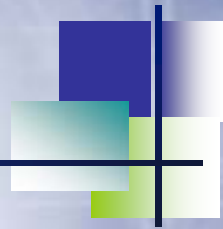
A shared ethic which aspires to universality is only applicable in our inequitable world, if it is complemented by the principle of differentiated responsibility:

**“Affirm that with increased freedom, knowledge, and power comes increased responsibility to promote the common good”
(2.b)**

It requires a transmutation of power as dominance to generative power.



The *Earth Charter*—its view of human development



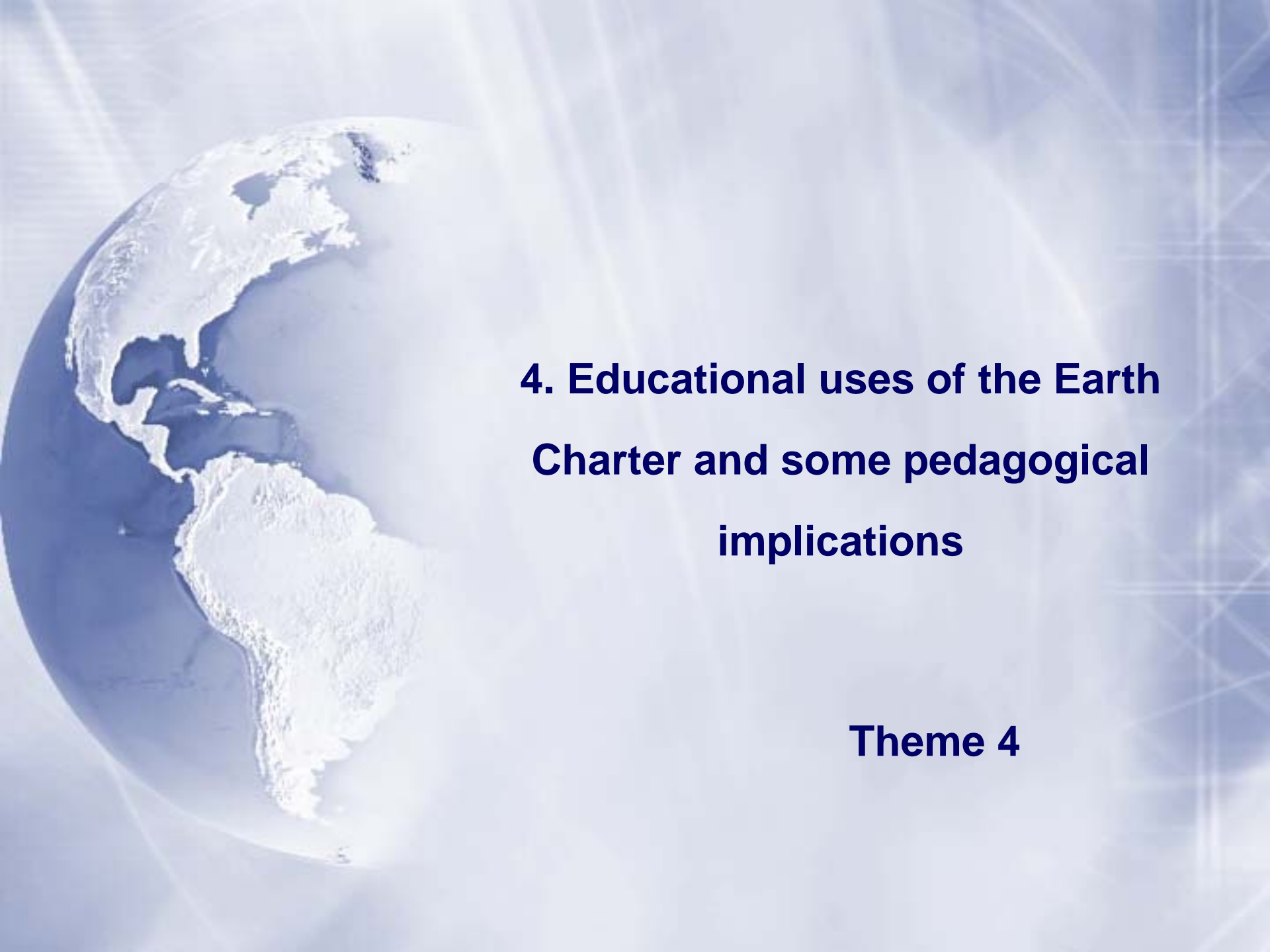
The development of virtues and altruistic motivations is the path to the exercise of universal responsibility in a differential manner:

“We must realize that when basic needs have been met, human development is primarily about being more, not having more.” (Preamble, prg. 4).

Virtues, freedom and responsibility



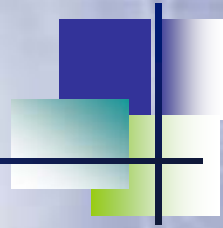
- Virtues are “*strengths of character which enable persons to achieve their goals and ideals and to flourish as human beings*” (Fowers, 2005).
- To the degree in which the core values which integrate our being are motivated to the common good of all the community of life, an ethic of virtues harmonizes freedom with responsibility.



4. Educational uses of the Earth Charter and some pedagogical implications

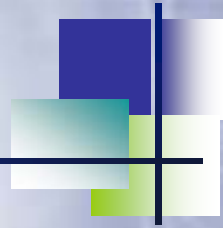
Theme 4

Educational uses of the *Earth Charter* for promoting sustainable living



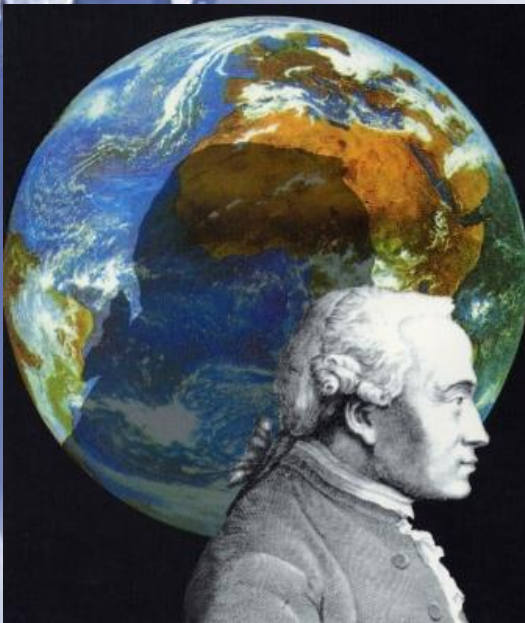
- 1. Conscientization**
- 2. Personal development**
- 3. Application of values and principles**
- 4. A call to action**

The 7 Decade strategies & the educational uses of the *Charter*

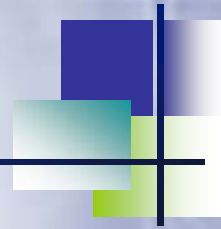


***Conscientization* is required to:**

- 1. Generate personal and shared visions of preferred, possible, and probable worlds.**
- 2. Conduct consultations to forge consensus and local cultural appropriations**

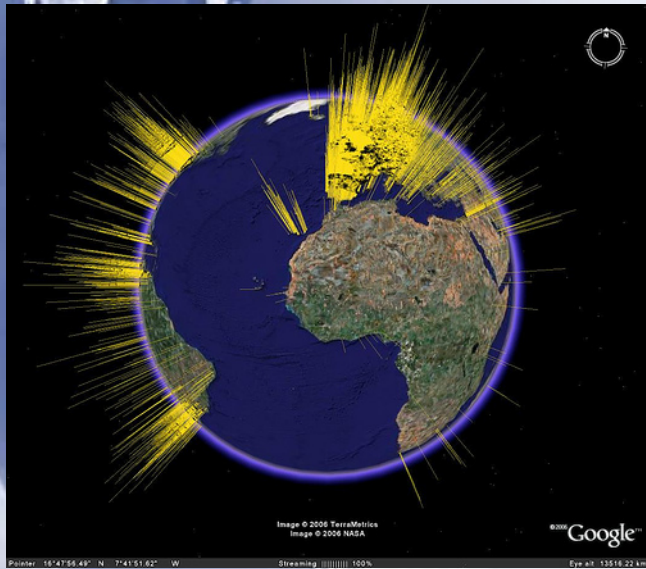


The 7 Decade strategies & the educational uses of the *Charter*

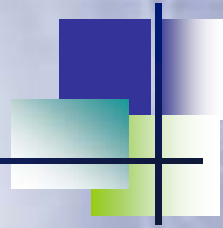


The pedagogic rationale:

1. Clarify and develop values to generate shared visions of preferred and possible worlds;
2. Design and plan critical paths to maximize their probability.



Pedagogic principle for cultivating universal and differential responsibility



Principle 2 of the *Charter indicates:*

The kind of virtues and competencies we need to nurture to realize the following vision of human development:

“Care for the community of life with understanding, love, and compassion.”

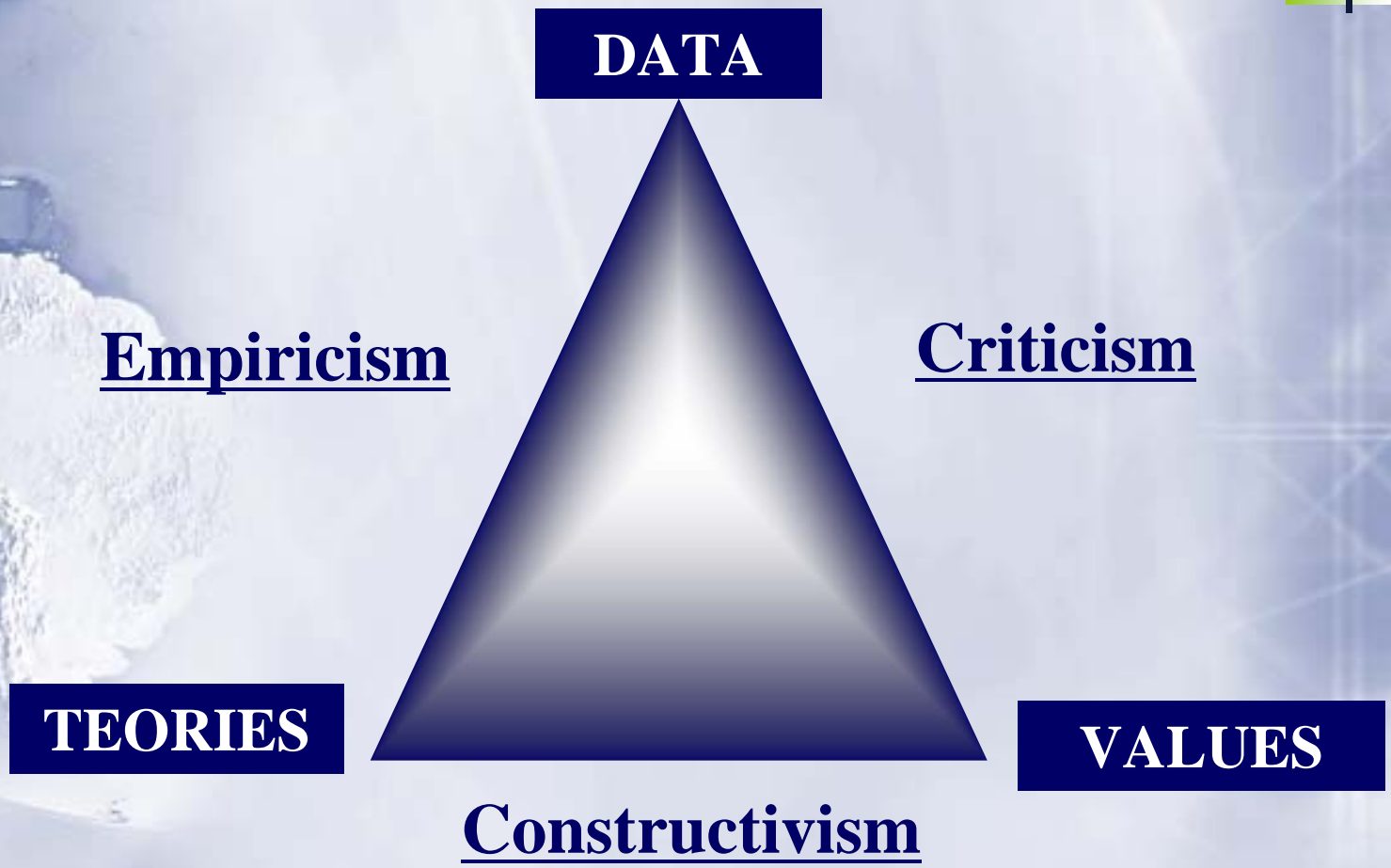
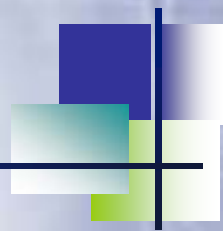
Application of values & principles



A **pedagogy for sustainable development** requires 3 interdependent transformations of consciousness and praxis:

1. Consciousness that we are facing survival issues
2. Critical capacity
3. Capacity to create the new that is needed

**A trilateral view of science
(Galtung, "Peace by Peaceful Means")**

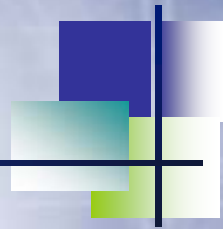




Tasks ahead

Theme 5

Need for an Earth Eco-Social Learning System



The EarthCharter as a living document



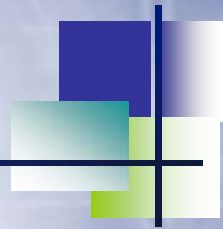
Citizens need to understand the relationship between

Their ethical principles



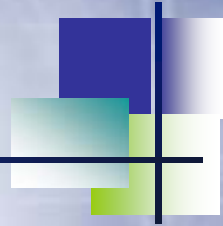
The **multilateral policy frameworks** of the U.N, regional organizations, national and local laws (foundation for human rights & duties, and ecological imperatives).

Need for an Earth Eco-Social Learning System



Necessity of creating networks of cooperation between diverse civil society organizations, governments at all levels, the private sector and the academy.

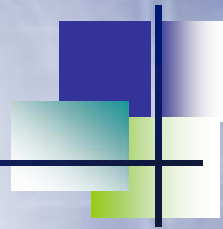
Need for an Earth Eco-Social Learning System



Citizens and learners need:

- **Current information on the status of legislation**
- **To have an opportunity to participate in live and virtual forums**
- **To share educational resources and experiences and to learn how to value groups who model sustainable ways of living**

This path can lead to strengthening multi-stakeholder governance, at all levels, through democratic participation and social learning

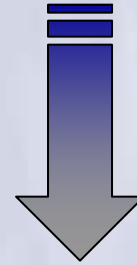


Core component of a model of eco-social Earth learning

- Strategic networks of citizen movements
- Virtual geographies of educational transformation
- Overcoming the digital gap in the world

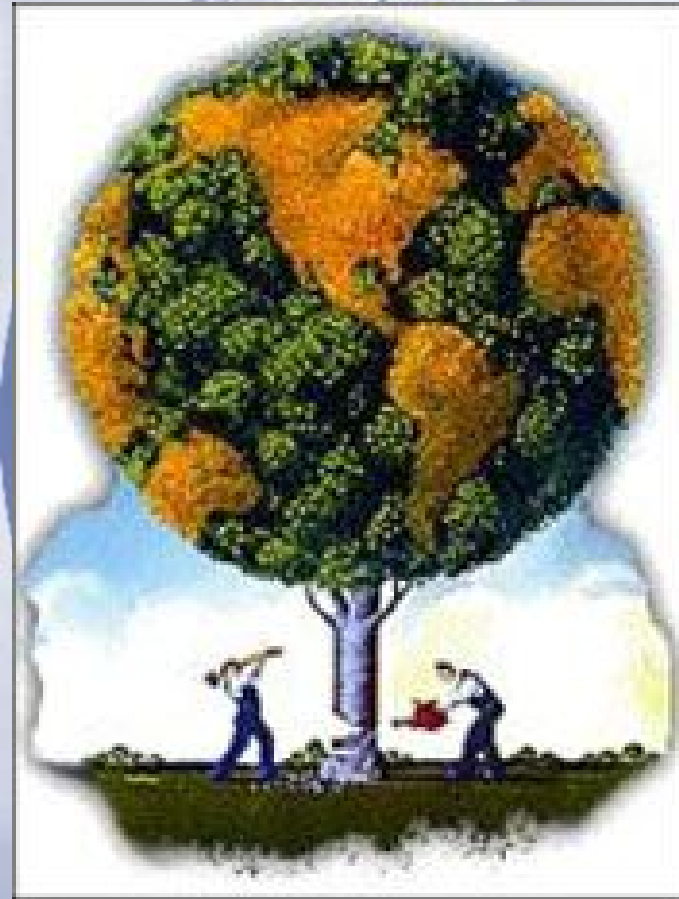


The *Earth Charter* can be used as:



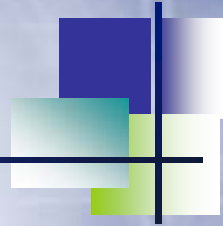
An architecture to create a mega portal to provide citizens and learners with a dynamic space to share visions, monitor, and evaluate the state of Earth, the status of human and non-human governance processes, and sharing of learning resources for sustainable development.

Example of www.wiserearth.org





Joint reflection



What could and should be our contribution to this great work of our time?