



Earth Covenant

A Citizen's Treaty for Common Ecological Security

Sisters of St. Joseph of Orange Joint Stance
with Global Education Association
1996

Preamble

We the people of the Earth, rejoice in the beauty and wonder of the lands, skies, waters, and life in all its diversity. Earth is our home. We share it with all other living beings.

Yet we are rendering the Earth uninhabitable for the human community and for many species of life. Lands are becoming barren, skies fouled, waters poisoned. The cry of people whose land, livelihood, and health are being destroyed is heard around the world. The Earth itself is calling us to awaken.

We and all living beings depend upon the Earth and upon one another for our common existence, well-being, and development. Our common future depends upon a reexamination of our most basic assumptions about humankind's relationship to the Earth. We must develop common principles and systems to shape this future in harmony with the Earth.

Governments alone cannot secure the environment.

As citizens of the world, we accept responsibility in our personal, occupational and community lives, to protect the integrity of the Earth.

Principles and Commitments

In covenant with each other and on behalf of the whole Earth community, we commit ourselves to the following principles and actions:

Relationship with the Earth:

- All life forms are sacred. Each human being is a unique and integral part of Earth's community of life and has a special responsibility to care for life in all diverse forms.
- Therefore, we will act and live in a way that preserves the natural life processes of the Earth and respects all species and their habitats. We will work to prevent ecological degradation.
- Declaring our partnership with one another and with our Earth, we give our word of honor to be faithful to the above commitments.

Relationship with Each Other:

- Each human being has the right to a healthful environment and to access to the fruits of the Earth. Each also has a continual duty to work for the realization of these rights for present and future generations.



- Therefore-concerned that every person have food, shelter, pure air, portable water, education, employment, and all that is necessary to enjoy the full measure of human rights- we will work for more equitable access to the Earth's resources.
- Declaring our partnership with one another and with our Earth, we give our word of honor to be faithful to the above commitments.

Relationship Between Economic and Ecological Security:

- Since human life is rooted in the natural processes of the Earth, economic development, to be sustainable, must preserve the life-support systems of the Earth.
- Therefore, we will use environmentally protective technologies and promote their availability to people in all parts of the Earth. When doubtful about the consequences of economic goals and technologies on the environment, we will allow an extra margin of protection of nature.
- Declaring our partnership with one another and with our Earth, we give our word of honor to be faithful to the above commitments.

Governance and Ecological Security:

- The protection and enhancement of life on Earth demand adequate legislative, administrative and judicial systems at appropriate local, national regional and international levels. In order to be effective, these systems must be empowering, participatory, and based on openness of information.
- Therefore, we will work for the enactment of laws that protect the environment and promote their observance through educational, political, and legal action. We shall advance policies of prevention rather than only reacting to ecological harm
- Declaring our partnership with one another and with our Earth, we give our word of honor to be faithful to the above commitments