

**The Biosphere Ethics Initiative:
Building global solidarity for the future of life**

Individuals and communities across the world have been working together to conserve biodiversity, including biological and cultural diversity, as an ethical responsibility. In order to counter the unbridled self-interest that is dominating our society and destroying biodiversity, we need to learn from these communities of practice and build solidarity with one another and with nature to ensure the integrity of the future of all life, in all its diversity.

To keep nature alive, the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and the Convention on Biological Diversity, call on nations and governments to build a mutual commitment for the continuity of life on Earth. The Biosphere Ethics Initiative (BEI) is this participatory promotion of the biological and ethical dimensions of life. In other words, we mean the domain of inquiry that examines claims about what is

3. Recognize the danger in the commodification of life, the appropriation of life processes and the synthetic creation of new life forms being introduced into the biosphere.
4. Maintain, promote and nurture bio-cultural diversity.
5. Foster local and regional alliances which recognize the knowledge and understanding that each has to contribute.
6. Recognize that the application of scientific knowledge is not value-neutral.

Our foundational aims are to:

1. Keep nature alive and flourishing in the biosphere.
2. Provide representation of nature in decision-making on policies at all levels that affect natural resources and the living world.
3. Uphold decision-making that is participatory, inclusive, self-critical and democratic.
4. Advance just and sustainable forms of governance within our political and economic structures, including supporting efforts to recognize and implement the rights of nature.
5. Establish an economy rooted in ecological realities that reflects the diverse ways in which we understand and value our relationships with nature.
6. Exercise ecological reconciliation by confronting the truth of the past and reconciling ourselves with those impacts and consequences.
7. Promote a universally fair manner of human development and consumption patterns, sharing both the burdens and the benefits.
8. Act with precaution when faced with scientific uncertainty.

The Process of Ethical Inquiry

From these shared ethical principles, questions of population, economy, governance and priority are raised. Within this process of inquiry we must ask ourselves serious questions, placed within their often unique contexts. This process provides an opportunity to think ethically and thereby act responsibly.

1. What is a fair share of the use of natural resources for each individual that does not compromise the existence of other life?
2. How can we channel the resources required to mitigate climate change and redress vast inequalities in the world?
3. How do we counter short-term economic arguments against biodiversity conservation with the long-term thinking required in ethical inquiry?
4. How do we support the common good within a society dominated by private property rights?
5. How can we sustain the integrity of the biosphere without much greater equality in economic opportunities and incomes?
6. How can we promote the common good of all communities and deter the harmful ambitions of those seeking excessive power?
7. What kind of domestic and international law systems do we need to empower institutions to respect, support and implement the Biosphere Ethics Initiative?
8. How can we ethically balance the