

TWELVE UNDERSTANDINGS CONCERNING THE ECOZOIC ERA

The Nature of the Universe

1. **The Unity of the universe.** The universe as a whole is an interacting community of beings inseparably related in space and time. From its beginning, the universe has had a psychic-spiritual as well as a physical dimension. The universe is a communion of subjects, not a collection of objects.
2. **Modes of Expression.** The universe expresses itself at all levels through communion (intimacy, interrelatedness), differentiation (diversity), and subjectivity (interiority, self-organization).
3. **Cosmogogenesis.** The universe is a creative, emergent, evolutionary reality that has developed and is still developing through a sequence of irreversible transformations.

Earth and Its Current Dilemma

4. **Earth.** Earth is a one-time endowment in the unfolding story of the universe.
5. **The Current Dilemma.** The effects of human activity on Earth have become so pervasive and invasive that the survival and health of the Earth community now rest on decisions being made and actions being taken by humans.
6. **Transition to the Ecozoic Era.** There is a need to move from the current technozoic period where Earth is seen as resource for the benefit of humans, to an Ecozoic era where the well-being of the entire Earth community is the primary concern.

Three Key Building Blocks

7. **The New Story.** The New Story, the narrative of the evolutionary development of the universe, offers a new understanding of the cosmos and of the role of humans in the universe process.
8. **Bioregionalism.** Bioregionalism, care for Earth in its naturally occurring, relatively self-supporting geo-biological divisions, reorients human activity in developing sustainable modes of living, building inclusive human community, caring for other species, and preserving the health of Earth on which all life depends.
9. **Ecological Spirituality.** Ecological Spirituality, presence to the primal mystery and value of nature and to Earth as a single sacred community, provides a basis for revitalizing religious experience and healing the human psyche.

Special Contributors to the Ecozoic Era

10. **Women, Indigenous People, Science, and Humanistic and Religious Traditions.** The wisdoms of women, indigenous people, science, and classical humanistic and religious traditions will have important roles to play in redefining concepts of value, meaning and fulfillment, and in setting norms of conduct for the Ecozoic era.
11. **The Earth Charter.** The Earth Charter provides a comprehensive set of values and principles for the realization of the Ecozoic Era.*

The Great Work

12. **The Great Work.** The epic task, or “Great Work,” of our time is to bring into being the Ecozoic era. It is a task in which everyone is involved and from which no one is exempt, and it will require change in every aspect of human society. On it the fate of Earth depends, and in it lies the hope of the future.

*The Earth Charter may be viewed at www.earthcharterinaction.org.