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Action Guidelines for Decentralized Expansion of the Earth Charter Initiative

Introduction
Earth Charter International (ECI) encourages everyone inspired by the Earth Charter to contribute to the goals of the Earth Charter Initiative. Your active participation and support are needed. In this connection, ECI is in the process of scaling-up the Initiative worldwide by promoting decentralized activity and the empowerment of individuals, communities and organizations.

As ECI undertakes this new strategy, it will continue to promote the Earth Charter through various formal international processes and a limited number of projects. However, this new strategy is necessary because the Earth Charter International secretariat is only able to organize and direct a small portion of the wide range of actions needed to implement the Earth Charter vision.

The Action Guidelines presented below are a resource designed to help people conduct Earth Charter related activities in ways that are in harmony with the values and principles of the Earth Charter.

The purpose of the Action Guidelines is also to ensure a certain measure of consistency in how decentralized actions on behalf of the Earth Charter are carried out. Think of the Guidelines as a kind of virtual coordinating mechanism for the Earth Charter Initiative as it prepares for a rapid decentralized expansion that could involve the actions of many millions of people worldwide.

The Action Guidelines are addressed first and foremost to individuals. The full implementation of many principles in the Earth Charter will require action on the part of governments, corporations, and other organizations. However, the commitment of individuals is the ultimate source of leadership and change for a better world and the contributions of all people in all sectors is essential.

The Action Guidelines are not fixed and final. The Earth Charter International Council will periodically review them in the light of lessons learned from efforts to apply the Earth Charter in different regions and sectors. The Council welcomes any comments and suggestions you may have regarding them.

The Action Guidelines

1. *Start with the Earth Charter.* Let the Earth Charter be your basic guide when you are planning and undertaking activities to make the Earth Charter vision a reality.

2. *Be a Living Example.* Strive to be a living example of the spirit of the Earth Charter in your day-to-day life – at home, in the work place, and in your community.

3. *Empower Yourself.* Act boldly, and trust that you can make a difference as an individual and that your activities will catalyze the efforts of many others.

4. *Cooperate, Cooperate.* Create the power to affect change by building partnerships and collaborating with others, and seek win/win solutions.

5. *Empower Others.* Share power by being inclusive and providing others with opportunities to strengthen their capacities for problem solving, decision-making, and leadership, unleashing human creativity.

6. *Promote Respect and Understanding.* Endeavor to build relationships of mutual respect and trust among individuals and groups from diverse cultures and communities, and resolve differences through dialogue in a way that produces learning and growth.

7. *Facilitate Self-Organization.* Facilitate the spread of initiatives inspired by the Earth Charter without trying to control them, counting on the capacity of human groups with a clear ethical purpose to self-organize and achieve positive outcomes.

8. *Focus on Root Causes.* Focus thought and action on the root causes of the major problems and challenges facing humanity, and do not let the pressures of existing unsustainable systems and practices deter you from action.

9. *Be Committed Yet Flexible.* Be unwavering in your commitment to fundamental principles and ensure that the means adopted to achieve your goals are consistent with Earth Charter values, but always be flexible and innovative in selecting means and methods as circumstances change.

10. *Be Resourceful.* Do not let your thinking and acting be restricted by dependence on money; use your imagination and be resourceful in making things happen.

11. *Use Technology Wisely.* Be mindful that large numbers of people do not have access to advanced technology, and when constructing technological solutions to problems ensure that they are appropriate.

12. *Protect the Integrity of the Charter.* When presenting, quoting from, or translating the Earth Charter be faithful to the words and spirit of the original text, and link the Charter only with organizations, products and events that are consistent with its values and vision.