

Conservation You Can Taste and Participate in:

How Conservation Paradigms Have Changed Since the First Earth Day in 1970:

The Old (a) and the New Collaborative Ways (b) of Looking at Environmental Issues

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1a. The world is doomed and people are the problem.

1b. If people have the capacity to wound the earth, they also have the capacity to heal it.

2a. The main problems facing the planet are either overpopulation *or* rampant consumerism and waste.

2b. It's just one percent of the world's population consumes that more resources than the poorest 90%, and even high density populations have found ways to increase quality of life by reducing their per capita resource consumption.

3a. Hunting and fishing by the poor are killing off the earth's wildlife, so we have to prevent overharvesting to save species.

3b. The loss of plants and microbes due to chemical and physical fragmentation of habitats and landscapes is imperiling more biodiversity than is hunting and fishing of vertebrate animals.

4a. Poor minorities in urban areas are victims of hazardous wastes because they have no environmental leadership capacity developed among them.

4b. People of color are leaders in and essential to caring for creation because they so deeply express the need to integrate social justice and environmental quality issues for the well-being of their families and communities.

5a. The best way to protect and appreciate nature is to let governments or big non-profits lock it up as wilderness in national parks and conservancy areas where no participatory practices—whether they be habitat restoration, foraging, grazing, fishing, hunting or farming-- are allowed.

5b. The best way to sustain and assure the functioning of natural capital is to engage diverse land-based communities in the practices of ecological restoration, sustainable harvesting, rituals and retreat so that they may maintain intimate contact with and protracted monitoring of the condition of the resources they rely upon.

6a. Placing more land management under the authority of government agencies allows us to avoid the tragedy of the commons.

6b. Top-down command-and-control management of resources and landscapes by bureaucracies most often disenfranchises local communities as long-term stakeholders, and oftentimes results in pushback, conflict or clandestine destruction of resources.

7a. "Good science" is enough to ensure the rational management of natural resources for the public good.

7b. Unless scientists, policy makers and on-ground resource managers are in constant dialogue with ethicists, faith-based communities and culture carriers, it will not be able to achieve just, equitable and morally-appropriate care for creation and community well-being.

8a. Biological conservation is about the recovery of imperiled species in protected habitats, zoos, botanical gardens and seed banks.

8b. Biological conservation is about restoring relationships among plants, animals and microbial populations in a gradient of habitats that all include both natural and cultural elements.

9a. Conservation costs so much money and jobs that the growth of local and regional economies have been slowed, disrupted or diminished.

9b. Collaboration restoration strategies generate livelihoods with liveable wages, valuable ecosystem services and local multiplier effects in a manner that sustains local assets and enhances regional economies so that they become less volatile and more resilient.

10a We should focus on protecting the charismatic megafauna where people can see them, for they are flagship species that will allow “trickle down” conservation to be achieved.

10 b. We should focus on conserving and restoring populations of the many wild and cultivated species of microbes, plants and animals that bring us our daily bread and provide ecosystem services in their habitats, whether seen or unseen.