

The Cycle of Conferences

Earth Stewardship

May 2007

Dear Co-workers

The International Day for Biological Diversity falls on 22nd May, the theme for 2007 being *Biodiversity and Climate Change*. We welcome your participation in visualising the will-to-good irradiating the work of all who are promoting responsible stewardship of the fragile eco-system of the planet.

<http://www.biodiv.org/programmes/outreach/awareness/biodiv-day-2007.shtml>

Bios: The Universal Energy That Flows Through All Beings

Bios is the Greek for life – the universal energy that flows through all beings. And it is an observed fact that life manifests not through only one or two forms here on Earth, but through a staggering variety, of all shapes, sizes and designs. Recently, a project has been announced titled “Encyclopaedia of Life” (www.eol.org), with the aim of making information on this diversity available to all over the internet. In simple terms, the ecological concept of biodiversity refers to the many different species found within any given area. This biodiversity is in part the result of the many different environments to which species have adapted; but it is also difficult to escape the conclusion that it is a result of the sheer exuberance of life itself, showing the amazing ingenuity with which life finds multiple answers to the single question of survival. And from an esoteric perspective of course, the very rocks and stones are themselves alive, and come in a tremendous diversity of forms. Humanity has recognised this diversity since earliest times, and has learned to adapt to this phenomenon. For example, indigenous peoples' knowledge of the differing plants and animals in their area is encyclopædic. Partly, this is due to the many uses which they make of them; and partly also to a different attitude towards other life-forms, an understanding that humanity's fate is intimately interwoven with that of other creatures, and that we are just one species within the complex tapestry. It is this attitude that has been, until very recently, largely absent from Western civilization, although it is beginning to re-surface in such areas as creation spirituality, with its “universe story”.

Unfortunately, within the scientific and economic fraternity, there is still a widespread tendency to see the value of other species mainly as it relates to their use by human beings. Thus, arguments for the preservation of species are largely based on this perspective, seeing other life-forms as resources. The problem with this view is that, as we know to our cost, humanity is still too inclined to over-exploit anything it can label as a resource. So it would be much better if we could collectively move away from this way of viewing species, and instead adopt a perspective of kinship, seeing all species as fellow pilgrims in life's mysterious journey. Thinking of animals and plants as our sisters, brothers and cousins may seem strange, but it is a view shared by St Francis of Assisi and by Native American spirituality. And just as we view diversity in culture as desirable, so too should diversity of life be seen as important for its own sake. If we think of languages as different visions of the world, revealing different facets of human consciousness, so by the same token, different species are different ways for the ever-present energy of Life to express itself through form. As such, each expression reveals something more about the nature of divinity, and each species lost is a missed opportunity for communication and communion with the Universal Mind. This takes the concept of biodiversity out of the realms of scientific abstraction into the realms of spiritual significance, and as such, it becomes the responsibility of us all to honour and defend it.

Headquarters Group
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