

AS I SEE IT

EEIU: Local diversity embedded in global unity

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In a recent discussion about the concepts, theses and structures of the Eco-Ethics International Union (EEIU) I was asked 'Why do you accept local diversity in a global union?' This was not the first time that such a question was addressed to me. I therefore repeat here the essence of my answer.

Knowledge and acceptance of local diversity in looking at the world is a basic prerequisite for developing global understanding and for forming a strong, lasting foundation for peaceful global co-existence. Local views can be of great importance in the development of global perspectives. Local uniqueness in terms of historical background and contemporary culture and religion is a treasure. A document of human evolution, it allows us to more fully appreciate the complexity of human thought and conduct.

We should not strive for global unification and uniformity at the expense of local diversity and tradition.

Look at Nature. She is a master of deriving overall unity and stability from local diversity. Do not forget the importance of bio-diversity for healthy ecosystems, ecological dynamics and evolutionary drive!

After formulating the text of our new ethical construct Eco-Ethics and introducing the concept of local and global components, and after publishing both in the form of an EEIU Brochure, I was not sure whether this would really interest — let alone affect — many people. Now, after only 5 years of EEIU existence, the Union counts 72 Local Components (Chapters, Youth Groups, Task Forces), 95 Fellows and 784 Members residing in 66 countries. In fact, the EEIU is represented in all parts of our planet! This is an overwhelming success, achieved without missionary zeal or public relations campaigns. We simply let our words and concepts speak for themselves. The unifying power of the EEIU is not rooted in

enforcing discipline or formal regulations, but in freely accepted ideas, facts and common goals. What comes together in freedom is likely to stay together in distress.

The short history of our Union provides wonderful, encouraging proof of the ability of people with different cultures and religious convictions to assemble, of their own will, under one umbrella of a new ethical construct — a construct based on verified scientific facts that opens up ways out of the human dilemma: overdeveloped egocentrism, aggression, domination, destruction, increasing conflicts of competing political and clerical interest groups.

With its local and global components, the rapidly growing EEIU has become a bright light in a human world swiftly sinking into darkness and despair. With your help the Union is building a new house for humanity. Eco-Ethics provides promising perspectives for a sustainable relationship between human requirements and ecosystem carrying capacities. It stimulates stewardship and responsibility in the protection of life and environment, and it furthers progress in environmental politics. While the Union invites criticism and constructive cooperation, it works for overall adjustments in the relations between *Homo sapiens* and nature, for the future of our children and for the future of millions of different forms of life — without diminishing local diversity or individual freedom.

You are cordially invited to join us! For further information consult the Union's publication organ *Ethics in Science and Environmental Politics* (ESEP; www.esep.de), EEIU Brochures (www.eei.org/eeiubrochure.html), ESEP Books (www.esep.de/journals/esep/esepbooks.html), Top Books (www.esep.de/topbooks/index.html).

For details on the Eco-Ethics International Union, visit www.eei.org.

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