



## **Community Monthly Meeting, Cincinnati, Ohio**

### **Sustainability Minute (approved May 14, 2000)**

We of Community Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends believe that the web of life, and each being within it, are expressions of the Spirit. We further believe that all our actions resonate throughout the symphony of Creation, flowing through space and time.

We recognize that the Earth community is in a crisis which is increasingly visible. We witness reliable reports on the decline of world resources, and especially biological diversity. Equally profound reports on the increase of toxic contaminants in our soil, air, and water give us cause for great concern. We are seeing the results of a war we are waging with Earth and with ourselves. This is not in accord with our testimony of peace.

As we search for the roots of these problems, we keep coming back to ourselves. We see population growing rapidly, industrial production spiraling out of control, and personal consumption increasing at an intolerable rate. These are not in accord with our testimony of simplicity.

The disparity in right sharing continues to grow. We know that the poor of the world bear the greater hurt. The rich are getting richer, and the poor, poorer. Toxins find their way far more often into the lives of the poor. This is not in accord with our testimony of equality.

We are therefore called to walk more gently on this Earth. The right sharing of the world's remaining resources requires that we in "overdeveloped" nations reduce our present levels of consumption, so people in pre-industrial nations may have more, and so ecological systems may heal. Living more simply can be a source of enrichment for ourselves as well, as it opens us to more direct and grateful contact with the mysteries of life and therefore with the Spirit.

But our individual efforts toward simplicity are not enough. For deep changes to occur in our corporations and governments, we must also speak and act as a religious community. We especially want to stop blind expansion, beginning our own neighborhoods and home region. We must instead support ecologically sustainable development, that which will last for many generations.

- As a first step we minute our commitment to live more sustainably.
- We will speak and act both as individuals, and as a religious community for the cause of sustainability.
- We will encourage and join with other spiritual and social groups in similar action.
- We will strive for deep structural changes in our communities, corporations, and governments.

We will take these first steps toward speaking truth to power, even when it is to ourselves. We will seek further leadings as the light guides the way. We will strive for sustainable lives in order that all living beings, as well as those yet to be born, might flourish.

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