

The Hummingbird Declaration

Uppsala, May 27th 2014

Mission Statement

We, the members of CEMUS Spring 2014 Climate Change Leadership class, have studied and observed daily that there is a great need for action and evolution in the realms of climate change and climate change leadership. We believe we have the responsibility and the capacity to engage in this process of change and evolution as outlined in this declaration and seek to inspire global participation. We acknowledge this diversity and multitude of ways to interpret and apply these principles within our individual contexts. The following sections are intended to act as guidelines reminding us of our responsibilities, and what we have learned in this class with the hope to transform the challenges our species faces into opportunities for a better world.

Our Role in the Ecosystem

Human kind has created a hierarchy and put itself above all other living organisms and existing things. Humans have also created a division between the social world and the natural one. We are more separated from nature than ever before. We need to see the bigger picture, understand and appreciate our roles in the ecosystems.

Leadership

A leader unites. Regardless of the leadership style utilized, a leader must recognize different values, backgrounds, and ideas with appreciative inquiry. When engaging with people of different ideologies, a leader approaches others in an understanding and friendly manner. A leader inspires, is positive and action-oriented. We should all aim to inspire and take on leadership, when possible, while recognizing the value of critical following. We recognize that we should embody the qualities we wish to see exercised at all scales of participation. Dare to question others and yourself, and have the courage to cross thresholds.

Communication and Education

We hold firmly that education does not end with the end of schooling and in some cases, as Mark Twain said, we must not allow “education” to get in the way of our learning. We believe it is important to realize we have a responsibility to be lifelong learners and effective communicators—for both ourselves and for the Earth.

When communicating about climate change, we must understand how and why we are framing our language and communications in the ways we are—just as we believe it is necessary to understand how and why others are framing theirs.

Understanding these frames may provide information more important than the message being communicated itself, and this provides the basis for mutual progress.

As change agents and global thinkers, we have a responsibility to ensure the most effective dissemination of information among those who share our worldview and those who may not. We affirm that the essence of this communication is to ensure that crafted messages incorporate the following principles: clarity, accuracy and eco-literacy.

Working the System

We aspire to be well-informed citizens and engaged leaders. Our definition of a system is a complex network of economic, political, environmental and social challenges and possibilities, where actors are identifiable on local, national and international levels. The benefits of the global system provide us with the privilege and freedom to reflect on and reimagine our current systems and the capability to act and inform others to act. We will seek to recognize any system we encounter, by understanding its interweaving actors and components, in order to create change and improvement, wherever necessary.

Leading by Example

Take action in the spirit of cooperation and mindfulness. Stay critical and evaluate consumption, behaviour and lifestyle choices. Self-critique is essential to self-improvement. Motivate dialogue and inspire your peers to be fellow climate change leaders.

On a local scale, facilitate community engagement and sharing, create local networks and build communal responsibilities in your area. "Walk the tightrope." Balance is adjustment, swaying left and right, not staying straight and rigid. Lead by example and respect yourself. Focus on your strengths to create change. We affirm that it is our responsibility to effect change and use our leadership in a way that creates and supports conditions conducive for the healthy functioning of all living beings and the complex systems on which they depend.

With love and compassion,

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