

# RAISE THE STAKES

Number 25

*The Planet Drum Review*

\$5

## Connecting Our Species: PLANET REPORTS



*Cosechando y Mantenimiento de Cebollas (Harvesting and Growing Onions)*  
Victor Vasquez Temó © 1993

**David Suzuki Interviewed by Peter Berg**  
**Review of Stephanie Mills' *IN SERVICE OF THE WILD***  
by Jim Dodge



# THINKING ABOUT THE BIOSPHERE AND GETTING BIOREGIONAL

David Suzuki Interviewed by Peter Berg

*Highly regarded as a scientist, author and creator of television ecology programs, David Suzuki is probably one of the best qualified and well-informed observers of the overall planetary ecological situation. When I learned that he was in San Francisco earlier this year, I requested a meeting to find out what he thought were our greatest biospheric concerns and how they related to bioregional perspectives.*

**PB: When I think about why environmental concerns are so late in the history of the industrial era, it seems important that Darwin was about 100 years after Newton and that created a certain gap. What do you think about that? The model for getting things done in the industrial era has been physics. If the model had been biology, what would be different?**

**DS:** I have to go way back, when Francis Bacon began modern science. But to him the act of doing science was a profoundly spiritual activity. It never occurred to him to apply science not only to understand nature, but to control and manipulate it. To Bacon the idea was that through science we can come to see how God creates his works and therefore worship him all the more.

It was Newton who started saying: The universe is like a giant machine. You can study and do physics here on earth and discover principles that act throughout the cosmos. His idea that the cosmos is an immense clockwork mechanism led to believing that if you reduce it to its smallest components and understand the cogs, the wheels and the springs, then eventually, like a giant machine, you'd be able to put it all back together again. Science has continued to operate in that reductionist way.

Well, modern physics has found that Newton was dead wrong. If you try to pinpoint an atom, the closer you get to the electron the fuzzier it gets. We live in a probabilistic universe not an absolute universe. Physicists understand very clearly that the chronomechanical world is not precise, it's only statistical. So how could you ever expect to rebuild the universe? Physicists now know that you can learn everything you can about particles as isolated parts of nature but when you put them together, they interact and new properties emerge that you can't predict. The reductionist revolution in physics is dead.

Unfortunately, biologists continued to run on the old reductionist idea. They thought you could study a chimpanzee by putting it in a cage and looking at its behavior. Jane Goodall said: Well, I think I'll go out in the field and see what they behave like. In the field they behaved totally differently. Biologists are still reductionists mostly. They haven't learned what physicists have already learned.

The change that's coming is among ecologists. I was trained as a geneticist and I can remember in graduate school we looked down on ecologists. We just thought they weren't doing real science. This was the contempt of the reductionist for the wholist basically. But ecology is now telling us that living systems are incredibly complex. There is potential from ecology, I think, to begin to get biologists to recognize that we have to look at the whole system.

**PB: What if people in general adopted the consciousness that you're now saying would be the new biology? If we all shifted from a reductionist perspective to a wholistic perspective, what would be the implications for society?**

**DS:** I don't really know. I am a scientist. I spent 25 years in research and I'm proud of what I

did. But I think we have to put science in its place. Science is one way of knowing but it's a profoundly limited way of knowing because the only way it learns about the world is by focusing on parts. We can't do the whole picture.

**PB: But while you're doing that, big changes are happening in situations that are directly related.**

**DS:** This struck me very powerfully when we were doing a film in the Queen Charlotte Islands when tremendous logging was going on up there. This was over 20 years ago now. My film crew was in a local restaurant and met a botanist from the University of British Columbia who had an office just down the hall from me. When he found out they were filming with me he told them: "Suzuki has no business being in a university. He's gotten involved in all these social issues, he's got no credibility at all." I was furious when I heard that but when I reflected on it I thought, this guy had



David Suzuki

made his reputation studying plants that are found in the Queen Charlotte Islands and no where else on the planet. He knew that clearcut logging was going to extinguish them but he wouldn't lift a finger because it would compromise his academic credibility. And I realized that that's the problem with science — by distancing yourself, you no longer care.

**PB: I have a card that's been on my desk for three years now and says "It's time to start thinking like a species." If we thought like a species, what would that mean for sustainability where we live? What would it mean for big biospheric questions, such as the greenhouse effect, the hole in the ozone layer? For popula-**

**tion in terms of the ultimate carrying capacity? And also human values? I guess where I'd like to start, because you are a biologist, is can we even think like a species? Do species think?**

**DS:** No, they don't. They just are. A species simply is. It is generally a part of where it evolved and belongs there.

Our species is unique in that we have escaped the bounds of the biological constraints that impinge on us. We are an incredibly plastic species. We look out, see things, and say: Oh, I know how I can use that. I'm astounded that we've lived in the high Arctic and the Kalahari Desert. We're really exceptional with the large brain capacity that gives us flexibility. Most species just are. They are naturally of a place. But because we have carved out this very special niche as thinkers, we are uniquely put in the position of having to try to think like a species.

**PB: Do you think we've done it?**

**DS:** No.

**PB: Well, if we did?**

**DS:** You know this expression: Think globally act locally? When you think globally, it is so massive, one's immediate reaction is who cares. Because I've used the expression and people come up to me after and say: Well, what the hell's the point of my doing anything, it's too big. What I say now is, you have to think and act locally to even have a chance of being effective globally.

**PB: All of the big biospheric cataclysms seem to begin in local places. For example, urban populations consuming huge amounts of resources and creating high levels of wastes could be the greatest threat to the biosphere in terms of things like pollution and the greenhouse effect. You might have to go to a global level to see cumulative damage but it's always going to end up starting on the local level.**

**DS:** Absolutely. In 1988, I interviewed a young American senator for a radio series and this guy blew me away with how well he understood environmental problems and he even had very concrete solutions. At the end of the interview I turned my machine off and said: What can people like me do to help guys like you? He answered: Don't look to guys like me. Don't look to politicians. Don't look to business leaders. If you want to make change, your only hope is at the grassroots level.

**PB: What about population? I've often thought that the drumbeat for population control is simplistic. White doctors telling African women what to do or operating on them without disclosing all of the consequences carries historically negative associations. In terms of population and carrying capacity, do you think there's a chance that we'll ever establish something like an approximate human carrying capacity for some geographic area?**

**DS:** I think the environment will ultimately dictate that.

**PB: Local environments will react?**

**DS:** Yes, and already have in many areas. Population, poverty, and consumption are the three issues that one has to look at. First of all, there's no question that there are limits to population. Then, you're poor, you don't care about the environment. You're just trying to survive.

**PB: The third is consumption to complete the triangle. It's not just population numbers that is the problem. It's not just what you do, it's**



also the way that you do it. A main reason why cows are sacred in India is that their dung is burned as an essential source of fuel. If you kill cows, you're killing the fuel supply.

DS: What I hate is us rich countries saying: Our population is stabilized, it's you colored people in Africa or Southeast Asia that are breeding like rabbits and you're the ones who are dooming us with this population explosion. As a matter of fact, to make the equation equal, it is necessary to multiply each one of us in the rich countries by the amount that we consume. If you want to compare us with Ethiopians, multiply us by 100. If you want to compare us to Chinese or Indians, multiply us by 20. So, the United States has, what, 300,000,000 people? In fact, there are 6,000,000,000 Americans in Chinese equivalents.

PB: That's a nice stroke. What's the role of international bodies in all of this? People are giving more and more credence to Agenda 21 from the groups at the Rio UN Environment Conference. I somehow doubt that nation-states are actually going to give up enough of their sovereignty to relate to each other in anything but terms of self-interest that are dictated by the powerful political groups in each one of the countries. Do you agree with that?

DS: Yes. The David Suzuki Foundation is totally focused on British Columbia. Our focus is B.C. because whatever we find that works for our place on this planet is going to have relevance everywhere.

PB: What do you make of NAFTA, GATT, EU and the other globalizing economic arrangements that are underway now?

DS: They insure the trashing of the planet. I spend three quarters of my talks now not on biology, not on ecology, but on economics. I know that Hazel Henderson's right, economics is a form of brain damage. And the neo-classical economics that everybody has bought into now is going to trash the planet.

PB: What else do you think might be on the horizon?

DS: There's post neo-classical economics and it's local. If you look at the history of economies, they were always developed to serve people and communities. What's happened in the last thirty or forty years is that the economy has been reified...it's been made into a thing that has its own behavior and charac-

teristics. Headlines in the newspapers say: The economy is skittish. It's as if it's a separate animal. We're not told that the economy is to serve you, but you must serve the economy. In the United States and Canada, our politicians are saying: You have to sacrifice for the sake of the economy. Your community has to give up social services for the economy. I'm saying: What the hell is going on? The economy is to serve us!

When transnationals have free rein throughout the world, when the free market is all that determines price, then you have companies that no longer have a commitment to place. They go wherever they can maximize profit.

The fight in Chiapas, Mexico is about NAFTA. The Mayans know that with NAFTA

big companies are going to come in, take their land, and turn it into huge farms to supply the rich countries. The problem is that money has increasingly come to represent itself. Currency grows faster than real things. In B.C. our trees grow at the rate of 2% or 3% a year. You don't have to be a

genius to know if you cut down less than 3% of your trees, you can have your forest forever, right? But, economically it doesn't make any sense because if you clearcut the forest, put the money in the bank, you can make 9%. Why should you be content with 3% on your investment every year when you can make 9%?

PB: Why aren't proven technologies utilized that would mean a solution to some of the ecological disasters? Alternative energy. Permaculture. Water recycling. Did you know that water recycling is actually against the law in many places in the United States?

DS: Why? What's the rationale?

PB: It's based on turn-of-the-century health problems related to keeping water in rain barrels that became a habitat for disease-bearing bacteria.

DS: Isn't that interesting. We're returning to rain barrels in British Columbia.

PB: You can re-use shower water to flush your toilet instead of pristine spring water or snow melt. So why isn't this implemented? What is going on when it can made crystal clear that something can both save money and be ecologically sound?

DS: We're not open. We have our prejudices, our preset notions, and to change those is incredibly difficult. I can show people what global warming or ozone depletion or species extinction are and people go: Oh, wow! Then you say, okay, we've got to do this. And then they say: Oh, I've got to change?

PB: How about cities and the prospect of sustainability? Both people's activities and municipal governments have to change. Where is city government changing that shows a move in this direction?

DS: Toronto, Canada. We've got cheap farm land all around the city and we don't have

any laws to protect it from development, so a farmer makes much more money by developing the area and selling houses.

PB: Similar to the U.S..

DS: So we've had an outflux of people from downtown Toronto into the suburbs which have their own regional governments. The city of Toronto is consequently losing its tax base because the population has been shrinking. The city has, of necessity, been forced to reconsider reinventing itself. How do we make the city attractive so people don't leave but instead come in? Some of the plans that I've seen proposed are very exciting. The city itself is currently too big to give people a sense of belonging to something. We've got to identify major transportation corridors, major subway inter-

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sections, bus or train areas and change legislation to allow industry, housing and entertainment areas to all coexist within walking distance. The idea is that you make many places where people can live, work and play, and they're easily connected to the other centers by rapid transit. The cost of this for Toronto would be in the tens of billions of dollars.

PB: I'm beginning to feel that there are limits to what city governments actually can do considering the way they're currently structured both in terms of how people get elected to office and what constituencies they're currently dependent upon. They seem to be restricted in essential ways.

DS: My approach is not even on the level of municipal government. I'm not focusing on politicians. And the reason that's my attitude is this: a hundred years ago in Canada political parties debated about whether women should be allowed to vote. There were literally parties that said women don't deserve to vote.

PB: So the whole structure is conservative, not just the politics within the system.

DS: We debated over whether children should work in clay mines in Nova Scotia. Today no party would dare say that because we've raised the level of discussion.

PB: But they still are conservative about ecological sustainability.

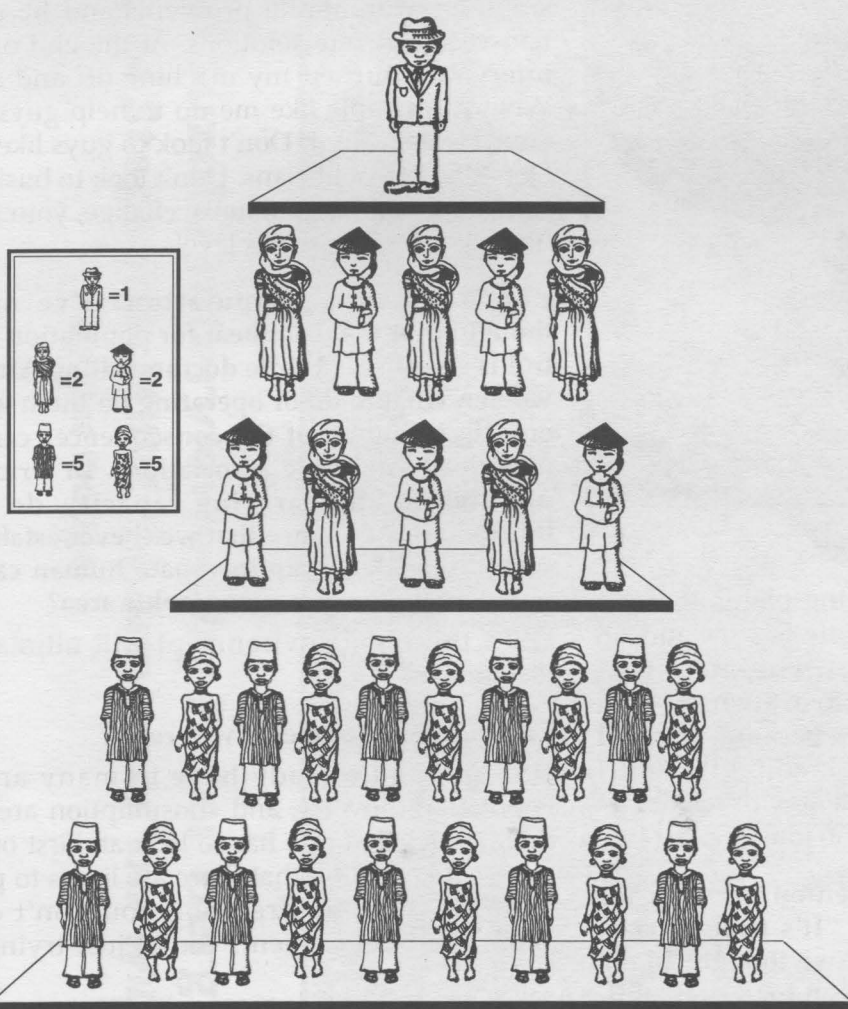
DS: Exactly. What we have to do now is raise the ecological discussion so that it doesn't matter whether you're right-wing or left-wing, everybody assumes that community and ecological principles have got to be built into our system.

PB: Urban sustainability has to become as acceptable as the Health Department.

DS: Exactly.

PB: What do you think is the most effective way to bring ecological information to the multicultural populations in cities?

DS: You know, I feel like I'm in a car heading straight into a brick wall at a hundred miles an hour and we're all arguing about sitting in the front seat. We're all going to hit this wall. But the people who lack power often lack the resources to even recognize the problems they're in. In Canada it shows in what we're doing with our garbage. In Vancouver we're shipping our garbage 600 miles north and dumping it in Cache Creek which is an Indian reserve. We usually build our most polluting plants next to Indian reserves. And the latest group of new immigrants live next to rubber plants, for instance.



**CONSUMER EQUIVALENTS**



**PB:** So what do we do?

**DS:** My focus has been on kids to try to show them that air is shared by all organisms. It circulates all around the planet. Show them that food comes from the earth. It's a species characteristic and we're all dependent on it.

**PB:** If you were given the opportunity to address the most urgent change, either locally in your Vancouver area or planetwide, what would be that change?

**DS:** There are perceptual lenses that cover and filter the way that we see the world and these lenses are determined by "sacred truths." They're ideas that are so deeply lodged in our culture that we never question them. My whole thrust is to try to get people to recognize the mythological nature of these ideas that are making us destructive. The first sacred truth is the idea that human beings are special and different, that we are not a part of the natural world. We create our environment, so we don't need nature basically.

It's perceptual, of course. It's what's in our brain. If you don't think that you're a biological being as dependent on air, water and soil as any other creature, you become incredibly destructive. We reinforce this notion because more and more we're living in cities which are biological deserts.

**PB:** Which place on the planet, from your observation or reports, is most urgently in need of change?

**DS:** China. They're committed to a development scheme to catch up to the industrialized West by the year 2000. They've had 40% economic growth in the last three years.

**PB:** Almost everybody is wearing or carrying something that's of Chinese origin these days.

**DS:** I have a friend in Vancouver who has been asked by the Chinese government to design a city for a million people on a present salt marsh. In the next fifteen years they're going to build 200 cities for a million people or more. They're going to be pulling in people from the country.

China uses exactly the same amount of energy as Canada does with vastly greater population. If all of these people aspire to a motor bike, we've had it. Today they're saying: We don't just want a motor bike, we want a car.

In spite of their one child per family policy, they're still growing at the rate of 20,000,000 people per year. And their economy is going up. The first thing that happens when people have a little bit more money is they want to eat better. Worldwatch Institute points out that if every Chinese drinks one more bottle of beer a year, you need 370,000 more tons of grain. If instead of eating meat once a month they want to eat meat three times a week, the results are catastrophic. By the year 2020, because industrialization is decreasing their agricultural land at the rate of 1% a year, their entire grain needs will be greater than the entire exporting capacity of the world. By then they may be the only country that will be able to afford to buy every bit that's available.

**PB:** You're criticizing China from the viewpoint of an outside mentality. Whereas, if they actually wanted to do something about the things we're talking about, they wouldn't do what we say. They would do what they decide to do.

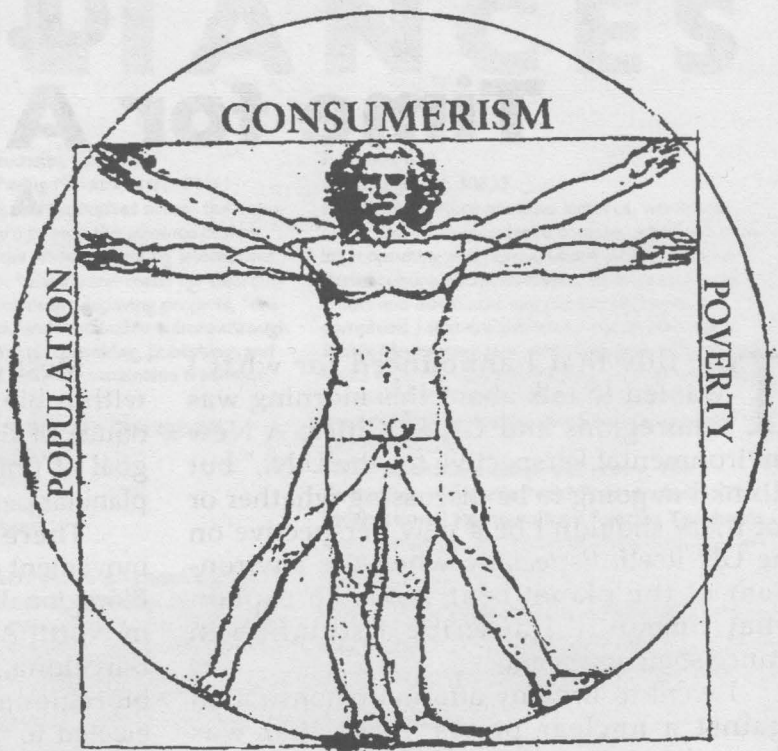
**DS:** I don't understand, where are you going with this? I mean is it illegitimate then to speak of the purely statistical consequences of what the nation-state of China is aiming at?

**PB:** They would insist that if they have a problem, they will determine the answer.

**DS:** I've spent a lot of time in Brazil talking about saving the Amazon rainforest and they say over and over: How dare you come down here? You've already destroyed your forest, now you're coming down and telling us not to do what you've already done. Brazilians say: You know our country is poor and uneducated. Ignorance is a part of the reason why we destroy our forest. What's your excuse in Canada?

**PB:** Good response.

**DS:** And they're right. The problem is that two wrongs don't make a right. We've learned from our destructive ways and there are lots of us in



Canada that are fighting tooth and nail against what's going on in our country. We learn lessons from our mistakes. Now we've got to pay to help people avoid the same mistakes that we've made.

**PB:** We've got to pay because of our economic position?

**DS:** If the Amazon rainforest matters to us, then we in the rich countries have the wherewith-all to pay people so that they don't have to destroy that and can look for an alternative. Our economies now are so intermeshed with this neo-classical model that's coating the planet that I don't think we can just sit back and say: Well, it's up to you.

It is true that in an ideal world local communities should make up their own minds. It's economic imperialism that has hooked the planet into a single idea of economics and how communities should be. That's the challenge, to break that.

**PB:** To resurrect a better notion of value, essentially.

**DS:** That's right.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Plea For Resources

If you are familiar with the so called Hopi-Navajo land dispute, then you are likely familiar with the name Katherine Smith. I have been granted the unique privilege of being asked and entrusted to record and write her autobiography.

This is my problem. I cannot produce a manuscript until I have the financial means to make a few more trips down to Big Mountain, one of the more sacred places on Navajo land. Katherine would like to record the sacred stories that have been passed down to her by her ancestors. She is not able to do this in the summer, as sacred stories must be told only in the winter time.

Can you help in any way? I will accept any donations and due credit will appear in the final published work. Please, if you cannot help, could you suggest another option. I will only be receiving a fraction of the proceeds from this book. Most of the profit will go to Katherine and to support the struggle to save Big Mountain.

Thank You for Your Time,  
Jonathan Ellerby, 187 Centennial St.  
Regina, Saskatchewan, S4S 6W3, Canada  
(306) 585-6814

### Otherwise: The Earth Pledge Foundation Book Review

Otherwise is a new book review magazine. It features about-to-be-published books, with timely news of university, alternative, international and mainstream publications.

Otherwise is a publication of the Earth Pledge Foundation, a not-for-profit foundation that pro-

notes sustainable development as the most effective way of encouraging economic, social and cultural activity that protects and supports the earth's ecosystems. EPF also supports a global commitment to the United Nations Pledge, a document which asks individuals to assume personal responsibility for making "the earth a secure and hospitable home for the present and future generations."

We solicit any promotional material or other information that will facilitate our complete coverage of new books, and ask that names, addresses and phone numbers of contacts be sent to:

Otherwise, PO Box 67  
Wyoming, IL 61491  
(309) 695-4403 • Email: [Jjsusdev@aol.com](mailto:Jjsusdev@aol.com)

### Seeds Available to Educators

For several years now I have been recycling packets which are returned to Livingston Seed Company at season's end. Bob Johnson, the company's owner, is pleased to donate the seeds to teachers and youth group leaders. I sort and collate collections and have been writing handouts to accompany the packets. I also assemble a collection of 20 packets with a theme that can lead to cross-curriculum studies. For more information send a SASE to:

Kathy Wildman, Hearts & Flowers Butterfly Farm  
3977 Condit Road, Sunbury, Ohio 43074  
(614) 965-2133

### Marses Earth Village

The Earth Village Network announces its first European Earth Village Project at Marses, in the

foothills of the French Pyrenees-Occitanian Bioregion. Earth Village Network is a worldwide, charitable foundation. Its purpose is to co-create ecologically sustainable village communities with attached biodiversity sanctuaries and to link these in a supportive global network. Two sites have been identified as suitable for settlement and agriculture. The first steps will be the construction of shelters, setting up water facilities and the preparing of land for planting. Earth Village is a caring, self-reliant community of people who live skillfully and modestly on the planet. Residence in such a community may be temporary or for a longer period.

For more information, contact:

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WWW: <http://intouch.info.nl/evn/>

### Tree Seed Available for Home Growing

The Forest Tree Seed Company, Millerton, NY will make small quantities of forest tree seed available for use by anyone who wants to start growing trees from seed. Tree seed is available in packets of 1 gram each. This will provide 50-150 seeds with simple instructions for home germination. Starting trees from seed is a good project for children and requires no more than a clear plastic container, paper towels, water, and seed. Contact:

Forest Tree Seed Company  
PO Box 882  
Millerton, NY 12546  
Roy H. Sagarin, BS (Forest Mgmt.) at (518) 789-3443



# U.N. at 50: Time for A New Perspective

A talk by Peter Berg

The title that I announced for what I wanted to talk about this morning was "Bioregions and Green Cities: A New Environmental Perspective for the U.N.," but I think I'm going to be discussing whether or not there shouldn't be a new perspective on the UN itself. Especially when the environment of the planet is at stake. To explain what I mean, I'll describe a situation in France some years ago.

I went to Brittany after a demonstration against a nuclear power plant that was planned for the town of Plogoff. This was shortly after the oil tanker Amoco Cadiz had sunk in the English Channel and there was a lot of bad feeling about polluting the water there. The proposed Plogoff plant was a five reactor operation, so if anything ever happened, it would be an unmitigated disaster on the coast. There were a lot of demonstrators. One of the highlights of this demonstration was the flag that became identified as its symbol. It was a black and white striped flag with multiple black spear points on a white field on the upper left side. I had never seen it, so I asked people what it was and they said it was the Breton Nationalist flag. The flag represented free Brittany as a separate government entity from the nation of France.

I concluded that many or maybe most of the anti-nuclear protesters were Bretons and some of them were Breton Nationalists. But when I went back to Paris and told this to a reporter for Liberation which was a popular, progressive, leading anti-establishment newspaper, she said it hadn't happened. So I said, "I guess that fits with what people had told me which was that if I told this to people in Paris they would say that they didn't exist and that Breton nationalism didn't exist." She said, "It doesn't." So I said, "You know, they have a word for you. The Breton Nationalists call you 'Francienne.' It's a combination of Française and Parisienne and it means people who think Paris is France, that everything of importance that happens in France happens in Paris." And she said, "There is no such word as that."

I have observed from this and other examples that national cultures and governments, whether French or American or Chinese, tend to shape internal events to their own purposes and attempt to control all of the local outcomes within what they claim as their domain. The overwhelmingly Breton content of the Plogoff demonstration was removed at the national French level. What's significant about this process is that the UN by its very nature ultimately deals with these member nation-states and attempts to negotiate between them.

The reality of environmental considerations, however, such as the nuclear power plant planned for Plogoff, rainforest destruction, species loss, or the ozone layer, can be either local or planetary but usually not nation-state oriented.

There needs to be a new perspective that is different from nation-states if the UN wants to address the problems that tend to be mostly local or planetary. The proper context for this is to think of bioregions within the biosphere. In other words, natural geographic entities within the overall living skin of the planet.

Bioregions are defined in terms of watersheds, land forms, soils, native plants and animals, climate, and adaptive human ways of living in these places. They've been ancient sites for human inhabitation on the planet. As a species we've spent most of our time as hunters and gatherers in bioregions, not as inhabitants of industrialized nation-states.

Most environmental problems originate within bioregions. Restoration and maintenance of these places should be the primary goal of united worldwide efforts to save the planetary environment.

There is already a nascent bioregional movement of 300 groups on several continents. Bioregionalism is an increasingly popular idea in North America, Australia, and Europe. In Barcelona, Catalonia, for example, the first bioregional Green City candidate was just elected to municipal office and will serve for four years. The activities of bioregional groups in North America range from ecosystem restoration, such as restoration of salmon in the rivers of Northern California (Shasta Bioregion) and of forests in the Pacific Northwest (Cascadia Bioregion) to permaculture in the Kansas Area Watershed Bioregion (otherwise known as part of the state of Kansas). The State of California itself has also declared bioregions and bioregional groups as the context for their new biodiversity program to preserve endangered species within the state.

Those are indications of some directions for the future growth of the bioregional idea. Probably the most important development of the bioregional movement is the Green City Project which attempts to correct the disinhabitory practices in the urban areas. The whole bioregional thrust will have very little significance unless it addresses the 75% of the human population in North America, Europe, Australia, most of Asia, and South America who live in cities. Unless city people can get a sense of reciprocity with the natural systems of bioregions and follow the need to preserve them, this effort will not reach its potential fruition. For that purpose, Planet Drum Foundation has established a working model in the San Francisco Bay Area that can be simulated any place else on the planet, the Green City Project.

It currently has four major programs. One is a volunteer network that connects people from the general public with the activities of groups that already exist, such as Friends of the Urban Forest, for example. We list over 350 groups and we refer people to them. Secondly, we publish a bimonthly calendar of activities of urban sustainability oriented groups that features daily hands-on activities and presentations.

The third part is a successful Education + Action Program that brings ecological activities to schools. These are often things that schools can't afford or don't possess the trained people to do. The style of Education + Action is service learning, doing something beneficial for the community as an education objective. It can range from a garden to a recycling program or a piece of sculpture from recycled materials. While they do this, children learn about a particular aspect of urban sustainability.

A fourth program is doing workshop/workdays. In San Francisco, a notable one produced a rooftop garden at a hotel for formerly homeless people. It's still very well tended. We did this hoping to engage the tenants as a step toward becoming self-reliant. It was an opportunity for them to become involved with gardening and ecology. At the time, we didn't fully realize that a dozen of the residents were

children who didn't have a safe place to play outdoors. They've turned this rooftop garden into their playground. We do workshop/workdays on a fairly regular basis and in the future we'll be doing them in such a way that communities develop permanent installations as a part of neighborhoods.

Transforming cities into ecological entities is the goal of this project and, in my estimation, should be a goal of the UN.

I believe the UN is in its most critical period. Nation-states originally became powerful by overwhelming local governments. Now nation-states are losing power. Supra-national economic alliances, such as the European Union, the North American Free Trade Agreement and the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade are eclipsing the power of nations. At the same time local governments are demanding the autonomy that they used to possess. The best example of this is the former Soviet Union where almost all the member states have devolved to reclaim some part of their identity. This could very well be the case in all of Western Europe in the future. There

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are at least five areas in France, four in Great Britain, and three in Spain, to mention a few, that would lay claim to their own sovereignty. The UN is probably too outmoded to deal with those changes as well as the environmental requirements that must be met as we go into the 21st century. If the UN can adapt, it can only be by advancing a bioregion/green city perspective.

**Question: I was wondering about the new economic trading blocs that are arising. It seems that the future shape of these blocs at this point is uncertain.**

**PB:** I think you're describing the "wars" of the future. We are going to enter an era of economic wars. The first shot has been fired by the Zapatistas in Chiapas, who are asking for a different economic identity if, in fact, they face the acquisition of their land for use by agribusiness to satisfy profit margins involved with NAFTA. We're going to see more of this. Local places will be attempting to protect, defend and negotiate their economic identities in the face of these supra-national economic powers.

**Question: What do you think the correlation will be between bioregions and geographically specific cultures to sustain both. If you sustain or treat an area as a bioregion, such as the Shasta Bioregion, or something like that, and treat it as a unit, by doing that, by default you also treat that culture as a unit and give it representative power. But that would mean restructuring our current border system which has caused a lot of problems in Africa at this point.**

**PB:** To be able to describe Northern California as containing both Shasta Bioregion and Shasta Bioregional culture, the description would have to be mainly ecological. I would have to

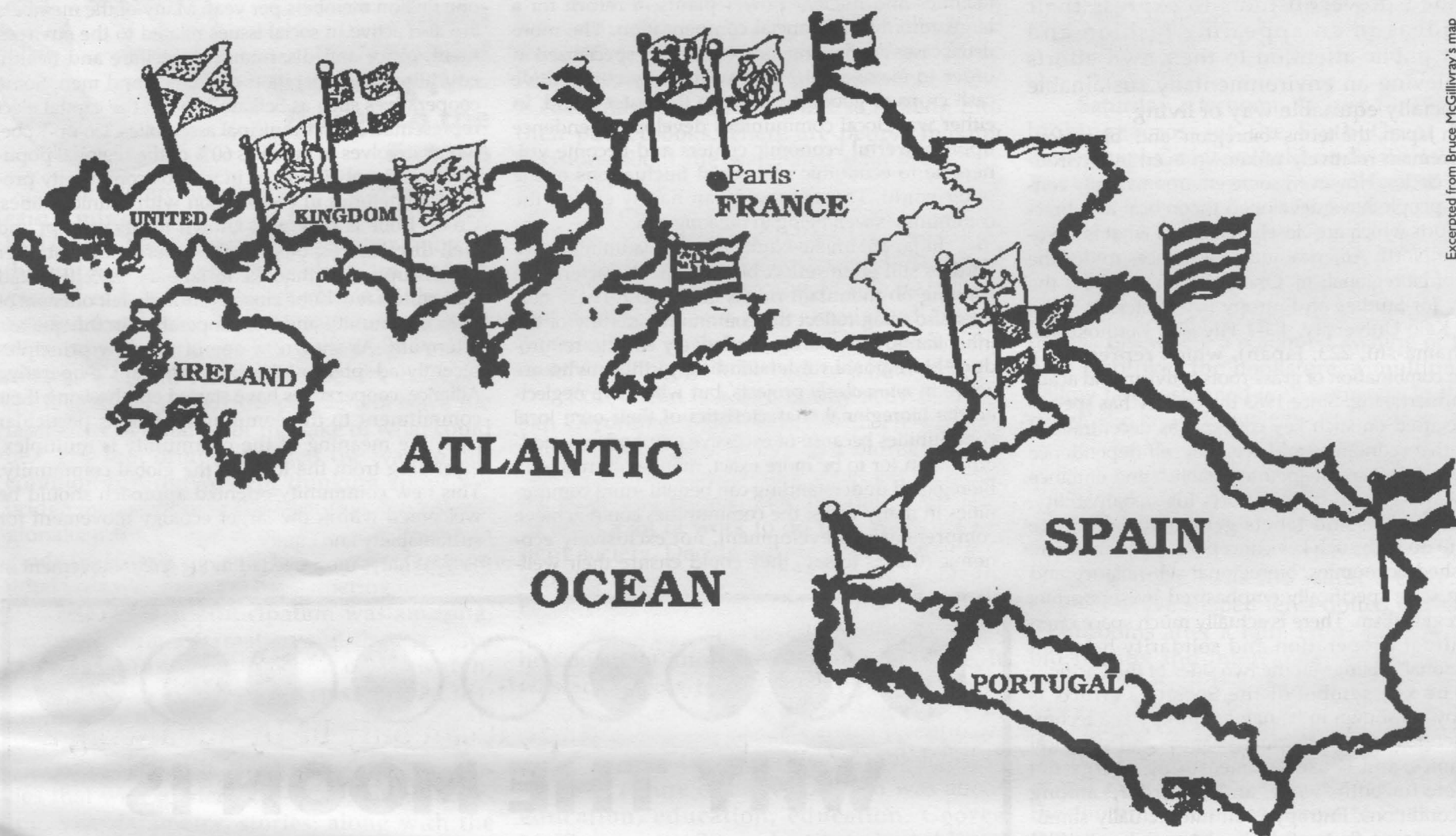


talk about fog, which we have in abundance in Shasta Bioregion. It's such a strong characteristic of the coast that we have to acknowledge it. Our friend fog. Or winter-wet, summer-dry. Usually our rain comes in the winter and we're a desert in summer. That's different from most places on the planet. Redwood trees don't occur any place else on the planet except in Shasta Bioregion. Our main watershed is the Sacramento/San Joaquin River in the Central Valley that is unique on the planet. These things are the basis for claiming a Shasta Bioregional identity, and they're natural entities. Do I think that culture is pronouncing itself? I think that it is. I was at a Summer Solstice celebration last night. The people that were there know about the Shasta Bioregion.

They know about bioregional and planetary culture. We were there to watch the sun go down on the longest day of the year; it's a planetary holiday, worthy of celebration. There weren't many solstice celebrations twenty years ago of this sort. It's a growing phenomenon and will increase.

Should there be a government of Shasta Bioregion? Of course there should and it should be a sustainable government. Probably it will revolve around water issues because the only bioregional vote we ever had was to defeat a measure that would have diverted a million acre feet a year of Northern California's water to Southern California. Ninety percent of the people in Northern California voted against that. It was called the single largest

vote on any ballot initiative in the state's history. When a reporter asked somebody in the Sociology Dept. at UCLA why the Northern Californians voted against the water issue, he said that votes like that only happen in "ideologically fanatical countries." But when they asked a sociology professor at the University of California at Davis, which is in the Central Valley of Shasta Bioregion, why that vote occurred, he said, "We simply don't want to support their lifestyle anymore." That's a bioregional comment. He meant it was inappropriate to divert the water for an artificial, human lifestyle in Southern California when it was ecologically necessary for Northern California.



Excerpted from Bruce McGillivray's map **DEVOLVING EUROPE** that appeared in *CoEvolution Quarterly* #32, Winter, 1981. For information call 1 (800) 783-4903.

## The Century of Bioregionalism

by Santiago Vilanova, Catalonia

The crisis of the nation-state is irreversible. Oligarchies and organized mafias have been taking over parliamentary democracy step by step. In Europe there has been a spreading wave of cases of corruption that has affected all the political parties and the highest echelons of power. If there was true freedom of information, we would be able to see how these corrupt practices are also affecting military power and the purchase and sale of armaments. It is going to be very difficult for governments to restore credibility to the democratic state as we understand it in industrial civilization.

The European Union and the process initiated with the Treaty of Maastricht present a serious identity crisis. Are we moving towards a union of peoples and cultures or towards a dehumanized market at the service of multinational groups? Are we going along the path to a synergy of diversities or towards greater cultural uniformity?

In any event, civilian society, the NGOs and the regions are beginning to react in the form of a certain civil disobedience against the "partyocracy" that has dominated the old continent since World War II.

### Goodbye to the Protector State

The coming down of the Berlin Wall and the emergence of nationalism (in some

instances using dangerous authoritarian strategies) are sowing the seeds for the future regional harvest. "Volem viure al país!" (We want to live in the region!) the agricultural farmers and ecologists were saying as their slogan during the seventies when nuclear power stations, motorways and uranium mines were threatening their land. That same spirit, somewhat jaded, is now being revived in Europe.

Even the creation of the European Union's Committee of Regions, the defense of the principle of subsidiarity contained in the Treaty of Maastricht, and the increasingly self-interested regionalist action of the Green Group in the European Parliament are backing the argument advanced by those of us who are for the reorganization of democracy on the basis of local and regional life.

Denis de Rougemont (1906-1985), philosopher, ecological thinker and author of *"El amor y Occidente (Love in the West)"*, defender of the idea of ecoregionalism, will be paid tribute in Barcelona this year. So the winds appear to be blowing in the right direction for the bioregional project, where for years Planet Drum has been a primary defender.

There have been, undoubtedly, reformist strategies along the way, but I think we should look on them as traveling companions. Any revolutionary option that requires a cultural cooperative to consolidate itself stands the risk of being integrated into the dominant system.

Now, will the bioregional society we pro-

pose be weaker than the power it is up against of corporations promoting consumerism because of the fact that it is not upheld by the protector state? Or might bioregionalism strengthened by civil action be the best form of trade unionism against transnational power? Will we see, finally, the emergence in the twenty-first century of anarchist ideas at the service of an ecological economy?

### Ecopolis for the Future

In any event, the challenge of bioregionalism is bound to reinforce the unity of all alternative movements creating networks of solidarity and self-defense. These networks, essential for all poor countries, should focus on setting up a Democratic Bank of Appropriate Technologies; a communication system (though using the Internet electronic mail may turn out to be a dangerous option since the CIA controls the service); NGO gatherings and meetings to defend the biodiversity of regions threatened by ecological destruction; or an alternative network to promote sustainable projects (ecopolis) in the city enclaves of bioregions.

There is an endless list of alternative projects awaiting us in the twenty-first century. Technology can no longer solve global environmental problems and bring "sustainable development." This magical term coined by the Conference of Rio will not be operative without the support of bioregional society. This is our strength and our hope.



# Bioregion as a Unifying Vision

A Report from Japan by Inoue Yuichi

In September and October, 1995, Peter Berg visited Nihon or Nippon, which literally means the country where the sun rises (the east) and is known as Japan among English speakers. He gave a series of talks on bioregionalism and Green City Programs in several places throughout the country. Peter's presentations were warmly accepted among Japanese grass-roots activists and concerned citizens. Many of them found his talks highly rewarding, not necessarily because the ideas were totally new to them, but because bioregionalism sounded great. It provided powerful tools to express their own ideas in an appealing fashion and attract public attention to their own efforts in achieving an environmentally sustainable and socially equitable way of living.

In Japan, the terms "bioregion" and "bioregionalism" remain relatively unknown even in environmental circles. However, some environmentally concerned people have developed theoretical and practical efforts which are closely related to what is advocated in North America and other places under the name of bioregionalism. One notable example is the Society for Studies on Entropy (c/o Professor Fujita Yuko, Keio University, 4-1-1 Hiyoshi, Kouhoku-ku, Yokohama-shi, 223, Japan), which represents a unique combination of grass-roots activism and academic undertaking. Since 1983 the Society has specifically focused on such key concepts as decentralized alternative economies and regional self-dependence and eco-cycles, and helped to establish and enhance local water-system-based efforts for sustainability. The main ideas and tenets generated here have much to do with such key concepts as reinhabitation, watershed economies, bioregional self-reliance and human scale specifically emphasized by supporters of bioregionalism. There is actually much space open for mutual cooperation and solidarity between "bioregional" siblings on the two sides of the Pacific.

The key symbol of the Society's efforts is "entropy" as shown in its name. Entropy is a technically defined term in thermodynamics and statistical mechanics, and is used in measuring energy not available for both "work" and "disorder," among other conditions. Entropy is an intellectually stimulating concept that might lead toward a unified understanding of our world, but is unfortunately a less appealing symbol for constructive efforts for environmental sustainability and social equity. This is because it has much negative implication, and sounds like something far beyond our daily life, something we cannot easily fathom. By contrast, the term "bioregion" sounds familiar, has an image of thriving life, is visually rich and seems to say just in a single word what we want to say. The term "bioregion" can readily convey a far more powerful message in a more attractive way, than such words as entropy, ecocycle and self-dependence. This is probably one of the major reasons Peter's presentation on bioregionalism was so warmly (and with much excitement) accepted among Japanese environmentalists. They instantly knew "bioregion" is the term.

The concept of bioregion could play a unique role in upgrading and enhancing the ecology movement in Japan. Currently, besides explicit ecological activism, there are three types of projects going on which are potentially important in achieving environmental sustainability and social equity. They are *mura-okoshi*, the *seikyo* movement, and *machi*-watching. Today these three kinds of efforts are carried out more or less independently, without much mutual support and exchange of information. They are also limited in many ways and could even oppose ecological values. If, however, bioregional ideas and perspectives are successfully introduced and incorporated in their own frameworks, things will change greatly. Each of these efforts would be much improved by becoming both more comprehensive and explicitly sustainability/equity oriented. They are capable of helping enhance the larger ecology movement into a more solid and better-balanced one. Bioregional understanding can help these three efforts become major components of the more influential future ecology movement in this country.

*Mura-okoshi* literally means revitalization of *mura* (village) community. So-called Japanese "modernization" (industrialization) has resulted in loss of village population, especially younger people, and remote communities are often left economically depressed, politically disempowered and culturally

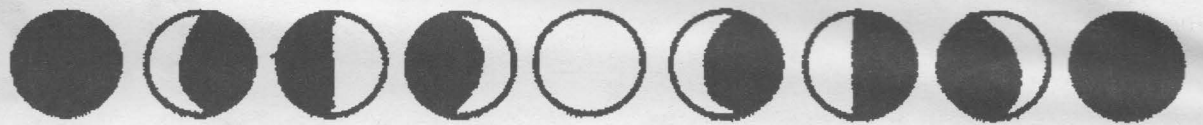
unproductive. *Mura-okoshi* is basically a local effort to reverse all this by making one's local community viable and sustainable. Unfortunately, however, this essentially good-natured effort can go wrong when too much emphasis is placed on a dollar-term (yen-term!) economy supported by the strong creed of economic growth. Some remote communities, feeling they are alienated from the so-called fruits of modernization, desperately try to enter the attractive market economy to get abreast with the rest of the world. They even invite environmentally unsustainable and socially destructive projects from outside seeking for short-term economic returns. The bizarre cases include accepting hazardous waste disposal facilities and nuclear power plants in return for a large amount of financial compensation. The more usual cases are making local economies specialized in order to make a couple of sufficiently competitive cash crops or goods available to the outer world. In either way, local communities develop dependence upon powerful economic centers and become vulnerable to economic and social fluctuations of the outer world. This approach can hardly ensure the community's well-being in the long run.

In Japan, unlike North America, administrative borders still often reflect bioregional characteristics, running on mountain ridges and rivers. These borders also often reflect the community identity of the inhabitants. It is therefore relatively easy to reintroduce bioregional understanding to those who are active in *mura-okoshi* projects, but who have neglected the bioregional characteristics of their own local communities because of excessive emphasis on modernization (or to be more exact, mono-culturization). Bioregional understanding can benefit *mura* communities in many ways: the communities could achieve comprehensive development, not exclusively economic (that is to say, they could ensure their well-

being in the long run by not only being economically viable, but also environmentally sustainable, socially equitable, politically empowered, culturally creative and spiritually rich). When *mura-okoshi* goes in this direction, it will easily find a reliable ally in the *seikyo* movement.

*Seikyo* or more formally *seikatu kyodo kumiai* (consumers' cooperatives) have successfully established themselves throughout the country. As of June 1995, there were 652 consumers' cooperatives with a total membership of 18.3 million (roughly equivalent to the number of households involved, since usually each household has only one membership). They are rapidly expanding by approximately one million members per year. Many of the members are also active in social issues related to the environment, peace and disarmament, welfare and health, education, and liberation of women and men. Some cooperatives such as Seikatu Club in the capital elect representatives in municipal assemblies. Co-op Kobe, which involves as much as 60% of the regional population, is deeply involved in various community projects, sometimes in cooperation with municipalities. Co-op Kobe is now well-known for its prompt and well-directed response to the emergency just after the disruptive earthquake in January 1995. It is said that quite a few Kobe citizens strongly felt oneness of their community and the cooperative in the quake's aftermath. As shown in one of the new principles recently adopted by the International Co-operative Alliance, cooperatives have started emphasizing their commitment to the community. In this particular case, the meaning of the community is multiplex, extending from the local to the global community. This new community-oriented approach should be welcomed within the larger ecology movement for sustainability and equity.

What is most needed in the *seikyo* movement in



## WHY THE MOON IS NOT ON INTERNET

by Ken Rodgers, Kyoto Basin, Japan

There are plenty of good reasons why the moon is not on Internet.

First, of course, the moon already has a life, and has no desire to shop on-line. The moon isn't hung up on recreating an imaginary lost teenagerhood; the words "hyper" and "multi-media" cut no ice with her. She's been heavily into developing her concentration, and the subtlest of illuminations, for aeons now. Not that she doesn't totally understand the attractions of distant & arcane mysteries, mall- neon razzle-dazzle, and highlighted texts. In fact, it was the moon who originally wrote the book on the marketing of unnameable desires, who transformed passionate unfulfillment into a universal art form. When the moon sings, full & husky-throated, we all howl along - we just can't help ourselves.

Keep in mind that the moon has seen it all. Changing constantly herself, she doesn't feel any compulsion to keep updating a home page, or subscribe to glossy magazines to keep abreast of the latest in vaporware advertising. You want information? "Fine by me, sweetheart," she coos, fluttering those lunar eyelashes. "Just come and get it!" Never conditioned by dyslexic education and media systems, she has no trouble differentiating between information overload and true enlightenment.

The moon has been quietly working the nets for millenia. Despite a few brushes with brash, mechanically-minded young cybernauts, she has never been high-tech. She still measures time by tide and menstrual cycle,

and naturally she doesn't have a Visa card to pay for all those aeons of on-line time (although she does have a few cousins closer to the sun who are grossly into plastics).

Anyway, the moon is unemployable, has no social security number, no liquid assets, no fixed trusts or interest in resort hotels, golf courses or real estate, and has no fixed address, despite her movements being habitual & well-known to her friends. At the same time, it must be said, the moon is NOT starved for meaningful interaction, or cosmic significance; she knows well that even the most muscle-bound mega-monitor is not a mirror, and can never encompass the whole of anything.

Can you really picture the moon clicking with some celestial cursor arrow to access "What's New?" or "What's Cool?" on Netscape? The moon would rather spend the night on the town, or bathing in tropical island lagoons, stroking the ridges of familiar mountain ranges, meditating on the virtual-nature of day-to-day reality, or conducting the far-flung orchestra of the night. In fact, she recently told me that from her point of view, she simply couldn't see any difference between cyber-surfing, watching TV gameshows, sniffing gasoline, playing pachinko, or bashing your own head repeatedly against a brick wall.

"Must be so nice when you stop!" she beamed, in perfect focus, glowing like a pearl over Higashiyama, in that exquisite shawl of everchanging clouds she's had forever, or at least as long as I've known her.



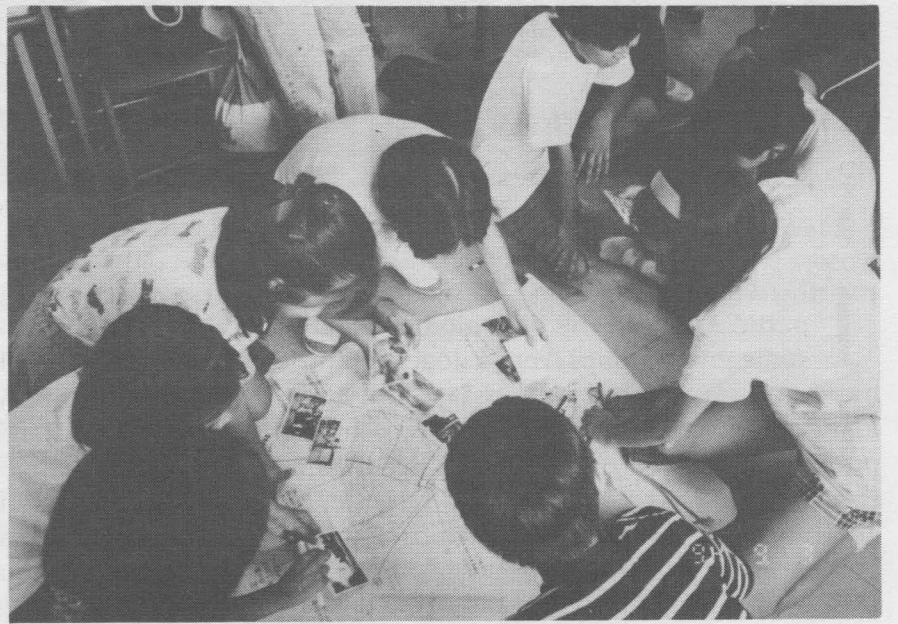
Japan is explicit bioregional understanding of each one's life place. Currently part of the *seikyo* movement is co-opted by commercialism: that is, some cooperatives are desperately trying to be competitive enough to survive the harsh race with profit-seeking super-markets and sacrifice ecological and ethical consumption. This has resulted in more principled members leaving the cooperatives and starting their own *sansho-teikei*, or direct tie-ups between producers and consumers. If the *seikyo* movement wants to develop their genuine commitment to the community, it is indispensable to go back to fundamentals and incorporate bioregional understanding of life places in community projects. The quality of this effort will be tremendously improved if the *seikyo* movement focuses on a watershed economy and politics, and tries to direct the members' consumption into bioregional ecocycles as much and as deeply as possible. Bioregional awareness fruitfully connects *mura-okoshi* and *seikyo*. Educational projects, including *machi*-watching, can do its part in developing this bioregional awareness.

The past five or six years have revealed quite a few innovative groups starting environmental education, and some of them are worth close attention for their potential to promote sustainability and equity. One is known as *machi*- (community-) watching or Community Exploration Party, which can be found in the suburbs of the Osaka metropolitan area among other places. The City of Takarazuka, which is roughly 100 square kilometers in area and has a population of 205,000, has a leading program. It is hosted by Takarazuka Human/Nature Forum, a group of concerned citizens and professionals along with representatives from such community organizations as parents' and teachers' associations, women's initiatives, consumer groups, business circles, and Rotary/Lions Clubs. In 1995, some eight hundred school children participated and the program was expanded to accommodate high school students and adult citizens as well. The program now involves public schools and the city hall.

*Machi*-watching participants are asked to walk around the town and accumulate firsthand information in their field notebooks about the place they live in. They are later asked to organize the information into a community map. Then they make a map from a different viewpoint, such as that of a beetle, a dog, a *kaki* (Japanese persimmon) tree, an old person, a handicapped person in a wheelchair, and water. Seasonal mapping is also attempted. By this process, participants develop awareness of what is important to them in their own community, what they care

about, and what they want to see in their town in the future. Oka Yasutoshi, Director of Institute of Global Environmental Culture (Yamatomi Bldg., 1-7-2 Imabashi, Chuo-ku, Osaka, 541 Japan), who has played a central role in organizing the project, says, "The primary purpose of *machi*-watching is to help children start to pay attention to their own community, to increase their understanding of their life place, and to develop a sense of belonging to the community." Oka wants to see the program develop into a multi-year project, in which participants can continually monitor the state of their community and enhance their spiritual tie to it.

Unfortunately, the Takarazuka project has not yet explicitly incorporated the bioregion concept, which could without doubt help enrich and upgrade the project into a more substantial and systematized one. Oka and his colleagues are already aware of this. Oka, who organized Peter Berg's bioregional talks in Osaka, says, "The concept of bioregion would renew the whole project into a higher-principled version, in which people can develop a solid watershed-based understanding and a visually richer and spiritually stronger identity to their life place." They have already made a step forward in this direction through pilot-phase programs of river watching and watershed mapping. Oka, whose specialty is regional planning and environmental education, thinks that knowing one's own community and region is the first step leading to citizens' participation in decision-making in the process of local policy formation and planning eventually what is referred to as reinhabitation by bioregionalists. Bioregionalism and the Takarazuka project are mutually supportive: that is, the explicit introduction of bioregional ideas would greatly help enhance the project, while the project has much potential to help increase and establish bioregional awareness/understanding. This awareness/understanding in turn would help the two projects mentioned above, *mura-okoshi* and the *seikyo* movement, unify into a solid bioregional undertaking.



Making maps from *machi*-watching

Despite much difference in social, political and cultural backgrounds between North America and Japan, the concept of a bioregion is equally important and valid as a vehicle conveying the ecological message on both sides of the Pacific. In Japan, bioregionalism has not yet established itself as a solid movement by name, but concerned citizens and environmental activists in Japan are ready to accept the bioregion as a key concept. Bioregional understanding can provide a unifying vision as a powerful catalyst linking existing potentially important initiatives into a solid new-generation ecology movement. This movement can provide positive, alternative proposals to mitigate against environmentally and culturally destructive industrialism and to point the way toward an ecological future based on sustainability and equity. It is my hope that Peter Berg's recent visit to Japan will give the society substantial momentum in this direction.

(In this article, surnames are put first in Japanese names, following the Japanese practice.)

Beth Leonard, Nanao Sakaki, and I traveled to northern Newfoundland in early June, 1995, to see moose, caribou, and icebergs. Nanao had just given a poetry reading at a gathering of Tibetan Buddhists in Halifax, Nova Scotia. We were talking about how every place has its own messages, visions, teachers, practices. I suggested that we wander as caribou, listening to their stories, and following their quest for enrichment. This poem comes from listening.

#### CARIBOUDDHISM

The iceberg has come  
to speak with Nanao.  
She is just beyond the window,  
waiting beyond the light.  
She has come a long way.  
She has a message for us.  
She is very shy.  
If we look directly at her  
she begins to melt away,  
all that she  
has to say, lost  
to the light of  
day, the wind, the  
rocks, our eyes —  
She begins to speak.

We must listen  
very carefully.

Tonight she comes as a  
moose, no longer iceberg,  
tiptoeing clumsily  
between the tents.  
She is happy in darkness.  
She is looking for Nanao.  
She wants to enter  
his dreams.

Today she is standing  
beside the road  
in a patch of bog and  
dirty snow.  
She is the color of glacier,  
iceberg, snow and  
light.  
She turns and  
disappears,  
into the woods.  
She is caribou,  
she is iceberg,  
she is message,  
and dream.

—Gary Lawless

## Three Green City Glances at Japan

by Peter Berg

Rice harvesting season brings an unusual dimension to urban life here. Even though most rice is grown in the countryside, major cities also have small paddies in seemingly every available open space. Bright green patches of thigh-high plants, stalktops bending with grain can be found in backyards, spaces between houses and "vacant" lots within the city limits of places like Osaka, Nara, Kyoto, and even Tokyo.

Standard rice farms use mechanical combines to cut and bundle ripe rice stalks, but city harvests are carried out in the old-fashioned manner. Plants are hand cut and hung topside-down on triangular frames that are about as high as an arm extended above the head. Reapers in wide-brimmed hats and handkerchiefs around the neck to ward off the morning sun stoop to cut, walk with full armloads to the frames and arrange bundles in thatch-like rows. Their conviviality seems to affirm the continuing strength of ancient traditions.

Seeing this process in the middle of a modern city with late-to-work traffic honking and oozing bumper-to-bumper on the highway, jarringly bright colored billboards, and the overall urban crush in such a densely populated country offers a startling glimpse of how partial self-reliance in producing food might look elsewhere in the future. And when harvested patches are burned at night, the smokey flames seem to summon archaic spirits back to the soul-starved city landscape.

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I sometimes describe how peregrine falcons use city office building rooftops in San Francisco as hunting platforms for taking pigeons to give an example of a viable and healthy urban ecosystem. In Japan crows are nearly as dominant as our pigeons, but the outstanding bird to watch cruising the cityscape is an osprey (sea eagle). One morning during a 7 AM walk in Asahikawa, Hokkaido I saw a large brown and

white presence staring down from a corner of the top of the NTT (telephone company) building. When I imitated the sound of a crow, the slouching osprey rolled lazily off the edge of the roof and with a few easy wing beats headed off at about third storey level above the main city boulevard.

In Nara I watched a fully mature white with black wing tips solo wanderer completely circle a small pond sending smaller birds off in a spattering panic before touching down with dancier grace on the surface.

Above the shrine-visiting crowds at Ise a single individual teased the skyline above some trees before being joined by a partner. They rose together in full view and came closer or further apart from each other in an affectionate way that I believe was evidence that they were sexually playful mates oblivious to the religious tourists.

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Odori Park in downtown Sapporo has dozens of 10x20 foot floral squares along the edges of lawn strips in the middle of several blocks. Many of them are miniaturized landscapes in which small groups of plants seem to mimic forests. Some mix lengths of bamboo or other materials to create a tableau. At one end of this extremely well-done but all-in-all conventional garden there is a wonderful exception. Four or five bicycle frames have been sequenced with front wheel forks pointed upward in a fan-like arrangement. Their original paint of pink, blue and silver remains although rust (deliberately?) has begun to spread with exposure. Green and white air plants with long slender leaves dangle from the forks, frames, pedals, and sprockets. At the other side of this square is a fallen-over stack of bicycle wheels without tires. Flowers in colors that roughly match the painted frames grow from between broken spokes. It is recycled sculpture of the most inspired kind, and the unexpected Ecology Era effect is multiplied by ingeniously including living plants.



# European Visit Fuels Bioregional Fervor

by Peter Berg

There have been strong European partners participating in the bioregional vision for some time. Groups from a dozen countries have communicated enthusiastically with Planet Drum and other organizations through publications and correspondence since the mid-seventies. Josep Puig of Catalonia has attended Turtle Island Bioregional Gatherings since Squamish, BC in 1988. Giuseppe Moretti from Italy's Po River Valley (Padania Bioregione) made a point of being present for the inaugural Shasta Bioregional Gathering in 1991.

In September 1994, Judy Goldhaft and I finally had a chance to pay back those visits and travel to some European sites during a six-week tour to spread the idea of bioregions and green cities.

The tour began with a lecture in Frankfurt, Germany for the "Futureworks" program of Amerikahaus. In addition to a good showing of various shades of green political advocates, there was a surprising turn-out of poets and writers who had no difficulty in accepting the bioregional concept as a primarily cultural idea. Amerikahaus sponsored another talk in Munich the next night (it was recently published in a book titled *Futureworks*). An unexpected Bavarian treat was traveling with gracious Franz-Theo Gottwald to Herrmannsdorfer, a remarkable organic farm village with a produce market and high-quality restaurant that successfully and artfully utilizes water recycling, energy co-generation, composting, and other aspects of sustainability. Poet Stefan Hyner and his friend Marianne Steele led us on a walk through part of the Rhine River floodplain, explaining how it was formed and became fertile after the Pleistocene Era (see Hyner's article on page 12).

With a space of free time before us, hospitable Amsterdamer Jan Van Boeckel offered a room in his previously squatted (but now Dutch government approved) cooperative apartment building and the use of its Lange Adem theater where he shows his own films. Largely through the dedicated effort of networker Fransje de Waard, a group of Amsterdam's environmental

organization representatives was assembled within forty eight hours for a highly successful introductory bioregional encounter in the theater.

A moonlit train ride over the Alps brought us to Mantova, Italy where Giuseppe Moretti waited with plans for an extensive and well-organized three-week circuit of his own *Padania Bioregione* as well as some other areas. Giuseppe operates an organic farm and produces most of his family's food including pasta, polenta, vegetables, meat, and wine. He is also an ardent bioregionalist who writes and translates essays on deep ecology and publishes *Lato Selvatico (Wild Side)* to promote bioregionalism and the fledgling Italian Wilderness Society. After a few days of experiencing the farm and exploring the banks of the Po River, Giuseppe brought us to talks and performances in Mantova, Bologna and Ravenna along with day trips to Verona and Venice. Next came the influential "Garden of Gaia" festival in Florence, which was probably the most important event for affecting practical ecological consciousness since it attracted large numbers of organic food, alternative energy, holistic health, and ecolifestyle adherents. It also publicized the new book *Bioregione* containing essays by Plant, Sale, Snyder, myself and many others. The bioregion/green city rap was received extremely well and was buttressed by panelists from *Terra Nuova* and *Frontiere* magazines. (*Terra Nuova's* subsequent interview provided national coverage.) The Giuseppe-led tour of talks and performances continued to Palombara Sabina, Nemi, the University of Rome, and Naples. *Nuovo Eco* magazine (a cross between *National Geographic* and *E Magazine* in the U.S.) carried a feature article and discussion of "bioregionalismo." Personal highlights of the Italian tour included Judy dancing in a castle's shadowy light, a walking salon through Rome's ancient architecture to the foot of Giardano Bruno's statue discussing ecological philosophy, and eating truly distinguished pizza where it originated in wildly anarchistic Naples.

Josep Puig of the bioregional group Alternativa Verda met us in Barcelona, Catalonia to start another extraordinary although different excursion. Talks here were always given at mainstream institutions such as the Catalonia Department of the Environment and Autonomous University in Barcelona or city hall in the town of Llobregat. Ms. Goldhaft was billed as "La Judy" at the latter, performing in support of the town's urgent protest against landfilling the Llobregat River delta. Catalonia's largest circulation newspaper *La Vanguardia* featured an interview with me on a bioregional approach for greening cities. The reason for our unaccustomed acceptability may lie in the contrary if not openly rebellious nature of Catalanian culture. Politically it was the region most opposed



PETER BERG

"La Judy" Goldhaft in Catalonia

to Franco's dictatorship, architecturally it fostered the nonesuch Modernist style of Gaudi, Domènech i Montaner and Puig i Cadafalch, and gastronomically it boasts a unique and delicious cuisine. Most importantly, the Catalan tongue defiantly persists and flourishes despite the oppressive incursion of Spanish language and culture. Catalonia can easily adopt bioregionalism as an additional aspect of its already profoundly individual identity.

Some direct positive developments have already followed the tour. Josep Puig's Alternativa Verda fielded a slate of candidates "based on the Green City Program" in the next Barcelona municipal elections (see sidebar this



Centro di  
DOCUMENTAZIONE  
Bioregionale

## International Cooperation Appeal

Giuseppe Moretti is establishing a Bioregional Documentation Center in Italy. If you have copies of published materials that are essential for this effort, please mail them "Air Printed Rate (AO)" to:

Giuseppe Moretti / Via Bosco 106  
Portiolo, Mantova / Italy

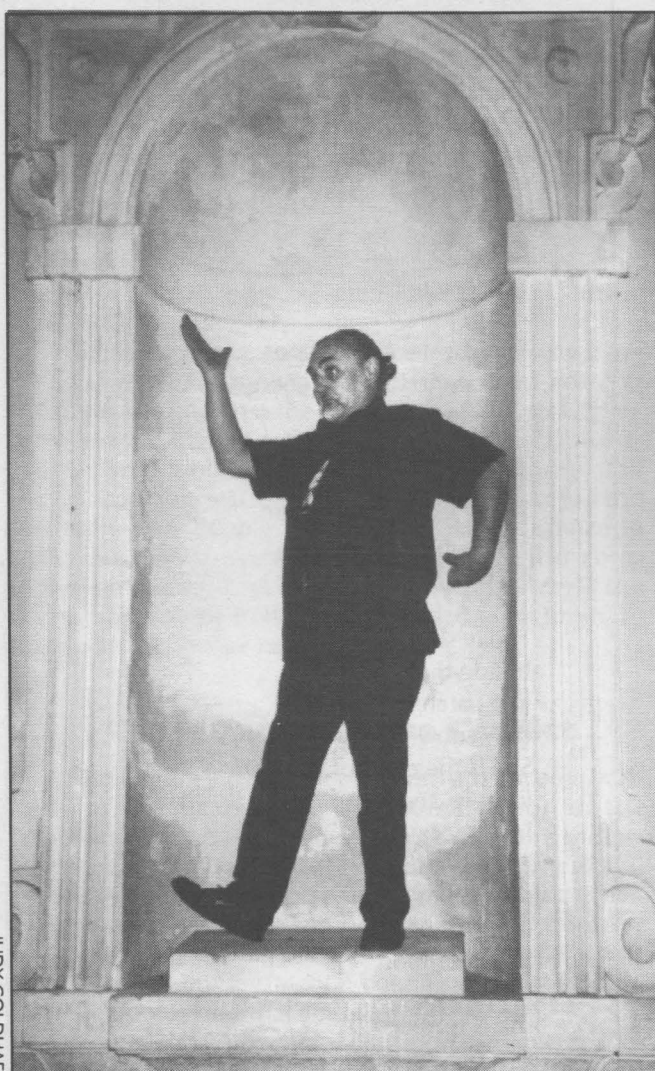
page). Giuseppe Moretti is building a local Po River Watershed group, and with several other tour sponsors he held a first Italy-wide network "incontro sul bioregionalismo" (bioregional meeting) in Bologna. He is also establishing a bioregional Centro Di Documentazione (Documentation Center/Library). These are significant aspects of serious and long-term commitments that will undoubtedly arise in other countries as well.

## Puig Wins in Catalonia

Last spring, 1995, Josep Puig was elected to the municipal council of Barcelona in a green-left coalition. In Barcelona city, more than 68,000 people (7.6%) supported the program for a "green, livable and human city." And in Catalonia more than 385,000 (11.9%).

Greens have been elected in the three most populated cities of Catalonia:

Barcelona, l'Hospitalet de Llobregat and Sabadell, as well as in other cities and towns. For the first time in major Catalanian cities, greens will work in municipal councils to educate people to act in a sustainable way of living and to push hard to build green cities.



JUDY GOLDFHAFT

Peter Berg in Italy



# SOUTH OF THE ALPS

by Franco Beltrametti, Mugena, July-August 1995

South of the Alps, an arch of about seven hundred kilometers, mountains, valleys, rivers, lakes and foothills, from near Trieste at the east to Cuneo at the west. Most of it belongs to the watershed of the Po River, which flows into the Adriatic Sea. The countries involved: Slovenia, Northern Italy (Veneto, Sud Tyrol, Lombardia, Piemonte and Aoste), with Ticino (Italian Switzerland) at the center, a triangle pointing south on the map from San Gottardo towards Milano, the major city in the plain.

I was born on the river Maggia's delta, a lake microclimate, the sunniest corner of Switzerland. My mother tells me that the small hospital has become an animal clinic. The town of Locarno used to be Milanese, then a colony of the Swiss. With Napoleon exporting independence as part of the French Revolution program, the local bourgeoisie voted for joining the new Swiss Federation, refusing the Milanese Republica Cisalpina, later part of unified Italy.

South of the Alps means acacia, vineyards, chestnut, birch, fir, pine, beech, larch, oak forests, persimmon, medlar, biwa and, since the mid-sixties, hidden marijuana patches. Languages are, from east to west, Slovenic, Friulan, German, French in Aoste, and, of course, Italian and several Italian dialects. As a child I could tell the origin of people by their particular accent. Radio first, then TV since the Fifties, flattened many tongues and ears.

From Veneto to Piemonte people eat polenta, corn mush, from the elegant white one with eels in Venezia to the rough yellow one in Lombardia, Ticino and Piemonte. You could once try an eatable version at the Columbus Swiss-Italian Food on Broadway, San Francisco. The cook was from Valcolla, not far from where I type this on a new Olivetti portable which I got discounted at the jumbo, concrete monster supermarket in Lugano.

I almost never get to see Lugano except when I meet my dentist, a biker and a sailor, in Paradiso, a minor sort of Raymond Chandler Bay City, shot in the future. By now the second or third banking center of Switzerland, 45 minutes' drive from downtown Milano, banks and hotels, hotels and banks, a tourist trap—that's Lugano. When you walk there you walk on gold, a luxury version of the air-conditioned

nightmare. Of course, the lake landscape is particularly magnificent.

Industry and overpopulation, traffic and pollution, local and general, provide the so-called effeto-vasca; even in the furthest mountains smog floats in. And polluted rivers run into the plain—can't stop that trade, with obsolete borders and laws, since "economy" works. Money took over, no matter the price, no matter how worn down the territory included.

To reason straight, the main pollution is greed, power and money. When money becomes only money, mafia power takes over, combining local and multinational money into ruthless profit which feeds on disasters. Another historical source of pollution, not only mental, is the church. These unholy combinations, together with fake nationalistic revivals, caused and helped the actual wars throughout ex-Yugoslavia. Reasonable persons know that, but reason doesn't count for much—which isn't news.

Years ago, a committee of Yugoslavian mothers in Belgrade warned not to push issues to the point of no return. Some ended up in jail: the myths of Cassandra and Antigone renewed. One can only be aware of the mighty indifference which spreads the virus of warlords, fed by you name what near or distant powers and nations. South of the Alps is not geographically distant from those wars. Armament deals happen in the pretentious buildings so much advertised in the slick design and architectural magazines. Build a bank in Lugano. Build a museum in San Francisco. It's all the same bag. "Pas d'argent, pas de Suisses," a banker once said to the king of France, Louis XIV. "For money, go to the Swiss."

Talking about South of the Alps is talking about lots of differences and dense history. As Gertrude Stein pointed out, history only happens "from to time." This place went through many instances of "from time to time." Here, density comes on heavily, geological, climatically, biologically. Everywhere fossils speak, revealing a complex situation, both dynamic and destructive. Private and state economic machineries only partially cover this situation up. Big money controls the media.

I'd like to focus on the geographical center of South of the Alps, Ticino, and the neighboring Lombard lakes area. Their positions make them a case in point. The very same nature flows through the artificial political borders.

A fast list may provide some basic information:

The numberless petroglyphs of nearby Valcamonica, as much as the memory of pole-

house lake settlements, show what the armies and laws of the Roman Empire, closely followed by the Roman Church, destroyed and rearranged. Celtic signs are still visible. Ancient roads crossed the Alps, both north-south and east-west. Oezli, the frozen mummy found in 1991 on the Italian-Austrian border, looks like a fine forefather, a traveler, a shaman, a hunter, a gatherer, a farmer and a craftsman.

When the "barbarian" invasions from the north caused the crumbling of the Empire, around here Longobards took over. Bertram, the root of my family name, is Longobard. Roman

20/VIII/95

Dear Peter and Judy,  
finally the piece "South of the Alps" is done and I hope you like it and find it useful.

I include a short note on my activities which you may use at the bottom of the article.

on the map I included watersheds, the larger towns, borderlines and the main transportation system.

Love to you  
franco

centers like Milano, Como and several smaller centers became eventually autonomous communes, run by oligarchies and corporations. They fought for territories, developed strong identities. Their common enemy was the Empire. War was already a big business.

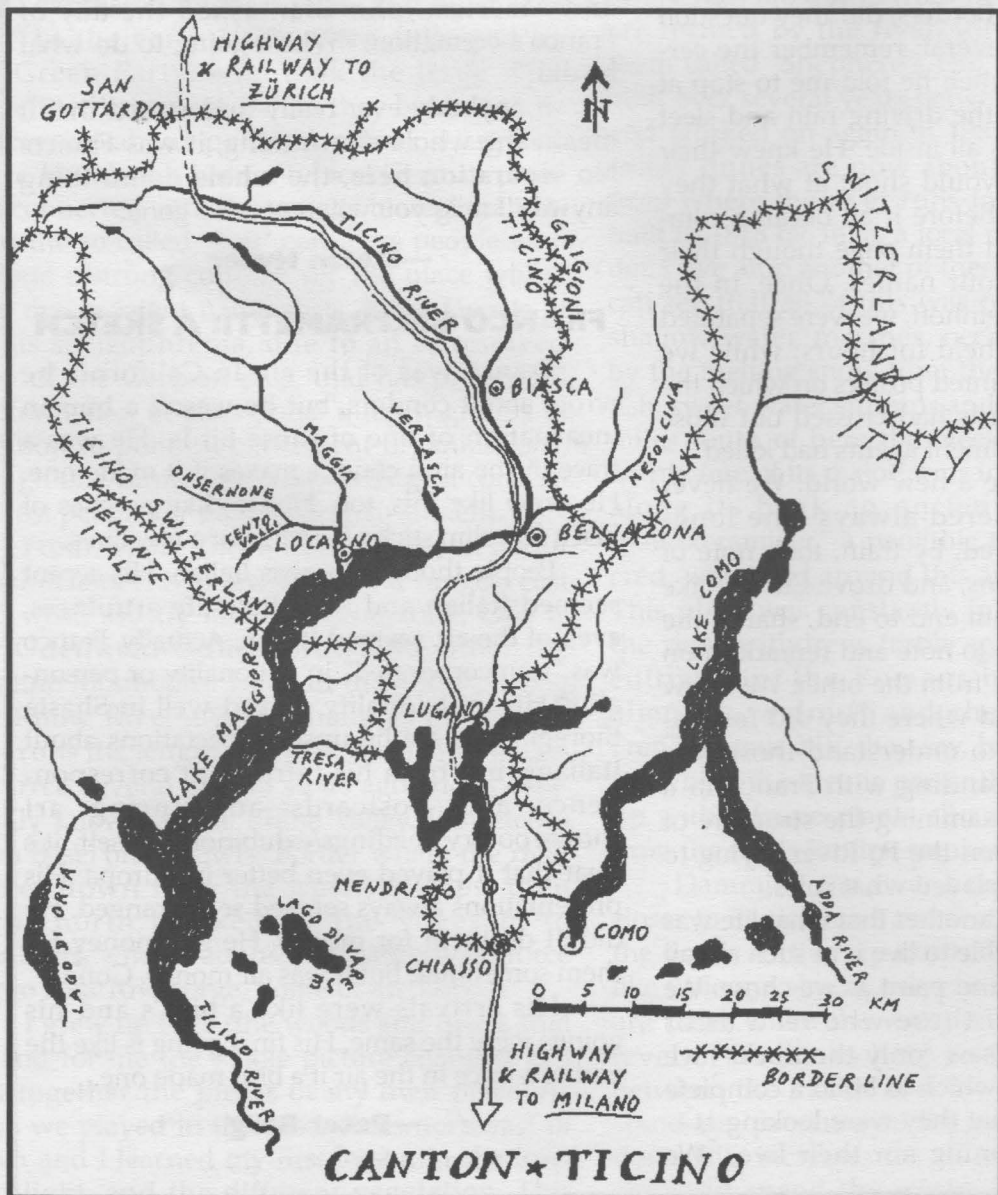
People here, in what is a rather marginal area, were farmers, hunters and fishermen. From the Middle Ages on, a sizable section of the population were stonemasons, bricklayers and carpenters, who seasonally migrated all over Europe and anonymously built cathedrals. They were called the *Maestri Comacini*. In the Renaissance, and shortly thereafter, they also became architects, as Borromini, crafting the most inventive and tormented figures of Baroque architecture in Rome. My neighbor, Emilio, in Mugena, was a mason in several countries. Now he sits watching cars drive by.

I am going very fast. With Counter-Reformation religious struggles, military expeditions ordered by the Cardinal of Milano wiped out so-called heretics. "Witches" were persecuted. To have illegitimate children, a common and until then accepted reality for girls, became a shame and a tragedy. Newborns were removed to far away towns. Popular wisdom, medicine and "know-how" was repressed or wiped out.

The Swiss Federation, dominated by growing merchant cities like Zurich, conquered larger territories, slowly expanding South of the Alps. The territory became a colony, run by *compradores*, privileged servants of Swiss governors who officially bought their positions, and paid off their initial investment by cashing in on heavy taxes, which broke down local economies and impoverished the people.

All this, combined with the magnetic effect of early industrial pools, emptied entire valleys, setting them up to become tourist paradises for Germans and Swiss-Germans. A fake, sickening folklore took over. Women who didn't migrate were working up to 13 hours a day in silk factories. Small and large land speculation began. With the advent of the Fascist regime in Italy, borders became stiff.

The hard working historian Virgilio Gilardoni, who died a few years ago, should be mentioned. He outlined with documented precision some of the preceding facts, and though





he was a Marxist, loved Pound's Cantos as much as Vertov's and Eisenstein's Soviet movies.

Let me be personal. In the early days of this century my grandfather Giuseppe, a very young farmer without land but with plenty of skills, migrated as many did, to California. Eventually he ended up owning and running a dairy in Mendocino County. When he migrated back, all his savings vanished when a "local" bank went bankrupt. Later my dad wanted to move back to the States but got a job in the Swiss Federal Railways instead. For a long time the railroad was a consistent progressive reality in Ticino and somehow it is still so.

Now a new high-speed line will double the existing rails. Many are the contradictions and foreseeable environmental impacts. One will get faster through and in and out—to Milano to the south, to Zurich to the north and, for better or worst, the dynamics of the whole territory will accelerate further. Over 300,000 people live and work here, without counting tourists but including seasonal foreign workers and frontalieri who cross the border by car in the morning and drive back to Italy in the evening.

I do not believe, in my experience, that wildlife and high tech can reasonably marry. The possible utopia, like in an early Richard Brautigan vision. Don't we want it all? To be locals and truly internationals at the same time? Plus, from a Taoist point of view, what's there to lose?

So, welcome to Gypsies, Africans, Arabs,



Asians, Yugoslavians, political and economic refugees, clandestines included. Or after heavily contributing to fucking up Third World countries, an ongoing habit, do we want just to consume their terrific music? Migration is nowadays so complex, so manyfaced—and what a potential richness it implies! Diversity densified. Real tolerance and flexibility can only grow in

mutual respect, even in situations of conflict, and "war is always a big loss," as the poet Philip Whalen once wrote to a president of the USA.

South of the Alps the best people around are quite informed and active. They live on or near to one of the main south-north throughways, trouble and bliss, side to side - do you see the point? It isn't news, the throughways do provide ways to "make it new." Fake attachment to fake tradition makes nothing but walls - self-centered made up rigid identities. Networks which include both ancient and live traditions nowadays hardly need walls, can't be but projectural, adjustable, living nets of projects.

A complex little corner of the planet, it is even more so on its positive sides. Take Gempus the Gypsy and his horses, take Nando the wild painter, Anto the capable lady ceramist, Pio the refined gardner and art lover, Claudio with his goats and reinhabitation biopractices for vanishing species of flowers and insects, unexpectedly supported by the state, take Giona the part-time publisher, take Fabrizio the watchmaster and idealistic counter-culture organiser, or Rolf the tree-doctor or Monika the intelligent bar and hotel keeper or Stephan the inventive builder of giant metal toys and many, many others.

They all seem to agree on values of comradeship, intensity, intelligence, playfulness and exploration. These individuals and their teams are light in the dominant world of greed which fears change unless it means easy money, a world of greed that wants to preserve what is it's own in order to destroy all others as quickly

**Afterword:** Franco Beltrametti died 26 August 1995 in Lugano, Switzerland. He was born 7 October 1937 in Lugano. He was a contributor to Planet Drum since 1978. He wrote of himself that he was "a traveler, ex-architect, international poet, writer, and performance and visual artist." His most recent books included *Clandestins* (1991), *Poesia diretta* (1992), *Trattato nanetto* (1993), *Tout ça* (1994), *Choses qui voyagent* (1995).

## REMEMBERING FRANCO

by James Koller

I met Franco Beltrametti when he arrived with his wife Judy and son Giona by ship in San Francisco in 1967. He had come from Japan, where he had gone—by train across Siberia—to work as an architect. He quit work there in disgust almost immediately. Entrepreneurial Japan was too like Europe. Where was the Japan he had hoped to find? He looked further, and in Kyoto, Franco met Philip Whalen, Gary Snyder and Nanao Sakaki. It was Philip who wrote and suggested that I should meet Franco.

Franco gave me then a small cardboard card on which he had drawn in pentel colors. "It is your ticket. With it you can go anywhere. But you have to decide," he said.

That first meeting began a conversation which lasted for years. We discovered the themes that ran through most of our hours together. We talked of Ezra Pound, his poetry and the avant garde notion of "making it new." We talked about Giuseppe Mazzini, Italian nationalism, Bakunin and the anarchy Franco felt represented his own view. We talked about Jaime de Angulo, and the histories of early and indigenous peoples, about wood and stone buildings. We talked about places. We both found our worlds to be of great interest, and were eager to tell one another of what we had discovered.

When I eventually reached Europe, Franco threatened to "civilize" me. He certainly tried. We walked city after city. We ate and drank, sat at how many streetside tables, "considering the matter." He and Claudio Cometa introduced me to the glories of gnocci, and Franco's father showed me how to make polenta in a copper pot in the stone fireplace in Riva San Vitale where Franco lived so long.

I tried to show Franco the America I knew—he ended up sleeping under my truck to keep the snow from covering him, crossed and recrossed the country as I drove, one old car or truck after another, reading poetry, mostly for less money than it took to get to where we were, eating from fire blackened pots, as well as good china, where the gentry took us in. Once along the Mexican border, a highway patrolman announced after questioning that

FRANCO BELTRAMETTI & JAMES KOLLER  
SAN FRANCISCO READING  
NEW COLLEGE  
777 VALENCIA STREET  
WED. JUNE 4th 1980  
8 PM



he had never seen two poets together in one car.

Somewhere there is a photograph of Franco looking like the Che Guevarra he loved. The photo happened to be on his passport, and caused him no end of trouble. How many times, at how many borders, did they question him? I remember several, remember the certainty in his voice when he told me to stop at the border, even in the driving rain and sleet that kept the guards all inside. He knew their minds, knew they would shoot at what they didn't understand. Before it all became computerized, I watched them page through their tomes, looking for our names. Once, in the days of the Bader-Meinhoff, we were separated and skin-searched, held for hours, while we contemplated the wanted posters on which the German border guards had crossed out those pictured who government agents had killed.

There would be a new world. We never doubted it, considered always "the long-term." And we moved, by train, took note of the great train stations, and drove Europe like we had America, from end to end, shared the places we continued to note and remark upon as very different one from the other. We knew that things happened where they did for reasons, and we tried to understand those reasons. I remember standing with Franco in a museum in Venice examining the structure of the small craft used on the Po River, trying to guess which factors played what roles.

We assured one another that what life was all about was being able to live it in such a way that we could write and paint as we chose. We knew that many of those who read us or looked at our work saw "only the tracks" we left, had no basis on which to build a complete understanding of what they were looking at—in neither their learning nor their lives. We

could really only share our thoughts and visions with equals, those who had experienced what we had. Only half in humor did Franco once write, "Where is Francois Villon?"

## REMEMBER FRANCO BELTRAMETTI!

On August 26, 1995 Franco Beltrametti died in Lugano.

When we first met in 1978 in Amsterdam, he at once made me feel welcome, and his saying: "This is not my tribe," gave me a fine political insight, very Zen-like, though he never much cared for strict discipline. Apart from his great painting and poetry, it was how he brought people together. Franco was to be trusted. He not only connected different parts of Europe, from north to south, but also Asia and America. John Gian asked the day of Franco's cremation: "Who's going to do what he did?"

If anybody ever really understood that it meant the whole damn thing, it was Franco. No separation here, the whole damn thing anyway. I miss you when you are gone.

—Stefan Hyner

## FRANCO BELTRAMETTI: A SKETCH

Franco was of the air. In California he wrote about condors, but he wasn't a human incarnation of one of those birds. He was a trace in the air a condor makes if it made one. He drew like this, too. Houses like perches of just a few slim sticks. Condors of a few lines.

People thought he was Italian. His accent seemed Italian and his whole-life artfulness, even of the air, seemed Italian. Actually, Franco was "unincorporated" in nationality or personality. His individuality played well in Shasta Bioregion where he upset expectations about Italians, but from his infrequent correspondence and postcards announcing art shows/poetry readings/exhibitions of self, it's clear that it played even better in Europa. His presentations always seemed self-arranged. He didn't do them for money. He got money for them sometimes, but it was air money. Gone.

His arrivals were like a bird's and his goings were the same. His final going is like the end of a trace in the air if a bird made one.

—Peter Berg



as possible.

It's not an easy matter, it never was an easy matter, and that's what makes it so vital and interesting. This place, at large and in its details, is so significant. And, as the Puerto Rican writer Victor Hernandez Cruz once said: who wants the planet to become a boring green playground strictly for rich white folks?

South of the Alps, take it or leave it, is as unchangeable and fast changing as Japan. Taiun, the Kyoto Zen monk, will soon visit again. I'll take him again to the hidden waterfalls downhill. Mirta, from Chile, may be swimming there with her daughter again while, less than a mile away as the crow flies, down across the Alto Macantone Ridge, the airport is getting more and more flights. At the same time, on the lake beaches are closing down because of pollution partially caused by technical failures of expensive machineries that are supposed to prevent the worst. "Buy new ones" seems to be the shortsighted opinion of Bellinzona, the political capital, where, thanks to clientelismo, state employees may proportionally outnumber the rats of Bombay.

The Ticino Government basically promotes division—between local and imported workers, employed and unemployed, and operates in behalf of local and large multinational money, mafia cash included. Political bosses of the traditional parties have been masters at mixing the worst habits of Italy with the worst of Switzerland—an undrinkable cocktail. No wonder that the federal Government in Bern thinks that Ticino sucks, but then, isn't it reciprocal?

Only small, self-supporting projects, armed with concrete autonomy and flexibility, won't become part of the problem and may embody fragile but livable answers. A network which may keep spreading like bamboo. We have got to dance, if not onwards at least sideways, or diagonally, transversally. As Dario Villa, the downtown Milanese poet and frequent visitor playfully wrote, welcome to "the city of living dead." We are here for nothing else than that.

## LAST NEWS

Fossil bears' teeth were discovered in a cave on Mount Generoso while recently another entire fossil dinosaur was dug out opposite Mount San Giorgio. The southern branch of Lugano glacial lake runs through the two mountains, coasted by the two old roads, the new road, the railroad and the highway. A glider landed on the high-tension line of the railway near Capolago, trains were interrupted for hours.

The highest unemployment rate of Switz-erland still is in Ticino.

Three royal eagles were seen on Mt. Lema.

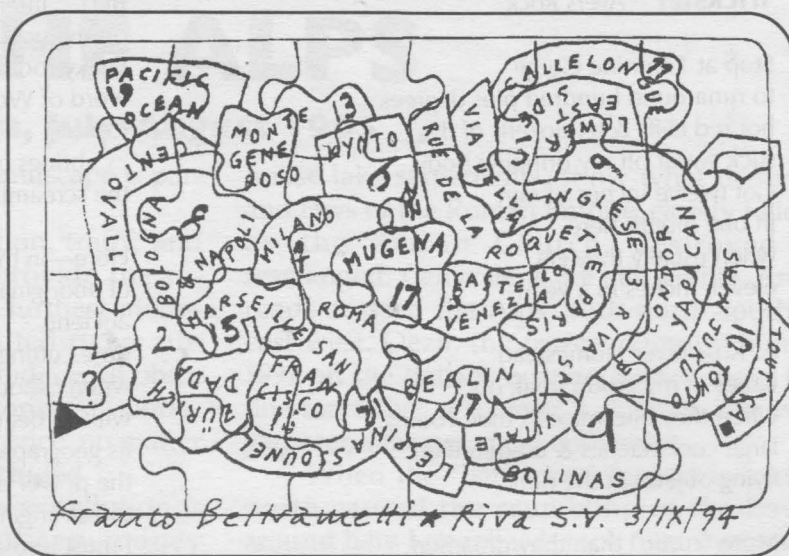
Another clandestine, a Kurd, was found dead in a Valmara canyon, on the Swiss side of the borderline. In a month 130 clandestines were arrested while trying to enter the country. Officials admit that for one illegal migrant caught, 19 manage to pass through. Several underground and not groups try to organize first help including practices to legalize refugee status. Intolerance is growing, pushed by the new right wing party La Lega.

Sixteen pounds of coke were found by narco borderguards in a toilet of an international train in Chiasso border station. But that's no news.

More written traces of tight Pizza Connection links with several Lugano banks surfaced in a trial in Italy. Cops discovered new dollar bills worth \$300,000 stashed in a pail on an abandoned farm below Montagnola, one of Lugano's Beverly Hills type residential areas. In the early Seventies the farmhouse used to be a hippy commune, near Hermann Hesse's villa.

Meret Oppenheim, the wonderful lady artist, got over 7000 visitors, mainly young, at her retrospective show in Mendrisio. She died over ten years ago, god bless her soul.

In Balerna, a colony of emerald green toads, given up for extinct, was found in a



minor swamp surviving just off the highway.

The underground 'temple' 'agli Orti' may have found a new seat in an old warehouse. Artists who passed through: Steve Lacy, Joelle Leandre, Rosa Zaragoza, Steve Piccolo, Nino Locatelli—for music; Tom Raworth, Julien Blaine, myself, Duncan McNaughton, Dario Villa, Kagumi, Jean Monod—for poetry and performance; Aziz Elhihi, Celso Grandi, Pam, Nando Snozzi, Nathalie Du Pasquier and others for art shows. Generally speaking a necessary international meeting point.

In ex-Yugoslavia over 100,000 civilians are escaping Krajina taken over by the Croatian Army, joining the millions of homeless refugees.

Three new zucchini in the tiny garden at the bottom of the stone village of Mugena. Today, August 7, here at 2700 feet, tomatoes are still green.

A lovely baby fox stared at us on a dirt road near Breno, one of the nextdoor mountain villages. Hi, Baby Fox.



mainly, but also loons, cormorants and herons who make this their home at different times of the year.

My mother remembers when they went swimming in the river; to me more memorable is the way in which we were told to not swim in the River! In the 1970s someone experimented with developing film using the water from the Rhine and had some interesting results; it's getting better, they say. Every once in a while we do find some clams, and there are people fishing in it, but we keep to collecting pebbles, herbs in the meadows, blackberries and sloe.

## Thoughts About the Rhine-Valley

by Stefan Hyner

July 11 - August 20, 1995 / Rohrhof Empty Boat / Year of the Pig

The first bioregional ideas here were expressed by local poets and musicians in the early 1970s, then followed by the Green Party, who took the issue with them into Parliament, before they became more concerned about political power struggles. There has always been a typical German problem connected with the topic of bioregionalism: even the so-called "Left" considers people who express a strong concern for the place where they live as latent nationalists, if not fascists. It is this schizophrenia, due to an unresolved view of the German past, that has prevented the formation of bioregional interest groups in addition to political/parliament organizations, though one cannot but acknowledge a concern of most people for their local environment.

From where I now stand I see, in about equal distance, two low mountain ranges, east and west, mostly made of sandstone. One is the Odenwald-Odin's forest—the other the Palatine Mountains. I live in the middle along the Rhine River—Vater Rhein, as they say—that runs the length of a geological fault which occurred several million years ago and is commonly known as the Rhine Valley. It stretches from Basel on the Swiss border where the river comes down from the Austrian Alps, then turns north blocked by the Vogesen, to Frankfurt, where Taunus and Westerwald force it into a narrow gorge, home of the Lorelei.

I grew up here (the woods and fields, that is) and for me the whole picture changed as I put together the pieces of my own place. As boys we played in the sandy hills northeast of town and I learned my first lesson in shadow-and-light, and the different vegetation. This

also meant riverside-and-mountainside. These sandy hills are dunes from neolithic times that are formed by the river. I lived atop one of them called "Shepherd's Hill" in a cabin I had built over several years between 1977 and 1981 and worked on again in 1985. Some of these sandy dunes are now about six miles away from where the river runs in a dammed bed, built in 1818 by Tulla, a local military commander. I live atop another of these sandy hills. You can see that all of this was once more or less shallow water, marshes, occasionally flooded by the melting snow from the Alps, filled with fish, sweet-water shrimps and clams. Just a few miles south of here the Neckar River used to empty one of its major arms into the Rhine and along its bank an ancient settlement of "Bandkeramiker," a neolithic tribe, was discovered, who lived around this area in 6000 B.C.T. This place was constantly inhabited and as the river withdrew, fertile soil was put under cultivation: the Romans brought grapes, almonds, walnuts and cherries. Later the French, Louis XIV, they say, brought asparagus for which the area is presently famous. I grew up with tobacco plants all around me, stole it from the fields for first smokes.

Damming the river here, in order to get closer to its rich land and water, is what causes the floods further up north that threaten cities like Cologne almost every year now. But there are times when the water still rises above the level of its banks here and even the dams between the marsh and the fields can't withstand the pressure so the river comes to the door. This increases the number of birds who stop and spend the winter. Ducks and geese



## Trickster Ayers Rock

Stop at Trepnine Gorge  
to runaround hundred plus degrees  
hot red cliffs & let dozens of flies  
suck sweat off my dripping body.  
Got twelve inches of rain  
in one month here  
when usually they get  
eleven inches in a year.

At Ross River Homestead  
ladies in my group freak out  
when they find mice in their rooms,  
large cockroaches & unidentified  
flying objects in the dark.

More "rustic" than they dreamed.

Bill gives good rap on history of ranch,  
explains aboriginal tools & weapons,  
makes Billy Tea, demonstrates the art  
of boomerang, leads the ride of horses.

Complaints of rusticity linger.

Check out the Olgas  
which are potently great  
& help blow out  
a few of the "bugs."

BUT... intense thundershowers hit  
on the way to motel at Ayers Rock.  
Leaky rooms, showers & airconditioners not working,  
word of World Class hotel just opening at Yulara  
Center  
. . . brings back  
the screaming panic shields.

Here—in this potent desert  
of aboriginal myth,  
ancient,  
time cutting,  
when I should be dealing  
with its beauty,  
its geographical aliveness,  
the power of truth  
the aborigines knew it held,  
I must instead  
deal with why  
a deluxe company  
has not booked  
deluxe accommodations  
in the middle  
of nowhere

not knowing  
that such  
just officially  
opened.

By dinner  
alcohol, valium  
& other legal secrets  
from hidden  
magical boxes  
seem to temporarily  
settle  
the riotous wave.

Talk Mayan & Incan history  
diversity of African tribal and national life,  
tie-ins to dreamtime, aboriginal ancestors.

Humor  
creeps  
back  
in.

They say  
Coyote  
made it  
to the  
Outback.

—Conrad Levasseur

## Spot the difference!

# GREEN-TOURISM

With green tourism expanding so rapidly, Ted Trainer offers  
this checklist for the environmentally concerned traveller

### Tourism

#### Ecologically unacceptable

Travel a long distance by air or car, using a huge quantity  
of scarce energy and polluting the atmosphere.

Stay in hotels built from scarce local resources, at a daily  
cost equal to the annual income averaged by half the  
world's people.

Spend a lot of money on duty-free goods you don't need.

By your affluent lifestyle, video camera etc, help to teach  
the natives the superiority of western culture.

Eat food airfreighted in, or produced by local people at  
starvation wages.

Spend your time not looking at trees, animals or landscape.

### Green-Tourism

#### Ecologically acceptable

Travel a long distance by air or car, using a huge quantity  
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## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Raise The Stakes #26

The theme of the next *Raise the Stakes* is education. You are invited to submit articles, announcements, correspondence, etc. (please double-space material and include a disk, if possible) or make referrals on behalf of people you know currently involved in educational projects to the Planet Drum office. A *Green City Directory* will be included in *RTS #26*. If you belong to a green city group involved in sustainable urban ecology or know of such a group, please contact our office for a questionnaire to fill out.

### Bioregional Association Update — Final Call for Committee Members

Picture it. Bioregionalism infiltrates the public education system, groups across North America communicate regularly through the Internet and a frequent continental newsletter, an unprecedented number of new bioregional groups and gatherings begin emerging, and

sound bioregional principles become the framework for resources policy management, local economics, and community building. Sound like a dream? Maybe, but with hard work, these activities and many others can result from developing the Bioregional Association (BA).

So far, about twenty people are serving on seven committees to create a framework for the forthcoming Association. Committees include: activities, agreement-making methods, bylaws, funding, issues, membership, and standards and practices for groups.

Independent responses from committee members have been compiled into a document titled "Initial Bioregional Association Committee Recommendations." (Call or write us to receive a copy.) Committees are now using these recommendations and comments from potential BA members to create final statements about their scope of concerns and how committees should operate.

If you want to have a say in forming the BA, this is your final call to become a committee member! Your only requirement is a desire to serve. Please contact us before January 15th if you want to help in this important decision-

making process. We plan to hold a working meeting with committee members in 1996 to get the Association up and running. It will be restricted to committee members to ensure that this process continues to evolve from an informed as well as a participatory perspective. Join us!

Debbie Hubsmith, c/o Planet Drum Foundation

### Turtle Island Bioregional Congress VII

The next Turtle Island Bioregional Congress will be held November 24-December 1, 1996 in Tepoztlan, Morelos, Mexico. The next planning meeting for this extraordinary event will be held at the beach in Maruata, Michoacan, Mexico, January 3, 1996.

For more information, contact:

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If an office can bust out of its seams, Planet Drum has. Our restricting factors are now funding and office space. Add to that an abundance of public enthusiasm and demand for our projects, and you can sense the excitement and perils associated with a two-decade plus movement-in-the-making that is really catching on!

People all over the world are ready to learn and begin implementing bioregional ideas. This fall Peter Berg spent six weeks in Japan giving workshops and talks. The *Japan Times* and *Asahi Shinbun* ran excellent feature stories about his tour and how bioregionalism will become increasingly important for Japan and the world.

Closer to home, youths from eight countries took part in four bioregional mapping workshops at U.C. Berkeley in August, during the 50th U.N. anniversary Global Youth Forum. Students ranging in age from 11-25 learned about bioregionalism, drew maps, and took part in consciousness-raising discussions concerning how humans can live more appropriately within their life-places. Many of these students did not speak English; however, translators helped Maggie Weadick and I, and the students' bright eyes and bioregional maps transcended language boundaries. They understood.

Our new book **Discovering Your Life-Place: A First Bioregional Workbook** is available now and will enable teachers everywhere to do bioregional mapping workshops with their classes. This exercise brings natural sciences home, ignites curiosity, makes watershed

awareness a way of life, and is perfect for any age group — kindergarten through adults. As Planet Drum's new distribution manager, I look forward to marketing this book to schools and universities. Call me if you're an educator who is interested in this resource, or if you have distribution ideas. Also, the next issue of *Raise the Stakes* will be about bioregional education, so get in touch with us if you're doing some interesting work and would like to write an article.

Education (combined with fun) has been a dynamic and prevalent theme during most of Planet Drum's activities this fall. The mid-September fourth Shasta Bioregional Gathering was filled with intriguing presentations, participatory workshops, descriptive slide shows, strategy sharing (as well as lots of dancing). On September 21st Gary Snyder gave a talk at Green Apple Books in San Francisco and designated Planet Drum Foundation as the recipient of the proceeds. Thanks, Gary! September 22nd was the State of California's quarterly Biodiversity Council Meeting (which was set up in 1991 to foster Resources Agency policies from a more "bioregional" perspective). I trekked up to Eureka to attend the meeting and made a public comment statement about the many ways the State could involve and learn from grassroots bioregional groups.

A generous San Francisco store, Green World Mercantile, hosted a benefit for Planet Drum and Green City on October 20th while a film crew and an intrigued audience heard Peter Berg, Sabrina Merlo, and Simon Hurd, and

watched a beautiful and educational "Water Web" performance by Judy Goldhaft. The store donated 30% of its sales from that evening and the next day to us.

In other office news and schmooz, Sabrina Merlo continues to direct the ever-growing Green City Project with help from Volunteer Network Manager Maggie Weadick and our extremely sought-after Education+Action Coordinator Simon Hurd. Ajila Hart meticulously keeps track of our finances, and this summer we said good-bye to former Membership and Distribution Manager Bob Fay. Judy Goldhaft has been handling membership with help from volunteer Anna Dirks, and in January we look forward to Ocean Berg returning to honcho this important position. Additionally, interns Beverlie Leano, Corinna Kennel, Lucila Orengo, and Joel Ginsberg, along with dozens of volunteers (including Carter Brooks), helped out immensely with projects ranging from workdays and bulk mailings to compiling a new international Green City directory.

Special thanks for continued support and contributions from our Planet Drum members. Profound gratitude to more than fifty farms, individuals, and food and beverage companies that contributed to the Shasta Bioregional Gathering. And appreciative recognition to the Foundation for Deep Ecology, Peradam Foundation, Cottonwood Foundation, and the Center for Ecoliteracy for supporting our bioregional work. We couldn't do it without you.

—Debbie Hubsmith

## Green City Report

Green City's "Open Space/Toxic Waste" bicycle tour of San Francisco's Bay Shoreline turned out over 80 bicyclists this July who pedaled a 15 mile round-trip survey of San Francisco's post-industrial shipping neighborhoods. Riders acquainted themselves with three Superfund sites, the maritime history and currently declining occupancy of the city's ports, development plans including a whole "city within a city" (Mission Bay) and a controversial new electrical plant, as well as "dangerous neighborhoods," holes in fences, and other local mythology. The San Francisco Bicycle Coalition, Greenbelt Alliance, San Francisco Bay Trail and Golden Gate University Environmental Law Clinic provided collaborative energy which raised attendance, and also helped install a bike rack at an infamous local bar-on-the-Bay, where the tour concluded.

Since that July "Workshop/Workday," Green City has coordinated a fennel removing frenzy at San Bruno Mountain, installed a large terraced garden (using broken concrete chunks to make three 35-foot retaining walls) at Ida B. Wells Continuation High School, in San Francisco and helped recreate ("daylight") Codornices Creek in Berkeley. In November we'll build in one day a new community garden in San Francisco's Mission District with the help of Dolores Street Community Services, Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador, and the San Francisco League of Urban Gardeners.

The *Green City Calendar* sports a hip and slick new poster format which allows folks to post listings just as they might in a repertory theater's calendar. We're now printing 5,000 copies per issue and distributing over half of them randomly throughout the Bay Area in stores, cafes, barber shops, etc. (Write for a sample copy.) This increased print run, new Calendar format, and creative distribution is inspiring more people to join Green City Project, which has brought our membership up to an astonishing 174! (This is truly impressive when you realize a year ago we had only 5.) And our over-the-phone volunteer and information service is averaging 274 referrals a month—up from only 100 referrals per month a year ago.

Besides honcho-ing program growth, Green City Project Director Sabrina Merlo drove across the U.S. this past summer in a diesel van which runs on fuel made from used vegetable oil collected from fast food joints! The Lard Car inspired a hilarious and informative documentary titled *The Fat of the Land* on the prospects and history of bio-diesel. Contact the Green City/Planet Drum office for fuel-mixing and video-buying information.

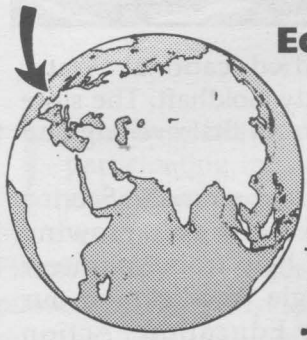
## Education+Action

The Education+Action program (E+A) continues its rise in popularity as a means of engaging students and teachers in hands-on urban ecological work. Kids are contributing to urban ecosystems through urban composting and gardening, recycling, native habitat restoration, alternative transportation, renewable energy, urban forestry, and coastal and watershed protection. For many of the students, ecology had little relevance in the past to the neighborhoods where they live and go to school. Through E+A, they are linked with community groups who help them learn about ecological issues that affect them, and are given the opportunity to understand local community needs and take action.

One of last school year's best E+A projects occurred at San Francisco Community School. It was a day dedicated to San Francisco's past and present flora. The day began with a native plant walk in McLaren Park, one of San Francisco's most vast and forgotten parks. Although sparse amongst the invasive exotic species, the native varieties linking us to the indigenous past are still present. Following the walk, the afternoon featured maintaining the street trees on the perimeter of the school's campus with Ross Jackson from Friends of the Urban Forest. These trees had taken quite a beating from the winter rains, so the students' assistance was necessary to ensure their survival. The day's finale celebrated the flora by planting some native San Franciscan scrub species on the campus. Planting native coyote bush, ceanothus, and manzanita represented a connection to the past and hope for the future that habitat protection and restoration will become a natural part of living in the city.

If you want to hear more about this innovative approach or have bioregional education experiences of your own to share, the next *Raise the Stakes* is for you! RTS #26 will be dedicated to bioregional education happening everywhere. If you have bioregional learning going on where you are, we at Planet Drum want to hear from you!





**Ecopolitics and the Free State: Scotland's First Anti-Motorway Conflict**

Just to the south of Glasgow, amid the woodlands and parklands of Pollok estate, a site of extraordinary resistance has emerged. From the roadside a huge red banner with bright yellow letters proclaims: "Pollok Free State," and where the road gives way to a dirt track, amid tall beech trees, one enters a place transformed. Huge carved totems of eagles, ravens, and owls stand as silent sentinels below tree houses. Shingle paths wind past recycling containers, sunflower beds, a small kitchen, and an information centre in the process of construction. A campfire is tended throughout the day and night, symbolic of the residents' spirit of resistance. Scattered amid the woodlands, are a varied array of benders and tents — the homes of the residents of Pollok Free State. Multi-coloured flags flutter in the wind, upon them the message: "Save Our Dear Green Place." The dear green place is "Glasgow" in the Gaelic tongue, and the Free State is the symbol of the resistance to the proposed M77 motorway, planned by Strathclyde Regional Council at a cost of £51 million, which would cut a swathe of concrete and traffic through what is the city's largest green space. The resistance to this road, whose focus is the Free State, represents Scotland's first anti-motorway ecopolitical conflict.

**The Roots of the Conflict**

Pollok estate is an area of farm, park, and woodland stretching for 1,118 acres, between 3-4 miles south of Glasgow's city centre. The parklands, oak and beech, woodlands, and the White Cart River provide habitats for a rich variety of wildlife.

The estate is also home to two golf courses and the Burrell Art Museum. In 1939 Sir John Maxwell of Pollok, founder of the National Trust for Scotland, bequeathed Pollok estate to the citizens of Glasgow, stating: *the said lands should remain forever as open spaces of woodland for the enhancement of the beauty of the neighbourhood and so far as possible for the benefit of the citizens of Glasgow.*

As early as 1965, an 11 km extension to the M77 was proposed in the Glasgow Corporation's highway plan to relieve traffic congestion on the road from Glasgow to Ayr. However, it was not until 1974 that the National Trust for Scotland decided to waive the conditions of the 1939 conservation agreement to enable the motorway to be built. Concerted protests against the motorway began in 1978 and involved Corkehill Community Council, and other concerned community groups.

In 1988 a public enquiry into the motorway issue lasted for three months, and included an array of submissions against the M77. These included opposition from Glasgow District Council, local communities who would be affected by the highway, and various community organizations including Glasgow for People. Despite popular resistance to the motorway, preliminary construction commenced in 1992. A swathe was cut through the western side of Pollok estate and the preliminary foundations of the road laid.

**The Branches of the Conflict**

The Region's Roads Department advanced a variety of justifications for the construction of the motorway extension. They argued that the motorway would: (1) assist economic development; (2) save travelling time for road users; (3) reduce road accidents; (4) reduce road congestion; (5) improve the reliability of the public bus transport system; and (6) enhance environmental conditions by removing traffic from residential and shopping streets.

However, opponents including planners, academics, transport consultants, politicians, and environmentalists, cite a plethora of environmental, economic, social, and political arguments against the

motorway. Environmentally, the road will cause increased noise and air pollution, thereby destroying the tranquility of the western Pollok estate, and exacerbating health problems such as asthma. The road will destroy Glasgow's largest green space, causing irreparable damage to woodland and wildlife habitats, while also contributing to the process of global warming. At the same time, the motorway will foster increased reliance on car use, thereby exacerbating these environmental problems. Economically, the motorway will facilitate car commuting, thereby generating increased traffic. An estimated 53,000 vehicles a day would be funnelled across the already congested Kingston Bridge in Glasgow, which is at present undergoing repairs due to damage caused by excessive traffic use. The motorway will also draw passengers away from subsidized rail and bus services. The resources that would be used to construct the M77 could be used instead to upgrade existing transport facilities, including freight and passenger rail networks, public bus services, and roads. This, together with the promotion of traffic calming measures, could ameliorate the environmental problems cited earlier. Socially, the motorway would only benefit car users, and not serve the local communities of Mosspark, Corkehill, Pollok, Nitshill, Carnwadric, and Kennishead where access to the use of cars is low. Indeed, it has been estimated that up to 75% of Glasgow's population does not have access to car transport. In addition, the construction of the road would sever the access of these local communities to the Pollok estate — which is a safe recreational area for children. The road would cut these communities off from each other and would force school children to play beneath the shadow of a loud, polluting motorway. Politically, the construction of the motorway entails the commercial development of a greenbelt space and the subsequent restriction of public access to the land. As such, this represents part of an ongoing process of enclosure and privatization of public land that has continued in the British Isles since the seventeenth century.

**The Branches of Resistance**

Although opposition to the motorway dates back to the 1970s, several recent developments saw the resistance coalesce into a more potent force. In the spring of 1994 Glasgow Earth First! was formed, a non-hierarchical group committed to engaging in nonviolent direct action in order to prevent further environmental destruction. The group soon began to focus its energy upon the M77 issue. In April 1994, the Stop the Ayr Road Route (STARR) Alliance was launched, a merging of various community and environmental organizations pledged to four goals:

- (1) to have the M77-Ayr Road Route cancelled;
- (2) to re-direct financial resources saved from the cancellation into an alternative, environmentally sensitive transport strategy;
- (3) to reinstate the land within Pollok estate to its previous condition as open space and woodland, as enshrined in the 1939 Conservation Agreement;
- (4) to restore all open spaces and buildings blighted by the M77-Ayr Road Route, and give priority to provision of pedestrian and cyclist safety, public transport and park-and-ride facilities. In June 1994, the Pollok Free State camp was established. Inspired by Colin McLeod, the camp acted as a potent, visible symbol of resistance to the motorway.

Like the branches of a tree, the resistance to the motorway spreads in numerous directions. It includes locals, students, travellers, environmentalists, academics, planners, politicians, councillors and the unemployed. The resistance also heralds from the various communities of Glasgow, from Scotland, England, Australia, New Zealand, Sweden, Germany and the United States.

We invite you to join us.

*Glasgow Earth First!*

*P.O. Box 180, Glasgow G4 9AB, Scotland*

*Tel: 041-331-2473*

*I wish to thank all those members of Glasgow Earth First! who commented on earlier drafts of this article.*

*Ecological concerns have a rich history in Scotland, most notably the twelve-year anti-nuclear struggle against the Faslane nuclear submarine base waged by the Faslane Peace Camp.*

*—by Dr. Paul Routledge*



**Creating Ecological Economics with Local Currency**

Here in Ithaca, New York, we've begun to gain control of the social and environmental effects of commerce by issuing over \$50,000 of our own local paper money, to over 900 participants, since 1991. Thousands of purchases and many new friendships have been made with this cash, and hundreds of thousands of dollars of local trading has been added to the Grassroots National Product.

We printed our own money because we watched federal dollars come to town, shake a few hands, then leave to buy rainforest lumber and fight wars. Ithaca's HOURS, by contrast, stay in our region to help us hire each other. While dollars make us increasingly dependent on multinational corporations and bankers, HOURS reinforce community trading and expand commerce which is more accountable to our concern for ecology and social justice.

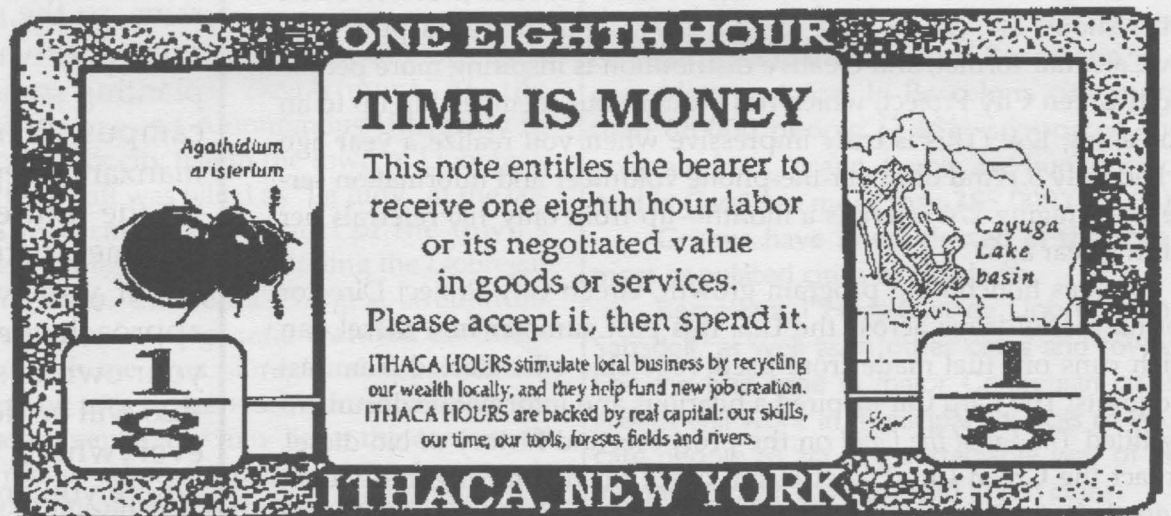
Here's how it works: the Ithaca HOUR is Ithaca's \$10.00 bill, because ten dollars per hour is the average of wages/salaries in Tompkins County. These HOUR notes, in four denominations, buy plumbing, carpentry, electrical work, roofing, nursing, chiropractic and child care, car and bike repair, food, eyeglasses, firewood, gifts, and thousands of other goods and services. Our credit union accepts them for mortgage and loan fees. People pay rent with HOURS. The best restaurants in town take them, as do movie theaters, bowling alleys, two large locally-owned grocery stores, and thirty farmer's market vendors.

Ithaca's new HOURLY minimum wage lifts the lowest paid up without knocking down higher wages. For example, several of Ithaca's organic farmers are paying the highest farm labor wages in the Western Hemisphere: \$10.00 of spending power per HOUR. These farmers benefit by the HOUR's loyalty to local agriculture. On the other hand, dentists, massage therapists and lawyers charging more than the \$10.00 average per hour are permitted to collect several HOURS hourly. But we hear increasingly of professional services provided for our equitable wage.

Everyone who agrees to accept HOURS is paid two HOURS (\$20.00) for being listed in our newsletter, *Ithaca Money*. Every eight months they may apply to be paid an additional two HOURS, as reward for continuing participation. This is how we gradually and carefully increase the per capita supply of our money.

We regard Ithaca's HOURS as real money, backed by real people, real time, real skills and tools. Dollars, by contrast, are funny money, backed no longer by gold or silver but by less than nothing — \$4.3 trillion of national debt.

Local currency is a lot of fun, and it's legal — HOURS are taxable income when traded for profes-





# C O R R E S P O N D E N C E

sional goods or services. Local currency is also lots of work and responsibility. To give other communities a boost, we've been providing a Hometown Money Starter Kit. The Kit explains step-by-step start-up and maintenance of an HOURS system, and includes forms, laws, articles, procedures, insights, samples of Ithaca's HOURS, and issues of *Ithaca Money*. We've sent the Kit to over 300 communities in 45 states so far, and our example is becoming national. To get one, send \$25.00 (2.5 HOURS option in NY) or \$35 from abroad, to *Ithaca Money*, Box 6578, Ithaca, NY 14851.

—by Paul Glover



## Shasta Bioregional Gathering IV— Bridge to the Future

The overarching theme of this year's gathering might have been BRIDGE TO THE FUTURE. There was a large banner hung in the amphitheater with these words on it which greeted each participant crossing over the suspended foot bridge over Austin Creek leading in. A sign posted there read, "It is not enough to have a vision. Without a plausible bridge, a strategy to get there, few people will leave the familiarity of what is for the sake of what could be." The foot bridge signified the way to our common future. We kept thinking about the bridge metaphor over the four days. Isn't bioregionalism the bridge to the future, a theory to guide us, to help us create it? It seemed so from what we experienced at the gathering.

The level of participation was amazing, people sharing information and their creative talents, volunteering in the camp watch, kitchen, kid's program. No one seemed disgruntled by the necessary duties—going along, getting along.

Another bridge was the variety of activities that we experienced—ritual, music, dancing, visuals, poetry, stories, along with the speakers and workshop program. Cooperation and varieties of expression are essential elements for both a gathering and for our practice of bioregionalism.

The format of the program, from opening to closing, provided us with another bridge to cross over. What did we learn from the process? Where are we headed?

"Calling out the four directions" gave us a sense of who we are. This was followed by interactive Sufi dancing, looking at our ever-changing partners—eye to eye, helping us to build a gathering community. Standing to form a large, human replica of the Shasta Bioregion, we got into our watershed configuration and experienced the sensation of being connected to a lot of other folks from different places. And then there was the water ceremony: each person coming to the gathering had been asked to bring a sample of water from his or her watershed. These were poured into a large blue vase which was held aside as a centerpiece until the closing circle, at which time the waters were ceremoniously poured into Austin Creek, letting the individual offerings flow freely from there to the Russian River and from there to the ocean beyond, a complete circle, so to speak, from opening to closing.

Our bridge was supported by the four themes or pillars of the gathering: History and Spirit of Bioregionalism, Health of Our Bioregion, Living as a Bioregionalist, and Future of Bioregionalism.

Malcolm Margolin, Native American historian, addressed the spirit by drawing upon the stories and experiences of indigenous people of Northern California. "How was it," he asked, "that Indian communities survived where tribes with great differences in culture lived next to each other?" He explained: each tribal place was experienced as "the center of the world." Tribes were tolerant of others outside

their centers that weren't like them, even those they didn't like. Tribes had a tremendous knowledge about place and knew how things fitted together. They were proud of their distinctive languages; to each tribe its language was the most beautiful. Someone asked, "How do we begin to develop a bioregional consciousness?" "Individuals can't do it alone," Malcolm replied. "There is a need for community." He went on to say that to we live in an insecure world, whereas back then you knew who you were, knew everyone around you and all about nature.

Brenda Adelman, chairperson for the Russian River Watershed Protection Committee, told us about the (un)health of the Russian River Watershed: "The main focus now is cost effectiveness. Everyone is looking into their pocketbooks. There are people making decisions about the watershed who don't care about its health." She went on to say, "The health of our region is impacted by pressures for growth, urbanization, water diversion, timber harvest, gravel mining, discharges of waste water, and so on." She would like to believe that healing can take place through education. "I came here in the 60s as a spiritualist," she said, "and I'm glad to be back to it here today."

Ron Thelin is a community activist in the San Geronimo Valley Watershed. He gave us guidelines on how to live as a bioregionalist: "Stay in some place a long time; get to know the place and people. Like marriage," he said, "it takes a lot of work to do this. We're a transient society. Decide where you want to live and stay there." He cited the need for people to be involved in the planning of their communities. "I wrote a preface to our community plan," he said, "that introduced language of place. It was acceptable to the county planners and became a document, a governing law. Find ways to work with government, find the language, but don't compromise your principles."

The Future of Bioregionalism was about education, education, education. George McKinley with Sierra Institute in Ashland, Oregon, admonished us to push boundaries when we educate instead of reinforcing the status quo. He takes students to Death Valley and

other places to experience the diversity of life in these communities. "We even went to tourist spots," he said, "to see how our perception of nature is forced upon us."



JOHN DAVIES

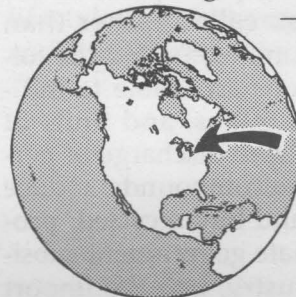
The workshops that were offered were rife with "How-tos." How to create a living space for yourself and others. How to grow your own food. How to set up an alternative money system. How to get into your own bioregional business. How to build community where you live. How to form a Council of All Beings. In the closing moments of the gathering, Robert Mendoza and Starhawk led a discussion on "The Challenges to the Bioregional Movement." Many crowded in around the campfire to listen to what Robert had to say: the social gap between rich and poor; over reliance upon master thinkers; the need to include people of color, poor people, the homeless in the circle; issues of democracy, equality and justice.

The organizers of the gathering had set the stage: the Town Square—a place where people congregated around a community announcement wall, the exhibit tables, the registration table, and two wine and cheese receptions.

Nature also set the stage with a mixture of

old growth and secondary growth redwoods, among which tent cabins with outdoor decks were spread. It all had the semblance of a real village. Austin Creek winding flatly through gravel in places showed the scars of four-wheel-drive trucks, but there was deep pooling in other places, enough even to invite a midnight swim.

—by Gena VanCamp & Bob Glotzbach



## ON THE WATERSHED: The Sixth Great Lakes Bioregional Congress

Saturday afternoon, August 19, 1995, I sat looking across at the Sixth Great Lakes Bioregional Congress held on Snake Island in Toronto Harbor. Bemused and delighted by the snug festival quality of the gathering as viewed over the bow of a moored power boat, I admired the soaring green meeting tent, its apex open to the sky. Pitching it was a piece of community choreography requiring over three hours. Elsewhere a scalloped awning or two, a blue tarp over the bookstore, a multipurpose yellow tarp festooned with pennants in the colors of the four directions (red, yellow, black, and blue), these shelters all guyed to willows, cottonwoods, white pines. The white roof of the cook tent where chef Lauren Boyington was, with the help of congress crews, producing her fabulous vegetarian delicacies, held pride of place near the water's edge. Trim nylon beehive shaped tents dotted the site like mushrooms after a rain. From afar I watched old friends and interesting others moseying relaxed through the little gathering, chatting and exploring.

Strolling on the farther shore I chanced on an au courant collective endeavor, "the turning of the solar panels ceremony." At the base of the footbridge leading across to Snake Island the site committee had located a solar power trailer to extract juice from the sun for the congress computer, and for a TV-VCR that congress organizer Chris Lowry had brought from the city in his canoe. The solar trailer, with its panels and batteries weighed about 1,600 pounds more than your average sunflower and so required the muscle of about four stalwarts to effect its heliotropism. Throughout the congress, which aspired to create a timeless human lifeway, were those judicious soupcons of high tech. When the sun went down it was dark on Snake Island, except for the Coleman lantern on the cook tent, the cool blue eye of the television screen flickering its videos and, of course, the ambient light from the dazzling city beyond.

Bioregional Congresses have been described as "ceremonial villages" and that was especially the case in Snake Island. The site committee gave us a taste of the bioregional good life on that logistical-nightmare-become Avalon: pretty good weather—no rain, no cold snaps; swarms of stinging insects which mysteriously forebore from attack. Using only a megaphone for public address.

The Great Lakes Bioregional Congress has been meeting irregularly since 1983. Northern Michiganian Phil Thiel, inspired by hearing Ozarks bioregionalist messiah David Haenke speak, in 1981 at a peace and ecology center in Traverse City, became a principle organizer of the first GLBC. By 1985, transplanted from San Francisco to Northern Michigan, I joined with Thiel and others from up- and down-state to organize the second GLBC. In 1991 GLBC awoke from a coma thanks to Michiganian Fred Fuller, Chicagoan Beatrice Briggs, myself and many others.

Resolutions from past GLBCs were as big as the problems of the basin. In 1983, for example, the Committee on Environmental




Protection issued a resolution addressing nuclear energy, chemical contamination, chemical agriculture, and ecosystem damage caused by "erosion, mining, wetland drainage, damming, water diversion, clearcutting, oil exploration and production, irrigation, urban development, chemical pollution and high or low-frequency electromagnetic waves..."

In 1985 it was modestly resolved that, "The primary goal of the GLBC is to facilitate the healing of the planet."


At the 1991 Congress (whose venue was a camp near Hell, Michigan), participants in the Air and Water Zones (so called rather than using the retro term committee) "noted the following examples of actions accessible to individuals, families, communities, and units of government at all levels: zero discharge of persistent toxins and chlorine compounds; reduce reuse, recycle, compost and buy recycled; promote mass transit; eliminate government subsidization of the auto industry; ban the import and export of products illegal or unwanted in the Great Lakes Bioregion." Free Trade, you see, is not on the list of bioregional desiderata. Evolutionary strategies for local self-reliance surely are, though, and the behavior to effect them.

The last two congresses, both urban, demonstrated through their field trips especially what urban bioregionalists are for. Whereas the previous four GLBCs were held in rural Michigan and attracted back-to-the-landers, nuke busters, organic farmers and rusticated hippies and concerned themselves somewhat more with what bioregionalists regard as threats. Some of these folks were inclined to regard cities themselves as threats. Now cities seem to be where people self-consciously bioregionalists are the most numerous. At GLBC '95, the largest single contingent from outside Ontario come from the Wild Onion Bioregion. (The word Chicago is derived from the Pottawatomi for stinking wild onion, which plant once abounded where the Windy City stands.) Wild Onionites had hosted the historic 1993 congress, first ever held in a city. Green City may be the turn the movement has to take. Or maybe these are fairly select events. At any rate, a great deal of responsibility falls on the shoulders of urban bioregionalists, for unless cities can become materially self-reliant, the rape of the hinterlands will continue.

This was the first GLBC hosted by Canadians, specifically the Toronto-based Oak Ridges Bioregional Alliance whose mandate was "to strengthen the community-based movement for the ecological restoration and ongoing care of the Oak Ridges Bioregion, and



# GREAT LAKES BIOREGIONAL CONGRESS '95



to promote the identity of residents with their home place."

The practice of such a mandate was suggested by the subjects of some of the workshops convened at the congress, and the field trips that launched it: Mapping Home, Migrant Birds Over the Lake, The Natural History of the Toronto Islands, a trifurcated field trip to the Don River and its restoration sites including the Chester Springs Marsh, "a wetland reconstruction project in full swing," and the Riverdale Meadow community garden, "a thriving permaculture fruit and vegetable garden... planned and planted almost entirely by volunteers." Other workshops dealt with housing innovations, writing about our places, consensus decision-making, community, and "spare parenting."

In the ceremonial villages of bioregionalism, community "as living together in place" is of paramount concern. As Alice Kidd, a Torontonian long since naturalized to British Columbia, where she lived for years in a "secular, scientific" intentional community, declared: "Human beings as individuals are not the basic unit that adapts to the environment. Community mediates between individual and environment." It's impossible to go this alone.

In the community workshop, Pat Lawson, an elder in a dashing rose colored sombrero, talked about some difficulties of community building projects she's essayed: a group house for the elderly in Port Hope, her desire to use the family name and lands for ecological center. "There are lots of farming families up and down the watershed," she said. The moment is now, she felt to create a spiritual awakening to the need for humans to integrate themselves with nature. Yet, "It really seems a very hard thing to do...I don't know how many genera-

tions it's going to take."

Hauntingly beautiful Sobi, younger than not, already has explored community in various shapes and forms, from anarchist squatting to a schoolhouse in Nova Scotia. "This exploration," he said, "has led to greater questions, such as 'Who does community serve?' I find that every day it brings me spiritual food. It's the only thing that gives me hope."

Sunday morning the numerous representatives of the Oak Ridges Bioregion reported to the plenary by doing that trick of splitting blades of grass to whistle. They squalled, squealed, squeaked and were adequately raucous. Then they encircled their spokesperson, holding hands, facing outwards. It was reported that they plan to meet again at the equinoxes, not just for socializing, but to strategize upcoming events such as another gathering.

Other, less heavily represented vicinities—the North Shore of Georgian Bay, Peterborough, Guelph-Kitchener-Waterloo, Haliburton, The Wild Onion, the Thumb (of Michigan's Lower Peninsula) and even the Hudson Estuary (which washes Manhattan's shores)—also reported their plans for further organizing and environmental action.

Many persons expressed gratitude for this opportunity to go barefoot for a while with "emphatic, aware" people; they appreciated the child-friendliness of the event, wished for a little more quiet time, "a greater range of skin tones," and a safe water supply. "My intestinal flora was really revamped," said one fellow (and with the toilets a brisk hike away, this was no trifling concern).

The talking stick traveled around the circles for the last time: The camp cleanup was organized. A circle dance ringed the newly-proclaimed elders, Torontonians Whitney Smith and Chris Lowry. The dancers spiraled outwards. Holding hands, half-singing, half chanting "We are a circle that has no ending and no beginning." As the procession uncurled itself, everyone had a chance to clasp eyes and smiles with everyone else, the human skein trailing gently off towards lunch (and towards the last chance for a solar shower, sex-segregated by default: a dozen men stripped pinkly naked luxuriate in the spray). A faint chorus of "Singin' in the Rain" rose from the glistening melee. Gaggles of people conversed, addressed yet unfinished interpersonal business, packed tents and equipment, dashed for the ferry to Toronto, to the farther reaches of home, and to the real work awaiting them there.

—Stephanie Mills

Another version of this report appeared in *NOW* magazine, Toronto, Ontario, September 14, 1995. [see p. 18 for a review of S. Mills' latest book]

## Discovering Your Life-Place: A FIRST BIOREGIONAL WORKBOOK

is now available!

Have you ever had a hard time explaining bioregionalism to others? Have no fear. Planet Drum Foundation has just published **Discovering Your Life-Place**.

This **Bioregional Workbook** is based on interactive workshops that Peter Berg has led for over 15 years with thousands of participants at community forums, schools, and universities. In a light-hearted, story-telling fashion, the workbook teaches about bioregionalism and leads the reader through a practical map-making exercise.

It allows everyone to realize their relationships with local natural systems and makes understanding environmental issues and natural sciences tangible, real and exciting. The workbook is perfect for all classrooms—kindergarten through adult education.

For one workbook send \$10 (Planet Drum members send only \$7.50) plus \$2 shipping and handling to: Planet Drum Books, P.O. Box 31251, San Francisco, CA 94131, Shasta Bioregion, USA. Contact us for larger orders.

## MEMBERSHIP

Planet Drum was founded in 1974 to provide an effective grassroots approach to ecology that emphasizes sustainability, community self-determination and regional self-reliance. In association with community activists and ecologists, Planet Drum developed the concept of a bioregion: a distinct area with coherent and interconnected plant and animal communities, often defined by a watershed and by the ideas that have developed about how to live in that place. A number of individuals and communities have adopted bioregional stances—they have "reinhhabited" their regions, they have chosen to "live-in-place" with the intent to restore, preserve and sustain their place in the biosphere. How about you?

### Planet Drum Foundation

P.O. Box 31251  
San Francisco, CA 94131  
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**Become a member** of Planet Drum Foundation. Membership includes two issues of *Raise the Stakes*, at least one bonus publication, a 25% discount on all our books and bundles and access to our networking and workshop facilities.

**Help build a bioregional group** in your area. We can help by sending a list of Planet Drum members there. To introduce your friends to bioregional ideas, send us their names and we'll forward a complimentary issue of *Raise the Stakes*. Send us ten names and we'll mail you a copy of *Reinhhabiting a Separate Country* for your effort.

**Send a report** from your region to *Raise the Stakes*, for publication in the Circles of Correspondence section.



# WEAVING ALLIANCES

Raise the Stakes #24 is a Bioregional Directory & Map that contains more than 200 listings. Since it was published, we have received changes, corrections and new listings. This Weaving Alliances section of Raise the Stakes will continue to update the directory. If you would like to be listed in the next Weaving Alliances and included on the complete bioregional directory database, write or call us and request a "Bioregional Questionnaire." We are trying to keep the database of the directory as accurate as possible. PLEASE LET US KNOW IF YOU WANT TO CORRECT YOUR LISTING OR CHANGE YOUR ADDRESS. The database is available on a Filemaker Pro disk for \$15 including postage and handling (CA residents add \$1.11 sales tax).

## CHANGES/CORRECTIONS:

**FRIENDS OF SANTA MONICA MOUNTAINS AND SEASHORE**  
SUE NELSON/CONTACT  
Box 123, 115 S. Topanga Canyon Blvd.  
Topanga, CA 90240  
(213)250-3233 • fax (213)250-5840  
RTS24 LISTING #20

**THE GEONOMY SOCIETY**  
GARY FLO/CONTACT  
30401 Navarro Ridge Road  
Albion, CA 95410  
RTS24 LISTING #22

**PLANET DRUM FOUNDATION**  
PETER BERG & JUDY GOLDHAFT/CONTACTS  
P.O. Box 31251  
San Francisco, CA 94131  
(415)285-6556 • fax (415)285-6563  
email: planetdrum@igc.apc.org  
Membership/subscription rates \$25/year in N. America; \$30/year outside N. America.  
RTS24 LISTING #39

**SANTA CRUZ BIOREGIONAL INSTITUTE**  
FRED MCPHERSON/CONTACT  
P.O. Box 544  
Boulder Creek, CA 95006  
(408) 338-2097  
RTS24 LISTING #47

**KIVAKI PRESS**  
GREG CUMBERFORD/CONTACT  
585 E. 31st Street  
Durango, CO 81301  
(970) 385-1767 • fax (970) 385-1974  
email: kivaki@frontier.net  
RTS24 LISTING #95

**WAY OF THE MOUNTAIN CENTER**  
DOLORES LACHAPPELLE/CONTACT  
P.O. Box 542  
Silverton, CO 81433  
(970) 387-5729  
RTS24 LISTING #98

**Mesechabe**  
DENNIS FORMENTO/CONTACT  
1539 Crete Street  
New Orleans, LA 70119  
(504) 944-4823  
RTS24 LISTING #140P

CHRISTINA A. SNYDER  
2838 Indianola Avenue  
Columbus, OH 43202  
RTS24 LISTING #160

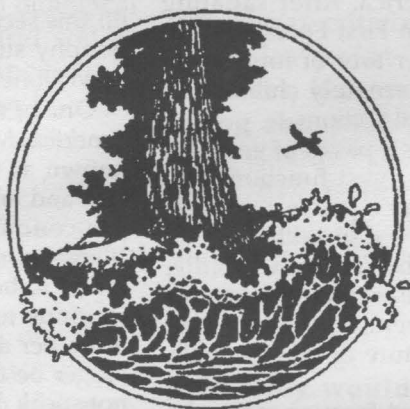
**GULF OF MAINE BOOKS**  
GARY LAWLESS & BETH LEONARD/CONTACTS  
134 Maine Street  
Brunswick, ME 04011  
(207) 729-5083  
RTS24 LISTING #209

**HARMONIOUS EARTH RESEARCH**  
MARIANNE SCOTT/CONTACT  
45 Kahele Street  
Kihei, HI 96753  
(808) 879-0930  
RTS24 LISTING # 232

## NEW LISTINGS: GROUPS

### Pacific Coast ( SF Bay Bioregion)

**ECOLOGY CENTER**  
INFORMATION COORDINATOR/CONTACT  
2523 San Pablo Ave.  
Berkeley, CA 94702  
(510) 548-2220  
An ecological nonprofit membership organization that began in 1969, the Ecology Center maintains a library, bookstore, recycling facility, farmer's market and provides classes. Interns and volunteers may earn membership fees (\$35/year in US, \$35/year in Canada and Mexico).  
**Terrain**  
same address and phone number  
email: ecologycntr@igc.apc.org  
This tabloid format newsletter provides ecological and environmental justice news and features. Complex ideas are rendered in an understandable way and no topics are taboo.  
MONTHLY—\$25/YEAR.



### Pacific Coast (Cascadia Bioregion/Klamath)

**NORTHCOAST ENVIRONMENTAL CENTER**  
TIM MCKAY, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR; CONNIE STEWART, OFFICE MANAGER; SID DOMINIZ, EDITOR./CONTACTS  
879 Ninth Street  
Arcata, CA 95521  
(707) 822-6918 • fax (707) 822-0827  
email: nec@igc.apc.org  
Since 1971 the Northcoast Environmental Center has focused on the environmental quality of NW California. Its accomplishments include expansion and protection of National Parks, Wilderness areas, Wild and Scenic Rivers, and ancient forest ecosystems; a highly successful community recycling program; pioneering "Adopt-a-Beach" cleanups; and local landscaping and revegetation. The Center provides a library, educational publications, and a phone "information clearinghouse" for meetings, outings, speakers, and contacts. Their Eonews Report is a public affairs discussion and roundup of local and international events that airs on the local public radio station KHSU-FM.  
**Eonews**  
A tabloid format newsletter that provides a forum for local concerns as well as national and global environmental issues.  
MONTHLY—WITH MEMBERSHIP \$20/YEAR, \$15/YEAR, STUDENTS & SENIORS.

### Pacific Coast (Coastal Redwood Bioregion)

**FOSSIL FUELS POLICY ACTION INSTITUTE/ALLIANCE FOR A PAVING MORATORIUM**  
JAN LUNDBERG & RANDALL GENT/CONTACT  
P.O. Box 4347, Arcata, CA 95518  
(707) 826-7775  
Fossil Fuels Action coordinates the Alliance and publishes *Auto-Free Times*, a biannual magazine and *Road Fighters' Alerts* which are bimonthly. Both publications are free with membership—\$30/year

regular, \$15/year students, seniors.  
The Alliance for a Paving Moratorium (APM) includes 120 groups and businesses across the continent. APM's goals are to stop the advance of new roads and parking lots while promoting alternatives to pavement, motor vehicles and roads for clearcutting forests. APM promotes depaving projects, "critical mass" bike rides, and sustainable culture through education, road-fighting, consulting, publishing, and advocacy for native peoples' sustainable traditions.

### Pacific Mountains (Shasta Bioregion)

**YUBA WATERSHED INSTITUTE**  
BOB ERICKSON/CONTACT  
17790 Tyler Foote Road  
Nevada City, CA 95959  
(916)478-0817  
The Yuba Watershed Institute is a citizen's group concerned with the sustainable use of natural resources and protection of the biological diversity of the Yuba River watershed. They work with the U.S. Bureau of Land Management and the Timberframers Guild of North America on the cooperative management of 2000 acres of forest land.  
Membership is \$25./year, \$15./year low income.  
**Tree Rings**  
TREE RINGS contains articles on watershed natural history, ecology, and matters of current interest.  
Occasional publication—with membership.

### Basin and Range

**Environmental Action Report**  
BELLE STARR/CONTACT  
P.O. Box 1535  
Cottonwood, AZ 86326  
A sixty second eco-radio show with a weekly theme that appears five times a week. They are working toward national syndication.

### Rocky Mountains (Bitterroot's Mind on Clark's Fork of the Columbia)

STEVEN R. HOLLOWAY & ROGER DUNSMORE  
232 S. Sixth Street E.  
Missoula, MT 59812  
email: oikos@selway.umd.edu  
They have occasional meetings, poetry readings and discussions. Among their publications are various books by Roger and maps by Steven.

### Great Plains (Upper Blackland Bioregion/Crosstimbers)

**CROSTIMBERS (OAK HICKORY FOREST)**  
ALICIA COTILLA & KEVIN MOGUL/CONTACTS  
7404 Bolo Lane  
Flower Mound, TX 75028  
(817) 430-8426  
A very new group forming around the idea of permaculture and instilling a strong sense of place in people of all ages. Hoping to produce a book about the crosstimbers area for children.

### Great Lakes ( Calumet Bioregion)

**LAKE CALUMET STUDY COMMITTEE**  
JAMES E. LANDING/CONTACT  
1007 W. Harrison Street (mc/183)  
Chicago, IL 60607  
(312) 996-3118 • fax (312) 431-8559  
email: u14609@uic.edu  
Covers a broad spectrum of involvement in SE Chicago and adjacent suburbs, including the Lake Calumet National Ecological Park and the corridors and communities around it.

### Atlantic Mountains (Katuah Bioregion)

**ELFIN PERMACULTURE/YANKEE PERMACULTURE**  
DAN AND CYNTHIA BAXTER HEMENWAY/CONTACT

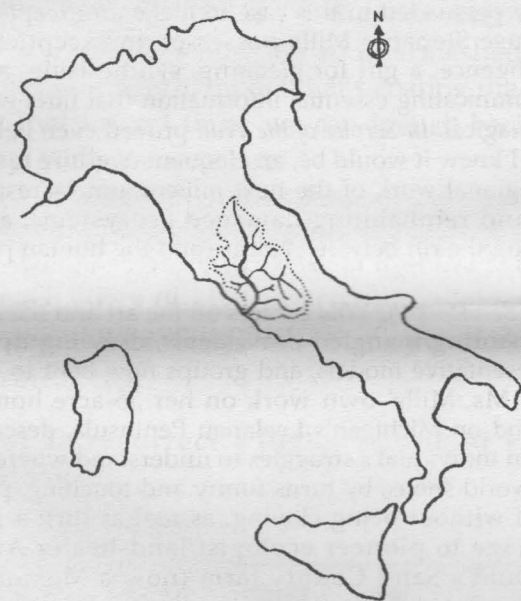
P.O. Box 672  
Dahlonega, GA 30533  
Elfin Permaculture provides lectures, workshops, direct and correspondence courses, advanced training, consulting and permaculture design. Yankee Permaculture publishes books, journals and pamphlets and distributes key resources (books and pamphlets) that are difficult to obtain elsewhere. **Robin Newsletter** is a medium for the continuing evolution of permaculture philosophy, and also serves as a bulletin board for the activities of environmental groups. *Elfin permaculture and Forest Ecosystems Rescue Network*.  
Other publications include a directory, **The Resources of International Permaculture**, **The International Permaculture Species Yearbook**, many pamphlets, etc. Write for more detailed information.

### Atlantic Mountains (Central Appalachian Piedmont)

**LIVING EDUCATION CENTER FOR ECOLOGY & THE ARTS**  
ERNIE REED/CONTACT  
P.O. Box 2616  
Charlottesville, VA 22902  
(804)971-1647  
They create community-based education programs with projects that promote preservation, restoration, community education and service, and long term sustainability. The programs are available for high school students and current topics are presented through interdisciplinary and experiential approaches.

### Europe (Bioregione Valle del Tevere)

**GAIA**  
JACQUELINE FASSERO AND STEFANO PANZARASA  
c.p. 109, 00018 Palombara Sabina, RM Italy  
(39) 774-634303  
They are involved with promoting culture, ecological restoration, education and information.  
**Gaia Newsletter**  
IRREGULAR PUBLICATION.



## INDIVIDUAL

### Mississippi River Valley (Lower Mississippi River Valley)

DAN EARLE  
2216 Brightside Drive  
Baton Rouge, LA 70820  
(504)763-6337 • fax (504)388-1418  
email: earle@aol.com  
He teaches a yearly "Reading the Landscape" class at Louisiana State University.



SHAFI HAKIM

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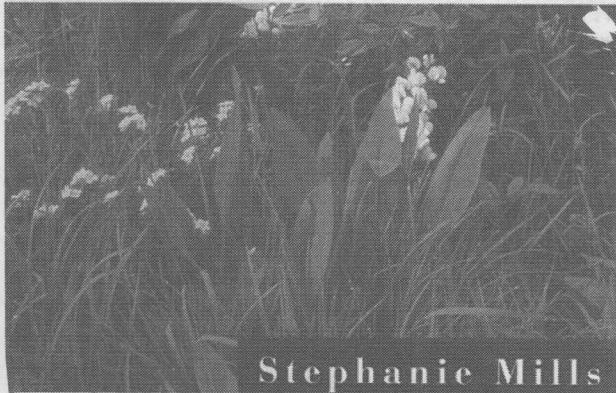
EDITING NOTES FROM DAVID GRAVES: I wish particularly to recognize and express my appreciation to Jean Lindgren, Lucila Orengo, and Carli Schultz for the volunteer time they put in at the computer copying and editing texts. And also do the same to the Planet Drum staff in general for their seemingly boundless patience with me while finding my way around the Planet Drum office for the first time.





## In Service of the Wild

Restoring and Reinhabiting Damaged Land



Stephanie Mills

### IN SERVICE OF THE WILD: RESTORING AND REINHABITING DAMAGED LAND

by Stephanie Mills, Beacon Press, 1995, 25 Beacon St., Boston, MA 02108 \$23

Stephanie Mills is a friend of mine — not closest, alas, but among the dearest — and though it's my usual policy never to review friends' books, I was easily persuaded in this case to make an exception, because Stephanie Mills possesses an exceptional intelligence, a gift for gleaning, synthesizing, and communicating essential information that flirts with the magical. *In Service of the Wild* proved even better than I knew it would be, an eloquent overture to the bioregional work of the next millennium — restoring and reinhabiting damaged ecosystems, and healing the rift between Nature and the human psyche.

*In Service of the Wild* centers on the art and science of restoring mangled ecosystems, drawing upon representative models, and groups now bent to the task: Ms. Mills' own work on her 35-acre home-ground on Michigan's Leelanau Peninsula, describing an individual's struggles to understand where in the world she is, by turns funny and touching, personal without being cloying, as real as dirt; a pilgrimage to pioneer ecologist/land-healer Aldo Leopold's Sand County farm (now a Memorial Reserve); a trip to the University of Wisconsin Arboretum, home base of the Society for Ecological Restoration; a visit to the Chicago environs' North Branch Prairie Restoration Project and its urban/suburban eco-volunteers; a stay with the reinhabilitas of the Mattole River watershed, perhaps the prime bioregional example of ecological restoration as a community/cultural practice; and finally a trek to Auroville, an intentional "utopian" city being built on desert in South India, where restorative "greenwork" is the evolutionary means to become "a city the Earth needs."

This discerning survey of recent and current restoration models is worth the price of admission, but the true power of *In Service to the Wild* resides in the clarity of mind and emotion that Stephanie Mills brings to work, from the obvious erudition underlying the careful delineations and subtle distinctions among various restoration philosophies to her amazingly graceful ability to get to the heart of the matter. Consider, for instance, this quote she elicits from Mahant-ji, who is working to cleanse the Ganges River of infectious waste and other pollutants: "The cohesive force in the world is love and commitment — the only cohesive force between all of us is this...That is what we should be living for on this Earth, otherwise there is no need to be living on this Earth." Taking Mahant-ji's point home later in the book, in a grand argument for "a return of crazy love between...humans of all ages and places; between humans and soil and everything that arises therefrom", Stephanie Mills concludes, "Let the love and commitment between beings be part of this great healing, and purify us of cynicism. If only we can dare to belong to one another, and to our land."

*In Service of the Wild* takes that dare as its task, and delivers a coherence that is both inspiring and consoling. It should be welcome reading for any aspiring Mighty Rootin' Dirt Ranger, and a bioregional bookshelf without it would seem vacant indeed.

—Jim Dodge

### RESTORATION FORESTRY: AN INTERNATIONAL GUIDE TO SUSTAINABLE FORESTRY PRACTICES

Michael Pilarski, Kivaki Press, 1994, Durango, Colorado \$26.95

*Restoration Forestry* brings together the writings of most of the key practitioners and theorists of sustainable forestry inside one paperback binding, like a super burrito of good forestry. Edited by veteran forest activist Michael Pilarski, this compendium covers the why and how-to of ecologically sound forestry and is packed full of essays, book reviews, contact lists, synopses of what various groups are doing, and even a list of university forestry programs for those who are inspired to go into cerebral depth on the subject.

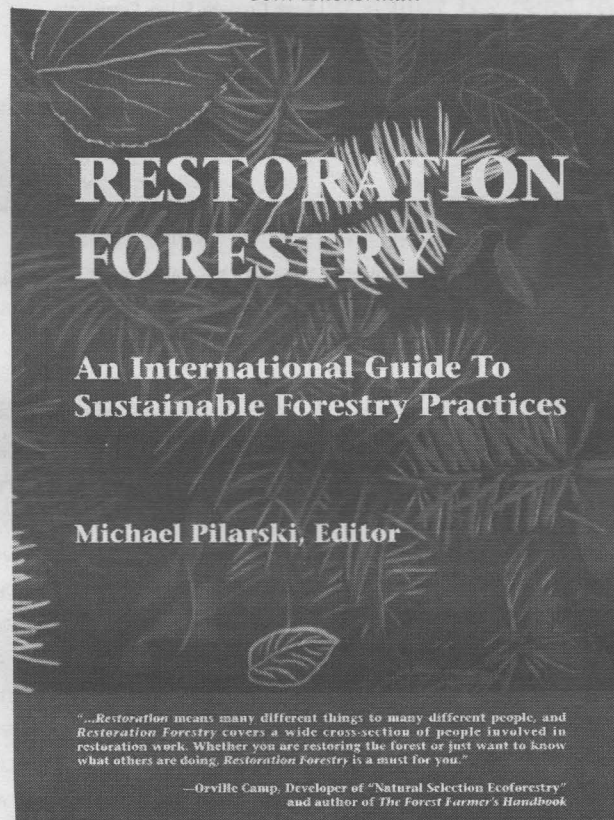
Like the *Whole Earth Catalog*, this is less a book to read cover to cover than a volume to browse and sample. It's easy to start off reading about forest ecology, then flip a couple of hundred pages and check out the excellent section on Native American interactions with the forest. Along the way you might be distracted by the directories of forestry organizations, government agencies, and periodicals, or get lost in a reverie about the hardwood forests of eastern North America. After satiating your curiosity in the section on First Foresters, you could take a chapter-by-chapter tour of forestry on various continents, feeling alternately chilled and sweaty in the boreal and tropical sections.

*Restoration Forestry* also packs a passel of gee whiz ecology stories about how the forest functions as a whole system, like Chris Maser's paean to mouse poop or Dave Perry's tale of how a sprinkling of forest soil made the difference between the conifer seedlings that survived on a clearcut and those that perished. These nuggets enliven the book and tie the abstract theories into a picture of what actually goes on among the trees.

Because this book is compiled from so many different sources—many of whom have learned from each other and are colleagues and allies—there is a certain amount of repetition, which is inconvenient but not annoying. The sameness of the graphics are a bigger problem, as readers could use more visual signposts to help them navigate through this 525 page book. Most essays—even the one about eastern hardwoods—are introduced with a drawing of what appears to be a spruce cone at the end of a twig. Optical diversity, like biodiversity, is key to health and productivity.

These flaws notwithstanding, it's a very worthwhile book. There's enough basic explanation to bring the lay person up to speed, and enough resource directories to keep even the most ambitious networkers busy and well-connected for years to come. It's a valuable toolbox for people who want to become informed enough to seize the chainsaws and chokers and commit forestry that does right by the land.

—Seth Zuckerman



### THE WAY OF THE EARTH: ENCOUNTERS WITH NATURE IN ANCIENT AND CONTEMPORARY THOUGHT.

T.C. McLuhan, Simon and Schuster, 1994, 1230 Avenue of the Americas, N.Y., NY 10020. \$30, \$38 in Canada.

*The Way of the Earth* explores myths, art, writings, and stories of the earth and humanity's relation to it on several different continents. McLuhan gathers her information from Japan, Australia, North America, South America, Africa, and Greece, and puts together a collection of lore extending from earliest times to a few years ago.

Starting in aboriginal Australia, she describes the links between people and the land, the sky, and the spirit that survives within the earth itself. The other-world, found by shamans and spirit workers, is known to aborigines as The Dreaming, which gives "meaning to life, bestowing upon it depth and resonance through memory. It gave order to the world and laid down the Way for humans." The aboriginal people relate to their continent in the most intimate of ways. The land owns them and they can converse with it through dance and ritual ceremony. The arrival of English prisoners to Australia and consequent attacks on the aborigines, starting with seizing and later industrializing the land through to the tourist trade today, has severely hurt the aborigines' ancient relationship. For example, what was sacred and guarded by men or women and reserved for each gender is now swarmed over by tourists of both sexes.

In the section titled "Japan," emphasis is given to native gardens and the peaceful settings that Japanese create in the most industrialized country in the world, as well as the myths and stories connecting Japanese people with mountains such as Mt. Fuji. The words of artists, writers and craftspersons fill this section, and much space is given to the philosophy surrounding the tea ceremony and the tea bowl alone.

One of the most interesting sections covers South America. McLuhan zooms in on a group of people known as the Kogi who live on an isolated mountain and are the most complete surviving culture of pre-conquest America. In 1990, they broke their silence of many centuries by choosing a British historian to be an intermediary. They stated that if we continue to blast our way through Mother Earth, to mine her and treat her with disrespect, she will no longer be fertile for us. The Kogi say that they will not speak on this subject again.

*The Way of the Earth* is an enormously good book for those interested in the profound relationship humankind has had with the earth from the beginning, and how all around the world, throughout time, this relationship, in its most pure and just sense, has been similar for our species.

—Carli Schultz

### LISTENING TO THE LAND.

Derrick Jensen, Sierra Club Books, 730 Polk Street, San Francisco, CA 94109, \$15

"We are members of the most destructive culture ever to exist. Our assault on the natural world, on indigenous and other cultures, on women, on children, on all of us through the possibility of nuclear suicide and other means—all of which are unprecedented in magnitude and ferocity. Why do we act as we do?" Derrick Jensen pondered. In search for answers, he interviewed some of our most profound contemporary thinkers, including environmentalists Dave Foreman and Peter Berg, feminists Charlene Spretnak and Susan Griffin, theologians Thomas Berry and Matthew Fox, and many others, including Jerry Mander, Jeannette Armstrong, and Paul Shepard. Jensen has compiled these dynamic conversations into a provocative book, which he describes as a way of searching for rocks to fill the different shaped spaces in the wall of knowledge. Each of us holds this knowledge in our bodies, which comes from appropriate forms of relationships with self, other humans, work, technology, eros, time, and nature. *Listening to the Land* contains gems of knowledge for everyone.

Whether you use them to fill in a few gaps in an already well established wall of knowledge or as the foundation to build a new wall, you will benefit greatly from reading at least some of the dialogues in this book.

As Thomas Berry said, "The Universe is composed of subjects to be communed with, not with objects to be exploited. Everything has its own voice. Somehow we have become autistic. We don't hear the voices." Now, let us all listen to the land.

—Hitomi Maeda

### FULL HOUSE: REASSESSING THE EARTH'S POPULATION CARRYING CAPACITY

Lester R. Brown and Hal Kane, Norton, 1994, New York, \$8.95, \$11.99 in Canada

Another book on population? More doom and gloom? Haven't we been hearing all of this since Paul Ehrlich's 1960 *The Population Bomb*?

True, the gloom has gotten gloomier and the doom now shadows dreams of spoiling our grandchildren (a humane parent's only form of revenge). No, we haven't heard it all. Thirty five years have passed since 1960, the bomb has exploded and the world is entering a new era.

In *Full House*, the fourth volume of the Worldwatch Environmental Alert series from the



Worldwatch Institute, authors Lester R. Brown and Hal Kane talk about food. They outline the causes of a future of scarcity and hunger and offer some solutions from a shrinking arsenal of options.

For the last four decades, from 1950 through the 80's, the world's food supply grew dramatically. Grain production increased 40% per person worldwide and the fish catch doubled. If there was hunger anywhere, the problem was with distribution, not supply.

In recent years these gains have dropped precipitously while population has continued to soar. While grain production grew at a rate of three percent annually from 1950 to 1984, it has only grown at a rate of one percent a year for the past ten years. The fish catch, which reached 100 million tons in 1989, has dropped off significantly due to limits imposed by nature. All 17 of the world's major oceanic fisheries are now being fished at or beyond their capacity. The world's range lands are in a similar state with overgrazing being the rule rather than the exception. With range lands and fisheries in decline, the world must look to farmers to meet the needs of the 95 million people being added to its population each year.

In this scrupulously documented volume, the authors outline six new constraints that are hindering farmers, ranchers and fishers in their efforts to meet this growing need for food:

- ❖ The inventory of new technologies is shrinking.
- ❖ The world's fisheries and range lands have reached their natural limits.
- ❖ Aquifers are depleted. Water is being diverted to new industries and to expand urban centers.
- ❖ In many countries, the use of increasing amounts of fertilizer has little or no effect because available plant varieties no longer respond to increased fertilization.
- ❖ New industries in developing countries are taking crop land out of production.
- ❖ Social disintegration, fed by rapid population growth, hinders government efforts to increase food production.

*Full House* suggests that this pattern can only be broken by a total reassessment of population policy. Otherwise we must face the reality that to feed everybody, everyone will have to eat less. It falls upon family planners, not farmers, to achieve the needed balance between food and people. Brown and Kane challenge world leaders to build an environmentally sustainable economic system. They offer a global food and population strategy and outline a budget to carry it out. Their plan includes not only filling the family planning gap, but also addressing the underlying causes of overpopulation through raising the level of female education and pressing for equal rights for women in all societies.

The recent population conference in Cairo demonstrated some of the problems facing many countries in their search for a rational balance between the limits of nature and the constraints imposed upon them by religion and tradition. Along with the authors, we can only hope that "societies facing food scarcity may realize the importance of slowing population growth...before nature takes the responsibility for doing so."

—S. Dog

#### FOLLOW THE DIRT ROAD: AN INTRODUCTION TO INTENTIONAL COMMUNITIES IN THE 1990's.

Monique Gauthier and Daniel Greenberg, 1992, 1 Evergreen Court, Landenberg, PA 19350-9389, \$28

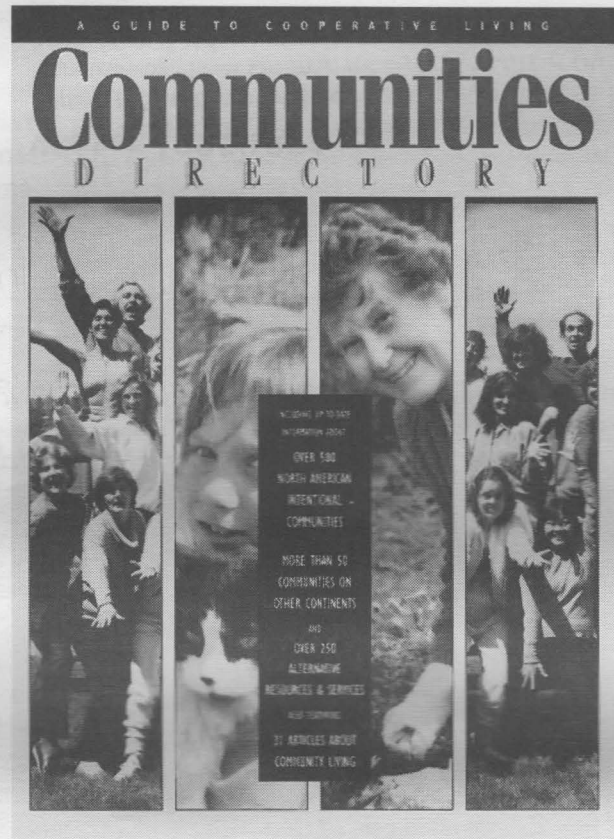
This insider's look at intentional communities across North America interviews both young and older members of various groups and scholars from the Center for Communal Studies, University of Southern Indiana studying the history, philosophies, and practices of a wide variety of group living institutions. Beginning with attempts at general definitions and a brief historical perspective (noting the gradual shift, since the '60s, to an older adult population and greater "family scene"), the video proceeds to touch upon characteristics of different community setups, including various religious and secular bases: Native American, Christian, social service, appropriate technology, organic farming; sharing of resources; cooperative trades and businesses; schooling and care giving; decision-making processes; and group dynamics.

Community members seem especially concerned with contrasting the media's and wider public's often negative perceptions and stereotypes of intentional communities as "cults" made up of drug users and/or isolationists with their day-to-day lived experiences. They emphasize the non-materialistic, cooperative spirit inherent in most communities, viewed as a positive departure from the individualism of modern industrial society.

The narrator notes that although an estimated 3,000 to 4,000 intentional communities exist in the United States, easily accessible information exists on only 300 to 400 of them. Greater attempts should be made to network among communities and to reach out to an often interested but ignorant public.

(Communities represented include: Sandhill Farm, MO; 100 Mile House, British Columbia; Shannon Farm, VA; East Wind Community, NC; The Builders, UT and NV; Lama Foundation, NM; The Farm, TN; The Mariposa Group, CA; Sunrise Ranch, CO; Pandamaram Settlement, IN; Stelle Community, IL; Community for Creative Non-Violence, Washington D.C.)

—Kari Norberg Carter



#### COMMUNITIES DIRECTORY: A GUIDE TO COOPERATIVE LIVING.

Fellowship for Intentional Community, Langley, WA, \$23 from Communities Magazine, Rt 4, Box 169-P, Louisa, VA 23093.

This volume is impressive—both in scope and function—providing a wealth of current listings and information on intentional communities. While focusing on North America, it also contains a respectable number of international entries; and while the editors admit that a large number of established communities declined to be listed, the result suggests few stones were returned in their quest for thoroughness. From a caveat in the "Introduction" section noting that all listings are self-descriptions (many of them unverified) to a keyword index locating communities and groups based on their listed values, practices, and other characteristics, the directory is carefully crafted and easy to use.

In the introduction to this guide, the editors identify a growing interest in intentional community, evidenced by the increase in inquiries received, larger attendance at gatherings, waiting lists for space in established communities, and a mushrooming number of co-housing groups. It begins with a variety of informative essays and articles relating to philosophical reflections on community and the evolution of community cultures. Next come ideas on finding and building a successful community and perspectives of different community types, including religious, urban, ecological, and co-housing. A section on "Personal Growth" shares views on the contributions of disabled members and on raising and educating children in communities. "Social Action" includes testimonials from communities formed around various social agendas, including mental illness, ecovillages/sustainable neighborhoods, bioregionalism, and co-housing architecture. Another section provides practical guidance on running a community, touching on consensus building, legal concerns, property buying, and financing. The last set of essays looks at communal history, from indigenous peoples to student housing cooperatives. The second half of the directory is devoted to community listings and descriptions, maps showing their locations, charts summarizing their characteristics, listings and descriptions of other helpful resources, and "RRDDLNoR"—the "Renamed, Regrouped, Dead, Disbanded, Lost, & No Replies." (Note: Keeping with the volume's thoroughness, this latter section also includes groups that were still forming at the time of publication and those that

had yet to find a name.) An appendix following the listings assembles a helpful assortment of odds and ends, including a calendar of regularly scheduled events, classified and outreach ads, and information on an intentional community Web page.

—Kari Norberg Carter

#### CLEAN AND GREEN: THE COMPLETE GUIDE TO NONTOXIC AND ENVIRONMENTALLY SAFE HOUSEKEEPING

Annie Berthold-Bond, Ceres Press, 1990, P.O. Box 87, Woodstock, NY 12498, \$8.95

"Looks like you'll be doing a lot of baking," the clerk joked as she rang up the huge amount of baking soda I was purchasing. She did not seem surprised when I told her that all the baking soda was actually for cleaning. Even T.V. commercials tout its benefits. Annie Berthold-Bond's *Clean and Green: The Complete Guide to Nontoxic and Environmentally Safe Housekeeping* certainly does not skip over the many uses of baking soda, but for those of you ready to add to your nontoxic cleaning repertoire, this is the book for you.

Berthold-Bond begins with a well-reasoned case for nontoxic cleaning, and in following chapters provides a variety of formulas for everything from waxing your car to cleaning pewter. She also gives an extensive number of recipes for the cleaners you use most often: bathroom cleaner, furniture polish, and all-purpose cleaners. And I do mean recipes. I was intrigued by the uses of tomatoes, rhubarb, and bread as cleaning agents. Others recommended range from the familiar—borax and vinegar, to the more obscure—zinc oxide and sodium percarbonate. *Clean and Green* will entice you to contemplate cleaning things you didn't realize were in need of attention.

The author almost always provides a couple of different formulas for each job. If one doesn't work, there are other ideas, all presented with such enthusiasm that you can't wait to get started. The weakness of many nontoxic cleaning books and articles is that they do not tell you exactly how to do it. Berthold-Bond directs you to get a spray bottle from the hardware store, fill it with one of her recipes and start polishing furniture with a soft rag. It could not be easier.

Okay, so one thing could be easier. I puzzled over "rottenstone" until I found the somewhat hidden ingredient list toward the back of the book. (Rottenstone is made from crushed up stone and is used as an abrasive.) For the most part, though, she provides good lists that are easy to locate. One of them tells the reader where to find the ingredients she recommends—health food stores, grocery stores or hardware stores. (Berthold-Bond does not mention janitor supply stores, but the recycled surgical rags I have purchased by the pound at such stores make the best dusting and the best window cleaning rags I've ever used. They are lint-free, washable, and last a long time.) She does make many other suggestions about cleaning rags, even saying that she enjoys cleaning more when she uses one particular rag.

Berthold-Bond's discussion of cleaning is definitely not traditional, which is exactly what I want and expect in a nontoxic cleaning book. I liked her section on the uses of house plants to counteract different toxins, and I was pleased that she mentioned the importance of eating organic food. My take on these chapters was that she was putting forth an integrated approach to nontoxic living in general.

I was surprised that this approach did not extend to her discussion of scented products. Berthold-Bond recommends essential oils and potpourri throughout the book. While she does give caveats about possible problems with essential oils, pine oil in particular, I would have liked a discussion of the hazards of scented products. They are unsafe both for people who use them and for those with multiple chemical sensitivities, who can have life-threatening reactions to perfumes and other scented products including essential oils and potpourri. I would hope that any integrated approach to nontoxic living addresses the effects of scented products on ourselves and others, and perhaps Berthold-Bond will do so in a future edition.

This book is an incredible resource, one which prompted Debra Dadd (a founder of the nontoxic cleaning movement) to write in the foreword that it is a book she wished she had written. I felt the same way. Annie Berthold-Bond is that rare writer who can make housecleaning sound like fun.

—Elizabeth Kristen

The reviewer founded and owned her own nontoxic cleaning business, Eco-Clean, for four years. While she no longer cleans professionally, she remains committed to the importance of spreading the word about nontoxic cleaning.



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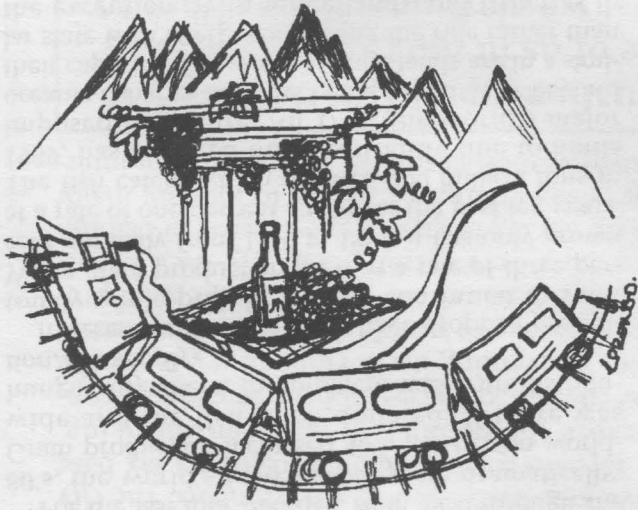
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## Winter 1995/1996

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## About the cover

*The Mayan Indians in Guatemala have built gravity based irrigation systems to divert water from streams to their plots. Little dams made of twigs and leaves are opened or closed so that water flows to the desired plot. With a pie tin the farmer then scatters the water from his irrigation ditch onto his plot...For more information contact : Arte Maya Tz'utuhil, P.O. Box 40391, San Francisco, CA 94140, (415) 282-7654, <http://www.artemaya.com>*

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# RAISE THE STAKES

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The Planet Drum Review

Number 25

**Connecting Our Species: PLANET REPORTS**



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Victor Vasques Temó © 1993*

**David Suzuki Interviewed by Peter Berg  
Review of Stephanie Mills' IN SERVICE OF THE WILD  
by Jim Dodge**

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