



Environment Policy

Rationale

Palms Australia recognises the link between poverty, vulnerability and environmental degradation. Any work that a Palms Program Participant engages in will promote environmental sustainability, which in turn is a long lasting element in reducing poverty.

Palms understands its relationship to the environment as ecocentric. This relationship is specific yet holistic. The ecocentric approach considers the relationship that particular ecosystems have with each other (ecosystems include both human and non-human, as well as the living and non living). An ecocentric approach includes economic, environmental, social and cultural systems.

Environmental philosophy

The environment is central to the Palms Australia faith tradition. It is rooted in the understanding that the natural world is the primary revelation of God. When this natural world is degraded both humans and non humans suffer the consequences. Righting this imbalance is achieved through addressing things such as poverty, education, oppression and injustices.

Taking an ecocentric approach, Palms Australia works with communities so that they can recognise the imbalances in both their local ecological systems and the wider global ecological systems and the relationship that exists between both. In recognising the imbalances, which are both physical and spiritual, the communities work towards righting the imbalances as individuals and as a collective. Palms Australia's Program Participants contribute to assisting individuals and communities through interaction, dialogue, self-revelation and encouragement.

How this is achieved:

Palms Australia and the Palms Program Participant:

- Supports the development of individual and community decision-making processes within an ecocentric approach. The decision making process would ensure that biological diversity and the integrity of the environment is fundamental to any outcome of the program or placement.
- Upholds the principle that the environment is not only enjoyed and of benefit to the present generation, but preserves and enhances the environment for future generations (Intergenerational equity).
- Adopts a precautionary approach where there is uncertainty in an action that may cause harm to the environment.
- Endorse the Earth Charter and encourage members & participants to adopt its spirit.
- Draws on the wisdom, experiences and expertise of those who are involved in environmental research, policy writing and active in roles that promote, safeguard and ensure the sustainability and integrity of the environment. An example would be "The Convention on Biological Diversity" (Rio de Janeiro 1992).

References:

Environmental Management Guide for Australia's Aid Program
The Earth Charter - www.earthcharter.org.au