

Canada geese are beautiful birds despite their reputation as intruding, dirty pests. We humans often resent their presence and droppings in our parks, beaches, yards, golf courses, farmers' fields. For the geese, however, these places are restaurants serving their favorite foods. Learning to live together is an ongoing challenge.



But I would note an ironic twist in this struggle over territory. We say the geese are increasing at unsustainable rates, polluting places important to human needs and enjoyment, and eating the grasses, grains, spinach, lettuce, corn and peas in our gardens and farms. And this is true and requires skilled deterrents on our part. The irony is that we humans have an analogous effect on the entire planet. Burgeoning population growth and our tendency as a species to think and act as if the Earth (its creatures and resources) is here for our own purposes is not unlike the behavior of the geese. The difference is that we can change our behavior, using the gift of conscious awareness that distinguishes humans as a species.

This is beginning to happen. More and more humans see themselves as members of the Earth community—not on the Earth, but of the Earth. Millions have embraced the Earth Charter, which maps strategies for healing the planet, and are living into this in their everyday lives. The impacts of global warming are pushing us to act. Like a butterfly flapping its wings, this consciousness and these actions are reverberating across the planet. Where do you feel this or see this—in yourself, friends, your work partners, in your locale and across the planet?

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