

Natural Disasters and A Pagan Community Statement on the Environment

June 1, 2015 by [Liz Fisher](#) [2 Comments](#)



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A call to sign [A Pagan Community Statement on the Environment](#) is currently underway. This is more than another petition. It is artfully written, featuring pagan beliefs and practices that are profoundly life sustaining. This statement could well become a manifesto for the earth-based perspective.

The disaster situations in the world continue to call us to action on behalf of environmental protection and human cooperation. By signing this statement we are committing ourselves to a vision. Spiritually, visualization is key to manifestation.



This vision is not only about material change. It is intensely emotional, the driving force behind our spiritual beliefs. A close friend of mine, Yana Castle, a life-long follower of Tibetan Buddhism, was in Nepal on a spiritual retreat when the earthquake hit. She was there for almost two weeks, forced into makeshift circumstances together with local

villagers. Her reports are inspiring. While the stress of the situation was severe, the compassion and love she felt coming to her from those most affected, and the love and outreach she was drawn to express are her most lasting memories. Her photo represents a glimpse of her experience, both external and internal. Read more of her reports on her experiences in Nepal following the earthquake at:

<https://www.facebook.com/yanajanecastle>

[A Pagan Community Statement on the Environment](#) is important because it does include reference to the spiritual/emotional component as well as practical changes. This document can have a unifying impact on those who identify as pagans and also draw in others. It contains the core beliefs represented in the Unitarian Universalist Principles and it invites a wide range of people, pagan identified or not, to consider this well-articulated perspective.

Because I think the language is so well crafted, I extracted from the document and include here what I feel are core concepts. The complete statement is considerably longer with supporting information and arguments; well worth reading and signing.

From [A Pagan Community Statement on the Environment](#):

We recognize that nature encompasses humanity and the planet, and that we are neither above nor separate from the rest of nature.

Earth's biosphere may be understood as a single ecosystem and that all life on Earth is interconnected.

We don't live "on Earth" like some alien visitor, but rather we are part of Earth. We feel these connections in a spiritual way.

As part of the body of life on Earth, we care about the health of all parts of the body.

We do so out of respect for our ancestors, out of care for all life today, and out of love for future generations. **Anything that harms the body of life on Earth, including global warming, pollution and extinction, is thus a spiritual and moral issue.**

Since Earth is able to heal itself, we need to stop doing harm, and let the healing begin.

Technical solutions can never move forward without political will, and the necessary political will requires **a shift in our most deeply held values**, in our very definitions of what it means to be human, and in how humanity relates to the world. **We recognize this shift as a spiritual imperative.**

Building a truly sustainable culture means **transforming the systems of domination and exploitation that threaten our future into systems of symbiotic partnership that support our ecosystem.**

We must be clear about our agenda, which includes promoting sustainable, local economies, reforming our food systems, distributing resources in a more just and humane fashion, and ensuring that our human populations are below the carrying capacity of our planet through access to voluntary birth control, and equal access to education and work for women.

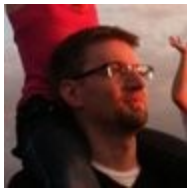
Fundamentally, we believe that a change in spirit is required, one that fosters a new relationship between humanity and other species and Earth as a whole.

We will continue to educate members of our community to foster intelligent and focused sustainable living, and help the world recognize that everyone, whether Pagan or not, is part of our precious Earth. **We hold that living a fulfilling and meaningful life, and allowing the same for future generations, is only possible if the entire Earth is healthy.** We will therefore strive as individuals, as groups, and as members of a global society to promote the current and future health of our entire Earth, including the water, air, land, and the web of life.

I want to close with a personal note. I live in California where we are now in the fourth year of a drought. Commercial agriculture uses eighty percent of the water in the state and goes unregulated while the rest of us must practice mandatory conservation. We are told this is because California produces much of the food for the rest of the nation. This situation is unsustainable and demands a shift in how we feed ourselves nationally. There are many examples around the world of situations like this that need radical shifts in perception. The future will, by necessity, demand change. Recognizing global

interconnection and using our knowledge of technology to work with natural phenomena to reverse the damage and expedite the healing is what this Statement calls for.

Many in the pagan community already take a vital role in these issues and will be on the forefront of discovering the needed changes. Statistically they say pagans are a small but growing population; that among pagans there is dissention and contradictions. Just as natural disasters can bring cooperation and expressions of loving solidarity, as Yana Castle witnessed in Nepal, what we are facing now may bring us together, both with other pagan identified individuals and across cultural and religious divides. Even though our spiritual practices and refinements may differ, I believe that humanity is moving toward earth positive beliefs and practices. At a basic human level we understand we are all part of this interconnected web. What could be more pagan honoring than that?



[John H Halstead](#) • [a year ago](#)

Thanks Liz!

[yewtree](#) • [a year ago](#)

Great post, and I am really glad you liked A Pagan Community Statement on the Environment. Could you spell Pagan with a capital P, please?