

## MANIFESTO OF THE PARTY FOR ANIMALS

Herewith is the Manifesto of the Party for Animals. In summary, it is our vision of how we should treat animals, nature and the environment we inhabit. This vision is the foundation of the views held by those in the Party.

Life on Earth manifests itself in various ways. Only in the animal kingdom is the number of species in excess of 1 million. Each life form has the ultimate goal of survival even if it is at the expense of other life forms. The species may be competitors or their relationship may be one of hunter and prey. However, all forms of life are part of the global ecosystem which, in itself, is a dynamic equilibrium. The battle for survival within the species results in life on Earth being a permanent battle rather than a peaceful paradise and this battle sometimes results in suffering or even death.

The human being forms part of this vast ecological system but due to its greater intelligence and the development of a social culture emanating from this, has prioritised its own interests at the expense of other forms of life in a more intensive and larger scale than any other creature. It is conceivable, however, that this greater intelligence also endows upon Homo Sapiens the freedom of choice to decide not to inflict unnecessary suffering and damage to their own or indeed, other species now or in the future.

Respect for the physical and mental integrity of all species of life on Earth is the basis for a more peaceful relationship between humans, animals and the environment in general. However, respect for life is not yet sufficiently developed in the human species which has resulted in significant brutality and pure neglect. As a consequence, natural landscapes are rapidly disappearing, species have become extinct and the global ecosystem, once so harmonious, is now overwhelmed and disorganised with the risk of the further loss of species.

It is morally unacceptable for humans to exploit nature so intensively as to change forever the natural dynamics such that forms of life disappear forever. It is the future generations of our children who will be faced with the results of our exploitations. It is therefore important for us to support and recognise the ecological limits of our planet and this support can materialise itself in a reduction of our use of land, energy, animals and plants.

The Earth Charter, which arose from an initiative of the United Nations 1987 (United Nations World Commission on Environment and Development: [www.earthcharter.org](http://www.earthcharter.org)) is often used as a starting reference for organisations concerned with nature and the environment. The protection of life, diversity and land is, in this Charter, referred to as a “holy task” of the human species.

Article 15 aspires to a special respect and mercy when dealing with animals who should not be subjected to brutal imprisonment or hunting and fishing methods which cause extreme, long and unnecessary suffering. These forms of suffering should be banned. The Earth Charter is also directed at the continued abuse of nature by humans. Other species, as well as humans, are deserving of respect and compassion as these life forms have a value in themselves but currently there are no clear restrictions regarding the use of animals.

A Universal Declaration of Animal Rights was adopted from the International League of Animal Rights and Affiliated National Leagues in September 1977 and considered that the respect of humans for animals to be inseparable from the respect of man for another man. Article 7 specifically cites, 'Any unnecessary act involving the death of an animal, and any decision leading to such an act, constitutes a crime against life'.

Hunting and fishing practiced as a pastime, as well as any use of wild animals for reasons that are not vital, are contrary to a fundamental right to live and reproduce in freedom in an animal's natural environment. With regard to testing on the animal species, substitute techniques should be investigated and developed.

After two centuries of small moves forward in the protection of animals, the time has now come to reduce our continued use of the animal species. Unfortunately, animals are still regarded as subordinate objects ('things' in the Portuguese civil code) that can be exploited for human interest. In the short life of a farm animal, for example, the negative consequence of this view is in the end result or death of the animal. Due to this, we should carefully study the consequences to the animal species of our ways of dealing with them.

The use of animals for what can be considered non-vital interests such as cosmetics, circus entertainment, bullfighting and fishing should be curtailed or even banned. Any religious or cultural tradition that affects the welfare of animals should be reviewed. In the past, traditions have adapted and evolved with changing times and traditions should continue to take into account new concepts and moral standards. The use of animals for testing and human consumption serves to divide the needs of animal and humans and alternatives such as clinical testing need to be reviewed. The development and implementation of these alternatives can be considered both necessary and ethical if humans are to express their loving natures towards animals and show a full respect for both the body and the mind of all species.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) provides an appropriate starting point for this concept. This law was created so that humans could live in freedom without fear of oppression or violence. It is species specific with the freedom of one human ending where the freedom of another begins. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights together with the Universal Declaration of Animal Rights and the Earth Charter consolidate a way in which man links with man, animal and nature. This consolidation is the basis for election of the Party for Animals.

To allow for the adaptation in human behavior towards nature and animals, it will be necessary for a cultural shift and a reformation of social, political and economic influences to take place.

The Party for Animals thus supports all initiatives aimed at improving the ability of humans to harmonize with nature and other species. The Party for Animals particularly support and promote actions to increase awareness and sensitivity that all sentient beings deserve the right not to suffer but to live their lives free from pain. In this way, the Party for Animals intends to serve the further development of the human species and to offer a new paradigm; an ethical civilization where all species can live in solidarity.

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