

BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE EC + 10 ON-LINE FORUM NOVEMBER 2009

This brief summary outlines the major outcomes of the 'Earth Charter + 10' on-line Forum that was held between November 2 – 30, 2009 using the WiserEarth platform. Earth Charter Affiliates and collaborators were invited to elaborate on the optimal ways to achieve and improve the purposes and goals outlined in the Draft Concept Paper of the Earth Charter + 10 Proposal. Over 150 people were invited, 70 actually registered to the forum and about half of them really participated more than once.

The Forum intended to get recommendations of what should be the priorities and focus for the 10th anniversary of the Earth Charter, and to generate ideas on a common slogan that would integrate the primary theme for all EC + 10 activities.

Most participants considered that Goal 1 of the current ECI strategy should be prioritized: to raise awareness worldwide of the Earth Charter and to promote understanding of its inclusive ethical vision. In other words, it was widely shared by participants that, above all, the Earth Charter should become more visible in order to attract a wider audience. Specifically, deeper involvement in global social networking web-sites (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, etc.) would help to achieve this end. In addition, some participants expressed their support to further encourage the educational use of the Earth Charter in schools, universities, religious and other communities.

The Forum also intended to open a space to share ideas of how the EC network members could join the EC+ 10 celebrations next year. Apart from the EC + 10 major events already scheduled, numerous local activities will be arranged on the International Earth Day as well as throughout the year to commemorate the launch of the new EC Decade. Some Forum participants presented their concrete ideas for activities and events they will organize or participate or plans for activities they would like to arrange.

Another important objective was to discuss a slogan for all activities in 2010. Initially four slogans were offered to Forum participants for consideration:

1. Earth Charter: Reflection and Action for Our Common Future.
2. The Earth Charter: Inspiration for a Just and Sustainable Future.
3. Working Together to Foster a Sustainable Future: The Earth Charter Initiative.
4. Earth Charter: the World beyond National Boundaries.

A number of participants suggested modifying the existing slogans to give more emphasis on the action to be undertaken in promoting the Charter; some stressed the need to have the word dialogue as part of the slogan as that must precede a concrete action; here are some quotes from participants:

“Reflection seems too soft of a word/concept; "beyond national boundaries" seems too political”

“Dialogue is better than Inspiration or Reflection”

“We need to find a way to continue the dialogue that created the Earth Charter”

Others recommended relieving the conceptual burden of existing slogans and replacing them with a *catchy phrase* in order to attract the mass attention. In the course of the Forum a new slogan (by Kerstin Veigt) was added to the list of initial four slogans as it received major support from the participants:

- Earth Charter + 10: Dialogue and Action for a Sustainable World.

Then there were some discussions on whether it should be “for a just and sustainable world” or “for a sustainable and peaceful world”

By the last week of the Forum another slogan emerged and was presented for consideration.

- Earth Charter + 10: it starts with one.

The underlying rationale holds that “everything starts with one Earth, with one Universe, with one person, with inner change, with one hand, with one heart, with one good agreement, with one hug, with one smile, with one dream, with a first help....”

However, this slogan did not receive much attention among the participants since only three names were clearly mentioned in support for this option. It can be explained by the fact that the slogan was added during the last days of the Forum and most participants had already expressed their point of view earlier. No major support or critics were provided, neither was any discussion held.

Below is the distribution of votes given for each slogan, Chart 1.

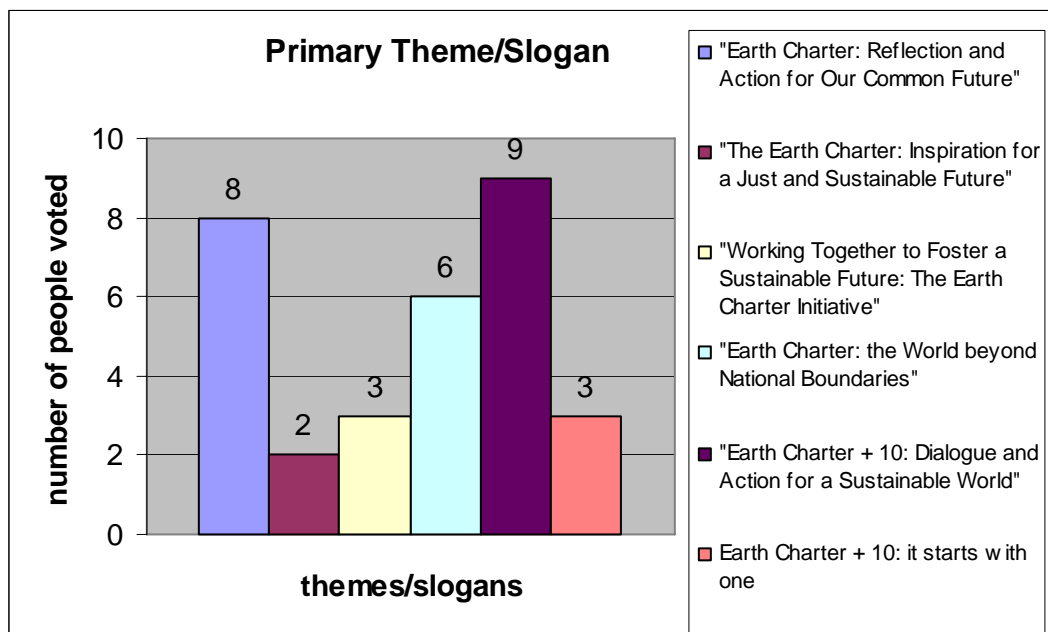


Chart 1. Distribution of votes given for each slogan.

Note 1: whenever a participant opted for more than one slogan simultaneously, the votes were allocated to each slogan respectively.