

# The Sixth Mass Extinction

A qualitative exploration of attitudes of perceptions, attitudes and ideas around biodiversity and mass extinction.

Prepared for Planetnetwork  
and the Threshold Foundation.

**HARPOON**

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## **Project Objective**

The objective of this exploration is to understand attitudes and perceptions of biodiversity and mass extinction with the intent of developing a relevant and motivating framework for engaging awareness and action around this issue with the public.

## **Caveat**

Qualitative research is an effective marketing tool for developing hypotheses and insights. This kind of learning, however, is intended to be directional and not definitive. Its purpose is to offer hypotheses and a context from which to enhance the quality of the decision making for the extended Planetnetwork, Threshold and '06 roundtable team.

The goal in conducting this research was to begin to understand perceptions of the Mass extinction issue with an eye to finding entry-points as well as understanding the barriers to understanding or simply learning about this very important issue.

We conducted focus groups in Chicago, Philadelphia and San Francisco and segment the groups in three ways; neutral (attitudes and behaviors towards the environment) somewhat engaged and highly engaged. We also ran all women, all men and some mixed gender groups to allow us to look at the issues in a range of ways.

Our findings were highly consistent across locations and kind of consumer groups. The same issues and barriers that impact people who are more neutral on this are shared by those who consider themselves highly engaged and involved.

Much of the findings, as the quotes will reveal, were derived by using both direct and indirect (projective techniques) questioning during focus groups and in-depth-interviews.

This report is offered up in the spirit of furthering this important dialogue and we hope it is useful to a range of people and organizations. This issue is far too nuanced and complex to be cracked in a single go, and it is our hope to move the dialogue along further with these findings.

## Project Design

**The following qualitative fieldwork was conducted in May of 2007.**

<b>Chicago</b>	2:30-4:30	18-23 Mixed Gender - Somewhat Involved
	5:00-7:30	45-64 Men - Highly Involved
	In-depth-Interview	
	7:30-10:00	24-39 Mixed Gender – Neutral
	In-depth-Interview	
<b>Philadelphia</b>	1:30-4:00	24-39 Women - Highly Involved
	5:00-7:30	45-64 Mixed Gender - Somewhat Involved
<b>San Fran.</b>	5:00-7:30	24-39 Mixed Gender - Highly Involved
	7:30-10:00	45-64 Mixed Gender – Somewhat Involved

**Overview of Key Findings**

**Framing the Context; Perceptions of Nature**

**Talking About Mass Extinction**

**Learning from Concepts**

**Moving Forward . . .**

**Appendix**

## Overview of Key Findings

### **Shifting Perceptions**

Clearly we are living through a time of rapidly shifting perceptions with regard to our natural environment. We are in a period of significant 'disruption' with regard to many of our assumptions, beliefs and even behaviors with regard to this – due in large part to Climate Change. This hardly negates the observations and implications of this enquiry however. It merely suggests that things are moving quickly and the more on target and efficient we can be with regard to messaging and positioning our issues, the better. It also is true that when beliefs and behaviors are in flux, it is a particularly good time to make inroads in people's thinking.

### **Climate Change Will Win – Climb on Board**

Even if Mass Extinction/Biodiversity were a cause celebre for most people, which it clearly is not, we think the public does not have the bandwidth to embrace another significant issue from this neighborhood at this time. We will do better to work somewhere under the broad CC umbrella and become a part of this larger story.

### **Mass Extinction Not on Anyone's Radar – Not Likely to Be Either**

For many reasons, which we will lay out in the body of the report, we do not believe that the general public is available, open to or even interested in this issue. At an emotional and a rational level, there was very little engagement here. It is our strong belief that most people cannot and will not be mobilized for this – in this form. The front door approach to this problem is locked up very tight and we will waste our time there.

### **Mass Extinction Should Be Nested Under 'Environmental Collapse'**

The notion of some kind of current and/or impending environmental collapse, however, is something that has significant traction and broad acceptance from people. While seen as a piece of the Climate Change issue, most people are also able and willing to see that Environmental Collapse has other causes, dimensions and imperatives. And it is through that opening that we will need to step if we want to tell our story.

We are not yet at a point to recommend final language for this however. Conceptually the territory is correct; the idea of 'critical environmental instability' is the one to convey. The public can understand, relate to and will, we believe, be more motivated to respond to this.

## Overview of Key Findings

### **'Environmental Collapse' Relevant and Believable**

Most importantly, 'Environmental Collapse' has a great deal of acceptance and personal relevance to it. It is not necessary to convince most people of this. It appears to tap into logic paths that have been systematically created and now have the weight and credence of accepted logic.

Our recommendation is to position Mass Extinction/Loss of Biodiversity under the rubric of 'Environmental Collapse'. The core causes of ME (HIPPO), can be openly addressed and hopefully mobilized against, as part of a response to 'Environmental Collapse' conversation.

It is not unreasonable to create highly focused initiatives under the banner of mass extinction or biodiversity, but we do not see these as viable mainstream initiatives anytime soon.

### **Earth/Nature/Environment Are One**

Almost everyone we met with (Philadelphia, Chicago, San Francisco) is willing to use these three to identify the meta-complex of our natural world and everything involved with it. The word 'environment' does not appear to have any kind of politicized charge associated with it, as long as it is not coming out of an 'environmentalist's' mouth.

## Overview of Key Findings

### **Nature Segmented**

Most people have clearly and neatly segmented up their picture of the natural world – and these segmentations provide profound clues around what they value, relate to and in turn how to message to them.

There are roughly three main circle to this bull's eye; Weather, Natural Resources and Biological Life. Each circle has less and less relevance and provides less traction with the public. Weather represents one of the few domains of the natural world that has resisted mankind's ability to manipulate, domesticate, or otherwise master. We still live in fear of it and *have* to attend to it and work with/around it. (Climate Change has clearly ramped up our attention here – but our experience with weather has taught us that it has always been on the frontline of our interaction with the natural world.)

Natural Resources, most notably air and water come next. These represent the 'building blocks' of life from the general public's perspective. And, they are increasingly seen as under threat; in part because of Climate Change, but more so because of ongoing and increasing environmental degradation. (Most are quite aware that this is largely human-induced.)

Unfortunately, Biological Life occupies the core, the most distant, hard to reach and hard to relate to part of the natural world for people. As we repeatedly learned, people are far more concerned about their air and water than they are about animals and plants. The implication here, is that trying to create traction around an issue of ME/BD in this hard to reach, harder to touch inner core of people's picture of the natural world is a huge and difficult challenge. As we suggested earlier, we think a back-door, indirect approach will yield far better results.

## Overview of Key Findings

### **Nature; Our Over-worked Cosmic Cleaner**

Most people readily admit significant concern about the ability of our natural world to continue to clean-up (this apparently is their idea of job number one for nature!) after us and provide clean air and water for humankind. This perception clearly hits home with most people and is something they appear to experience daily. Vehicles spewing out exhaust, stories about questionable tap water, pollution and more are ways in which people feel they come face to face continually with how our natural world is being over-worked and degraded.

The word 'clean' came up continually during these sessions. From much of our other qualitative research experience in various consumer-goods explorations, we find this focus on clean to have reached near epidemic proportions in our collective imaginations. While this notion may sound ridiculous to the scientific community, the public is far more worried about nature being dirty, than its being depleted from the standpoint of biodiversity. *And this is true even with people who understand the significance and consequences of loss of biodiversity!*

Our argument, quite simply, is that we can and should make a case for environmental collapse under the auspices of Nature as Cosmic Cleaner in order to get our agenda in the hearts and minds of the public. Thus, we can address our biodiversity issue - albeit indirectly.

### **'Environmental Collapse'**

Most people intuitively understand and viscerally respond to this concept and phrase. The word collapse has a particularly emotional and even physical potency to it. Most people have seen and experienced some kind of collapse. They can feel it.

Linked to the environment, the idea of collapse is a palpable one and we think it is rich in dimensions moving forward. It can and will accommodate a wide arc of implications. Initially, it may be used to invoke the threat of clean air and water. Food, we expect to soon show up here too. And so on. Our job will be to plant this seed, and then overtime dimensionalize it to include more and more parts of the natural world. The public understands this idea, and has already internalized much of it. We think we will be much closer to our goal of focusing attention and awareness around the idea of loss of biodiversity if we can help insert '*environmental collapse*' into common parlance. Hopefully it can and will stand alongside Climate Change in a new lexicon of planetary imperatives, planetary healing.

## Overview of Key Findings

### **Do It For Your Children . . .**

If 'Environmental Collapse' is the broader strategic platform for this campaign, then doing it for the children is the initial positioning for this. There are many reasons for this that they report will address in detail. Briefly, it became apparent that most people are simply rationally and emotionally unavailable for the story of environmental collapse, let alone mass extinction. They tend to take in these ideas in what we call their "consumer mode" (ultimately this can be defined as a hyper-extended form of infant behavior where one is continually conditioned to be catered to and pampered with exactly what they want. . .) and simply refuse to engage with the idea. We encountered this kind of phenomenon from highly engaged "environmentalists" as well as neutral folks. Not really denial, it is closer to a kind of emotional and rational *disability*. Despite taking numerous tacks, in terms of how we tried to position and tell this story, there was little consistent traction anywhere.

Surprisingly, when *forced* to step out of the infantile cocoon of consumerism and to become a watchful parent – people's barriers and inapproachability evaporated. When we simply asked them "How will we tell the children what has happened to our world on our watch" most people melted; Men, women, even younger singles.

We think mass-culture modern consciousness has successfully barricaded the door for most people. If we knock on their doors and try to engage them at a personal – individual level – we run the risk that their consumer-infant persona will render our message inaudible. (Even the notion of Stewardship – failed to fully activate people. While it called on the parent/elder, its appeal was largely rational, and lacking the emotional, and the richer agency of the 'child', it fell short.)

### **Through the Eyes of a Child . . .**

In a sense the surrogacy of children helps give us access to the inner sanctum of the psyche of the public. Through the surrogacy of the child many people are able to emotionally respond to, and intellectually conceptualize things that they themselves have long ago shut down in themselves. When we ask them to step into the role of the parent, or the elder, they activate another kind of consciousness. And this consciousness is one that is far more able and willing to hear our story.

Our children can, do and will hold us accountable. Far more than we ourselves will!

## Overview of Key Findings

### **Mass Extinction as Symptom – Naming the Problem**

Our core premise here is that by getting people to begin to more aggressively attend to 'Environmental Instability' we will begin to get them to address the very concerns and issues that contribute to ME and the loss of biodiversity. (Clearly we will need to create a patchwork strategy to address different dimensions of this multi-dimensional problem and to activate actions that support different unique concerns around the ME issue.) But at a mass-communication and activation level, we think this is the first and most important step.

Developing the right language for our problem is a huge issue and the next bit task. (We should keep it close to accepted, embedded logic and language already in common parlance.) We think we are clearly in the right territory. But what is the ideal, exact wording to work with here? What is our version of 'global warming' or 'Climate change'? This work needs to be carefully considered and masterfully executed.

### **Mass Solutions vs. Top Level Initiatives**

If this were our dime, we would spend one third on mass initiatives and focus two thirds of our resources on top level decision makers. We simply do not have the time to spend.

## **Framing the Context; Perceptions of Nature**

### **Framing the Issues**

In setting the context for framing up these issues there are numerous paradigms that must be discussed and explored, because these are the key shapers and drivers that underlie people's attitudes, ideas and behaviors with regard to issues of the issue mass extinction. (Biodiversity and Mass Extinction)

### **Setting the Context; Environment, Nature and the Earth**

Clearly mass extinction/biodiversity is an issue that resides within a broader context and it became apparent that we needed to understand the kinds of frames of reference under which this issue resides for people. It was also fairly clear that the whole issue of ME seemed to exist in relation to this broader context.

The broadest frame of reference or context respondents identified was seen as nature, earth or the environment. This feels like a common construct, and a frequently referenced, highly agreed upon big-picture frame. (Interestingly, while some differences seemed to exist between each of these; environment, nature and earth, they seem to share enough common ground to represent roughly the same ideas for all of our respondents.)

It is our sense that to begin to understand attitudes and perceptions of respondents around ME, we need to begin by understanding how they frame-up, perceive and engage with the broader construct of the nature. (While we will continue and reference 'nature' environment and the earth should be understood as included as well.) These perceptions represent a natural starting point for us.

## **Framing the Context; Perceptions of Nature**

### **Nature's Black Box**

Most respondents seemed to appreciate Nature as a black box. Something very complicated, complex and ultimately un-knowable going on. Part of this view acknowledges, in a positive and tuned in way, the incredibly complex, multi-faceted dimensions of nature. It is our sense that most of the people we met with see nature as a system – or interlocking relationships. And this kind of image seems positive and promising to us.

Yet, on the flip side, no one wants to be educated and really understand much of this. Even the highly engaged and well-read respondents we met with did not seem curious about understanding more, or probing into the details.

In general people tend to capitulate to the 'awe' factor of nature when the rigors of really intellectually tackling it all begins to overwhelm them. This happened repeatedly in the groups.

Ultimately we think viewing Nature as a black box is both an evasive maneuver as well as an expression of exasperation and burnout in the face of this issue. It also reflects our significant disconnect from it and lack of any real education or training around it.

### **Nature Knows Best**

There is also a penchant for seeing nature as some kind of everlasting force that will be here long after we are gone. "Nature bats last" was frequently offered up as a kind of great equalizer for all our human deeds and misdeeds. People would say this with a chuckle and something like, "Long after I'm dead!"

The reality is that they are only paying lip service to the issues and dodging them. Invoking the potency and longevity of nature and the earth is an easy way to shift the focus from the here and how to the hereafter –and thereby avoid further reflection on it all.

## **Framing the Context; Perceptions of Nature**

### **Nature Renews, Relaxes and Heals**

Most respondents spoke to the extremely relaxing and renewing experience of being in 'nature'. Whether that is a city park, a backyard, a true wilderness setting, etc. Nature is greatly valued for its ability to refresh, rejuvenate and renew the mind, body and spirit. In simple terms it cleans us up, and sends us back into the 'real world' ready to go. There is no need to press this point or argue it – nature is valued for its ability to refresh and renew. To clean us, and our world.

"Nature provides serenity, an escape from the urban jungle.  
Peace and quiet. . . Nature is the source of life. . .  
I appreciate it more now than I did and worry it is going away."  
45-64 Men – Highly Involved – Chicago

"Nature and the earth free the mind and spirit and physical stress. . .  
We are dependent on it, can't survive without it.  
It is genuine, can't be imitated, clean and refreshing."  
18-23 Men and Women – Somewhat Involved – Chicago

## Framing the Context; Perceptions of Nature

### What is Nature?

For almost everyone, nature, the earth, and the environment, all begin with one's immediate sensed experience; the immediate weather and physical conditions we can directly feel or sense. Weather is the one dimension of our natural world that we cannot so easily distance ourselves from, virtualize, or ignore. (As we will discuss shortly, most of us have managed to displace most of the dimensions of our living reality into a virtual realm where we can interact with them on our own highly controlled terms.) Weather however, is one thing that resists this kind of displacement.

Time and again we heard respondents play back that the way they most frequently and impactfully enter into relationship with nature is via the weather. The simple sensations of the outside world represent a vital link (perhaps the last one) that we are forced to experience on our own.

While most of us prefer to stay in our protected and controlled atmospheric bubbles (home, car, office, etc.) we still are very cognizant of the weather and what it is up to. With the advent of Katrina and the broad acceptance of Climate Change, we are even more attentive regarding this. (It is important to comment, however, that our preoccupation with weather and our experiencing weather as a kind of 'face of nature' is entirely independent of the current Climate Change issue. This is something we have been observing for many years . . .)

As our increasingly 'modern' lifestyle and culture has evolved our involvement with nature/earth/life has slowly been whittled away. Weather, in a sense, is the last man standing and so has become the last remaining gateway to nature, environment and our earth.

"Nature provides us with food, air, and regeneration.  
I care, I value it greatly. Without proper maintenance it will fall apart.  
It reminds me of what God is capable of and what he has done for us."  
22-39 Men and Women – Neutral – Chicago

"Our responsibility to nature is to sustain us. It sustains us. I mean literally, the air we breathe, we need water. Like our top two needs – like food and water. – that's from nature. I mean, we could make food, but we're not there yet, I suppose. "  
18-23 Men and Women – Somewhat Involved – Chicago

## Framing the Context; Perceptions of Nature

### What is Nature?

*Cont'd.*

**Strategic Observations:** There are several intriguing implications here. First and foremost, we tend to really take seriously those dimensions of nature that we personally and immediately experience. If we can't and don't directly experience it, it probably has less importance!

Nature in its more available form is, primarily, a sensory experience. While we may perceive it through other means, rational, emotional, intuitive, we believe that the senses offer the most compelling gateway between nature and humankind. Despite how 'de-sensitized' we have become to our earth, environment and nature, we still count on, respect and relate tremendously to our sensory experience of weather. We seem to trust, believe in and accept this.

It is on this sensory level that we are willing and able to experience, check-out, verify and solidify ideas about the state of nature. Weather (climate change – pollution –etc.) we can directly feel and relate to. Other pieces of the puzzle, unfortunately, lack any kind of agreed upon frame and therefore are out of sight, and out of mind.

## Framing the Context; Perceptions of Nature

### Weather as the Face of Nature

Even before the focus on Climate Change, we think most respondents would identify closely with weather when it comes to their approaches to nature, the earth and so on. CC has only exacerbated this reality – but it is an error to think it is wholly responsible for this. Weather is the one domain of nature where we can still sense, see and experience its legendary powers. We also think that respondents prefer to think of nature this way; powerful, mythic, capable of taking care of itself.

“I think the part of the natural world that I relate to the most is the weather, because it has the greatest impact on my everyday life.”  
18-23 Men and Women – Somewhat Involved – Chicago

“It’s the air we breathe, everything we touch is a part of our environment.”  
45-64 Men and Women – Somewhat Involved – San Francisco

“The environment (nature) is something we need to protect for the next generation. We must act now before we have done irreparable damage. We encounter nature everyday in the air we breathe and in the weather swings we experience. I enjoy spending time outdoors with my family and I think about air quality a lot. I also enjoy gardening. Nature is life! Without protecting our earth we are nowhere!”  
22-39 Women – Highly Involved – Philadelphia

“I said that the natural symbolic thing to me is rain, cause even when you are in the city and the urban thing, the urban landscape is overpowering you, when it rains its like the rain the storm feels like a natural area, and shows you can’t completely dominate nature. And it feels like it is cleansing, washing away. . . Rain is everywhere. No matter where you go. You can go to the dirtiest, grimeiest part of the city and it rains there. Its kind of like the natural thing that kind of washes away what is dirty and cleans up what we do to it.”  
18-23 Men and Women – Somewhat Involved – Chicago

**Strategic Observation:** Weather seems to register as a direct encounter with nature herself. Storms, winds, moments of beauty in weather all feel like an authentic experience with nature with a capital N. In this mode respondents seemed more willing, more likely to experience, think, feel and reflect in a grand manner. This is also true of landscapes and vistas. They take us into our ‘big picture place’. But, if weather is the face of nature, where does biological life fit in? What about the flora and the fauna?

As we will discuss in much greater detail shortly, it was tellingly obvious that ‘biological life’ did not seem to have the same powers of transport. Instead, it seems like biological life occupies the opposite, the ‘small’ end of the telescope. Where nature as ‘weather’ is the grand, the timeless, the expanse; nature as ‘biological life’ is the particular, the specific, the temporal. Unfortunately, plants and animals in the context of ME tend to take respondents to the small side of the telescope.

## Framing the Context; Perceptions of Nature

### Weather; Air and Water

Nature tends to be seen as the complex interplay of many aspects of the web of life, ultimately playing out in terms of the air we breathe and the water we drink. This is where the respondent's real concern and engagement begins to ripen into something we can leverage and use. There is growing concern about both air and water quality. This is a broadly held perception and even considerable concern.

As they see it, nature can no longer keep pace with human activity and as a result the air and water is not being renewed and cleaned as we need it to be. A very few also included food safety as part of this bundle, and we expect the chorus to grow around this, but most respondents had not yet made this leap.

Pollution, which for most people, was their first (and still most pervasive) acknowledged example of human's messing things up, is still very much bound up in this story. It is an old and convincing story for most people. The logic and evidence makes it clear that we have and continue to foul our nest and degrade our necessary natural support systems.

"I would ask the earth, what pollutant affects you most?"  
45-64 Men and Women – Somewhat Involved – San Francisco

"The animals would ask me why we feel its OK to pollute like we do?"  
22-39 Women – Highly Involved – San Francisco

"Nature is vitally important. It sustains life, recreation, quality of life, future generations. You encounter nature everywhere in the air you breath, water, at work, driving and recreation."  
22-39 Women – Highly Involved – Philadelphia

**Strategic Observation:** The whole notion of natural systems appears to be far easier to grasp, acknowledge and extend in the context of weather. At the level of biological environmental systems the idea appears to be much harder to grapple with and envision.

## Framing the Context; Perceptions of Nature

### **Air and Water are Dirty!**

Almost everyone seemed convinced that air and water quality have really suffered of late and this is a direct result of human activity. They also can see that nature is unable to keep up with this problem and has fallen well behind. As we said, this is a significant concern.

“Problems? Pollution and what it affects; air and water. The presence of the ocean, and clean water and habitat loss.”

22-39 Women – Highly Involved – San Francisco

“Nature is the existence in which I live. The whole is tough to quantify although tangible. It affects both my life and future generations.

Space and cleanliness is how this touches me and how I am connected . . . My awareness has changed in that I notice that there is not an abundance of resources.

Therefore it is crucial to conserve – air, water, etc.”

22-39 Men and Women – Somewhat Involved – Philadelphia

**Strategic Observation:** Related to but not entirely in sync with Climate Change, this perception probably has its roots in pollution concerns that are well seeded and broadly accepted by all. The proof points for this seem, in a very convincing way, to be encoded by weather as well.

It is possible that this common, even adjacent, yet unique side of our natural environment could represent a way to tell our story.

## Framing the Context; Perceptions of Nature

### Nature; Our Cosmic Cleaning Lady

At a very simplistic and basic level most respondents seem to view nature as that force or natural process whereby our environment, our earth, is scrubbed clean and rendered livable for everything.

In this context they seem mostly to be referencing air, water and perhaps our food. But clearly, air and water dominate their (highly human-centric) thinking.

As we have learned from other categories and projects we are active in Americans are obsessed with the idea of things "clean". And it was not surprising to find that they have extended this near phobia/obsession onto their picture of nature, environment and the earth.

"Nature cares about clean air and water, habitats and green spaces."  
22-39 Men and Women – Somewhat Involved – Philadelphia

"What does wilderness value? It values space and cleanliness."  
22-39 Men and Women – Somewhat Involved – Philadelphia

"Nature would say, 'Do you think I will stay this way forever if you do not change your ways? I'm doing OK, but I could be better. Can you clean the air and water so that I can breath and have a clean nest?'"  
22-39 Men and Women – Somewhat Involved – Philadelphia

**Strategic Observation:** Most respondents are very open to the fundamental narrative that the environment and the earth are being degraded, polluted and otherwise rendered "dirty" and that nature is unable to keep up with the ever-growing job of cleaning it up. This is almost at the level of a self-evident truth for most respondents; regardless of their level of interest, engagement, understanding, etc. It represents a rich and compelling entry-point into a deeper story.

While many of these people don't give a hang about biodiversity, they are very concerned about how *dirty* life is getting.

There is an interesting connection between the role nature plays in terms of relaxing, refreshing, renewing and rejuvenating them (in essence "cleaning" them) and the fact that Nature is getting awfully dirty itself these days. We think there is a very palpable nervousness and fear inside people about this.

People are quite viscerally open to a story about nature not being able to keep them clean – they can feel this threat.

## **Framing the Context; Perceptions of Nature**

### **Working with the Clean Gene**

As we will learn shortly, most respondents (we find this in every project we work on!) have a clean/germaphobic fixation that borders on a cultural obsessive-compulsive disorder.

While no one explicitly got to this point, we intuitively feel there is a potentially interesting connection between the way the earth/environment/nature feel clean or dirty and the way our own bodies do. Meaning that there may be a potent, visceral link to leverage. While most people have successfully transcended their own biology, (coming later) this whole area of 'cleanliness' may represent a kind of holdout splinter cell where the public is open to feeling, sensing and actually having an embodied experience and response. Despite their numerous defenses and constructs, this is one place they repeatedly seem vulnerable and available.

## Framing the Context; Perceptions of Nature

### Nature Working Too Hard

Most respondents seem to feel that Nature is a system of actions and interactions that always has been and always will be. They have tremendous respect for the workings of nature regardless of their knowledge base.

While there is very little knowledge or even interest in understanding the inner workings of nature, there is clear and general agreement that it is a highly sophisticated, complex and hard-working system. Without it, life on earth would not be possible. We depend on it to survive.

"Nature would say, 'why do you make me work so hard to keep it in balance?' Its mood is positive, upbeat and knows it can fix anything we throw at it. Its emotions are concerned."

45-64 Men – Highly Involved – Chicago

Most respondents really believed that nature, the environment, the earth, is having to work hard to accommodate humankind. We are pushing it too hard. This is not a stretch for most. They quite readily accept this. They hear and see confirmation of this fairly regularly. While they know this is going on, they do not have a frame, a name, a construct for this.

"My description of nature is a swirl of fire that speaks . . . Nature's mood is depressed, angry, hostile. Its emotions are upset, hostile, sick. . . To nature we look like messy animals with hatchets and trash clinging to us – with dirty mouths."

45-64 Men – Highly Involved – Chicago

"We are apart from nature, not a part of it. When the reverse should be true. Our responsibility is to limit our footprints, garbage, development, population. Nature/earth will clean up but can't do it when overwhelmed. Unless by total devastation and starting over."

45-64 Men – Highly Involved – Chicago

"The earth is tired, overworked and overused."  
22-39 Women – Highly Involved – Philadelphia

## Framing the Context; Perceptions of Nature

### Playing Our Part; Giving Back

There was a consistent commentary about the need for humans to begin to give back, to play a role, to work more in concert with nature. Whether this is driven by guilt, a greater awareness of the weight of our impact, or something else is hard to say. Regardless, this sentiment clearly exists. People are aware of nature, the role that it plays in supporting all of life here on earth. Many seem to accept at face value that they need to play more of a role. Not so much an obligation or a chore, but more of a participatory, even celebratory engagement with deep foundational principals of life perhaps.

While we do not think this is a highly bankable sentiment, we do think it represents a broadly shared and held perspective. *Humans are involved in the problem, and need to be involved in the solution.*

“Our responsibilities to nature and the earth are to keep it clean, replenish what we strip/take from it. To help it grow and rejuvenate.”

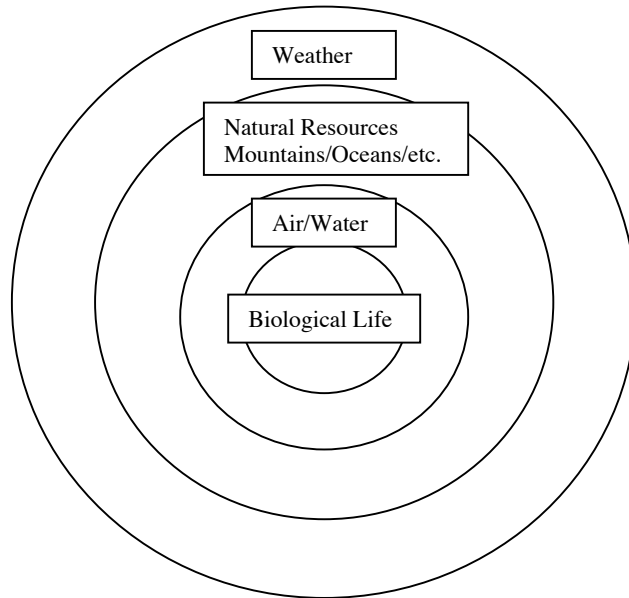
45-64 Men – Highly Involved – Chicago

**Strategic Observation:** We think this is an interesting entry point; the idea of nature being unable to keep up and manage everything we are throwing at her. There is a certain almost common-sense believability in all of this. And, most people can readily enough arrive at their own version of the consequences of this. Happily this also allows people to arrive at their own ‘truths’ about things, without bringing in an expert or outside voice to mediate. This is something they feel, see, touch, experience and therefore; know. *Can we somehow find our way into this magical web of logic most people are willing to allow?*

## Framing the Context; Perceptions of Nature

### Model of Nature

Most consumers appear to gain access into the natural world this way; moving with greater and greater difficulty into the core. The implication of this is that biological life, is the hardest to relate to and the most inaccessible part of our natural world.



## Framing the Context; Perceptions of Nature

### Nature as Natural Resources

The simple, stark and somewhat bleak perspective that is clearly emerging is one of a very human-centric model for nature, the world and the environment. It is important to acknowledge this because it informs and in fact seems to circumscribe the imagery set and meme pool we may have available to us.

“Nature is a balance of the creation of earth; consuming all natural elements. We keep nature to provide for a healthy environment to live in.”

22-39 Men and Women – Neutral – Chicago

“The environment, nature and earth represent life currently and for future generations. I’m in touch with the environment daily from the moment I get up and use natural resources (water, food, etc.) until I go to bed.”

45-64 Men and Women – Somewhat Involved – San Francisco

“For the thing that relates to the natural world, I picked cigarettes. They are a natural thing and you know, big corporations and the whole city structure of things, putting your different kinds of chemicals in it and the different stuff, and it’s a dirty habit, and you know the city is dirty, and it is that kind of thing.”

18-23 Men and Women – Somewhat Involved – Chicago

**Strategic Observation:** Respondents seem to experience the strongest sense of personal relevance and concern when nature/earth/environment is portrayed in direct relation to them; 1. Weather, 2. Air and water, 3. Landscapes and 4. Biological life. It is important to note that by the time we get to biological life, we have significantly fallen off in terms of relevance and concern.

This is both dis-heartening in terms of realizing how little space most people accord to nature/earth/environment but encouraging in that there is still some direct access available to us. Provided we learn how to use this channel to communicate through.

## Framing the Context; Perceptions of Nature

### Gender Associations and the Natural World

When pushed to describe nature more, roughly half of respondents describe an older woman in some kind of natural garb. She is old, wizened, small and clearly in bad shape. More than anything else she seems to be sad and dejected. Not angry or vengeful, but beaten and subdued. This image gets played back fairly consistently by a number of people.

"I see nature in a motherly being form for me to converse with, maybe a tree form, kind of like one of the tree people in Harry Potter."  
22-39 Men and Women – Neutral – Chicago

"I think of nature as a beloved friend and as a red headed stepchild. I think in the last 10 years people are more aware of what is going on with nature. . . It is an older woman with dreads in a robe of greenery."  
22-39 Women – Highly Involved – San Francisco

"Nature looks like a female, green and mossy. Older and certainly wise."  
22-39 Women – Highly Involved – San Francisco

"It appeared as a stunning tall, elegant, long-haired man/woman in flowing robes. Nature was very powerful and a little sad . . ."  
45-64 Men and Women – Somewhat Involved – San Francisco

On the other hand, there are also others that see nature as a kind of natural force – like a small cyclone or burning light – often green in color. This image is one of vibrancy and strength to them. It was not seen as beaten or subdued or weak. It had more of a male energy and feel to it.

"I see it as green, abstract, a globe, glowing, a strong presence."  
22-39 Women – Highly Involved – San Francisco

We think both of these are apt images for nature and how people tend to see it. And they in fact represent the two sides of the coin that represents how we feel about and are able to see nature now.

It would appear that nature encodes both masculine and feminine dimensions and that the obvious divide for most people, is between what they perceive as the living/animate part of nature or its biological dimensions and the non-living/inanimate part of nature or its natural resources dimensions. Kind of like hard ware and soft ware.

## Framing the Context; Perceptions of Nature

### Gender Associations and the Natural World

The male aspect of nature is the hardware; the enduring, strong, unvanquished mountains, vistas, storms and potent forces we experience.

Zeus casting down lightning bolts on wayward humans is a classic and enduring example of this kind of imagery and thinking. Like a stern father, this vision of the natural world represents cosmic justice and is conscious, exalted, undying, ordered, grand, impersonal and awe-inspiring. Here the natural world represents sustenance and husbandry.

On the other hand 'life', and living things (*our* biology) tended to be reigned over by lesser deities and mostly female ones like Artemis, the Goddess of the hunt, Hestia, etc. Here is the living and the dying. The cycling side of life. The coming and going of the seasons. Plants and animals that come and go, that rise and descend. This side of the natural world is the side that we have largely exiled and hidden from view. We do not want to witness the death and dying; we go as far as to rename our foods to avoid conscious interaction with it; pigs are turned into pork. Calves become veal. And so on. Biological life occupies the more feminine, repressed, underground and even unconscious end of the spectrum. And in so doing, it tends to be less obvious, less accessible, and is clearly harder to relate to and identify with.

In our culture men are given the 'force' and women are given 'life'. And, not surprisingly this dichotomy plays out in macro and micro ways in terms of how we conceptualize and relate to nature.

**Strategic Observation:** There appears to be a significant divide between what respondents refer to as natural resources (water, air, weather, mountains, sky, etc.) and what they think of as those living aspects of nature.

When thinking about the earth, nature, the environment, etc. respondents found it much easier to relate to and visualize it more as the former than as the later. Oddly enough, we seem to have a harder time relating to the "living" side of nature – the feminine. The 'non-living' part of the natural world commands significant interest, respect and attention, while the living side of it seems to get short shrift.

Consistently, throughout these groups, regardless of the locale and the engagement level in the issues we found concern for and relatedness to the natural resources, or masculine side of nature to be seen as more important and immediately present in their lives. Animals and plants get mentioned but far less, and the impact and connection is somewhat remote.

## Framing the Context; Perceptions of Nature

### Gender Associations and the Natural World

Nature as victim is a hard sell we think. While nature is down and out for sure, most respondents seemed to have a very bi-furcated picture of nature; both ailing and fading yet fierce and capable. When pushed, people will retreat into their more masculinized conceptualization of nature – and defend its power, its strength, its force. The harder we push, the more they take refuge in consciousness – the masculine. The feminine, tends to fade from view and scuttle off into the unconscious. When we allow the abused aspect of nature into consciousness we must simultaneously admit to our role as a perpetrator, and this it seems, is hard to do.

The male side of nature still seems virile and able to strike at will. (Even though we give individual storms female names this is arbitrary – we give tropical storms male names!) This side of nature cannot be subjugated and will endure long after we're gone. But, the biological or feminine part of the natural spectrum is perceived to be more passive. It can be domesticated, mutated, genetically modified, cloned, spliced, frozen, etc. The equal rights movement is still in its infancy and it seems that many of these same chauvinistic and misogynistic attitudes remain unchanged with regard to nature.

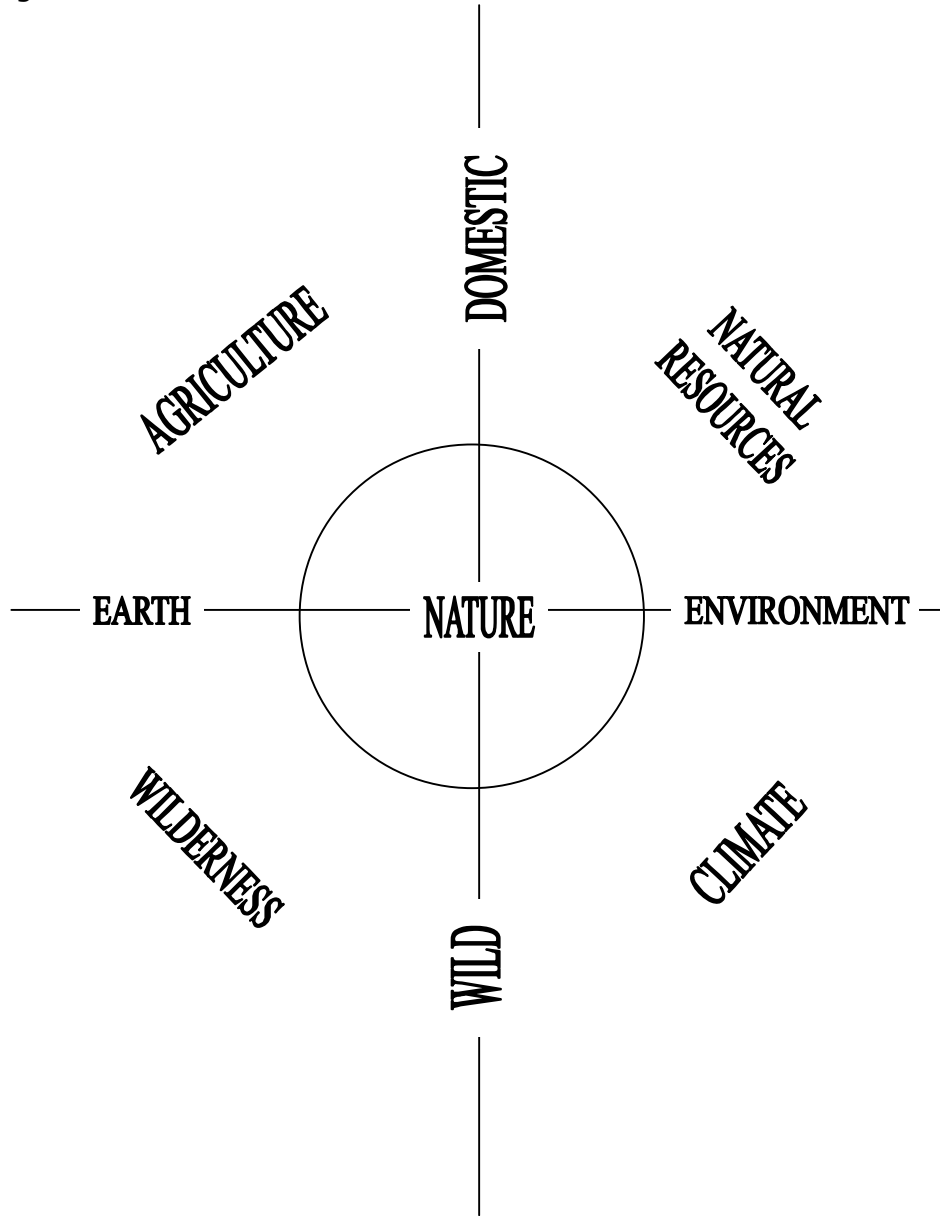
**Strategic Observation:** The equal rights movement has been slow going and it is unlikely that facilitating a respect for the autonomy and equality of bio-diversity and nature will be happen any more quickly or easily than it has for women. Given enough time, it would be useful to push on the link between the plight of women with that of the feminine or biological part of nature. The fact that nature is already imagined as an over-worked, under-appreciated, and probably underpaid women, indicates that this link already exists in the collective psyche. Long term, this issue of ME is undoubtedly another dimension of feminism that must be addressed. Short term, however, it may take some radical action, leadership and even heroics to curb the trend towards environmental degradation and species loss.

## Framing the Context; Perceptions of Nature

### Dimensionalizing the Model – #1 The Four Frames for Nature

When thinking about nature, it is clear that there are four main quadrants to consider; agriculture, natural resources, wilderness and climate.

These are important, because they each represent a significant entry point or enculturated context. As the model gets more complex, they reveal the deeper connective tissue of imagery and meaning available (or not) to us with regard to each of these four frames.



## Framing the Context; Perceptions of Nature

### Dimensionalizing the Model – #1 The Four Frames for Nature

**Strategic Observations:** Nature is at the center of the wheel and the construct. It is the organizing principle and initiator of each quadrant.

Nature is a complex construct – we need to approach it with care and be mindful of its many faces or frames. A division between nature and human nature is much too simplistic a construct.

In the top half of this chart, represented by Agriculture and Natural Resources, nature and human nature are interrelated and interdependent. The bottom half of the chart, Climate and Wilderness, represent the aspects of Nature that are still somewhat autonomous. We are conditioned to see, experience and even prioritize each quadrant differently.

It is not correct to assume that the Climate quadrant is the only one active in our minds and imaginations, it is simply the one we most obviously can't ignore or manipulate.

It is not clear how or if these quadrants impact and connect to one another. They may well be highly exclusive of one another.

As we move along the line from domestic to wild our sense of our ability to control or impact the situation diminishes. This is the line that traces our control as well as our comfort level.

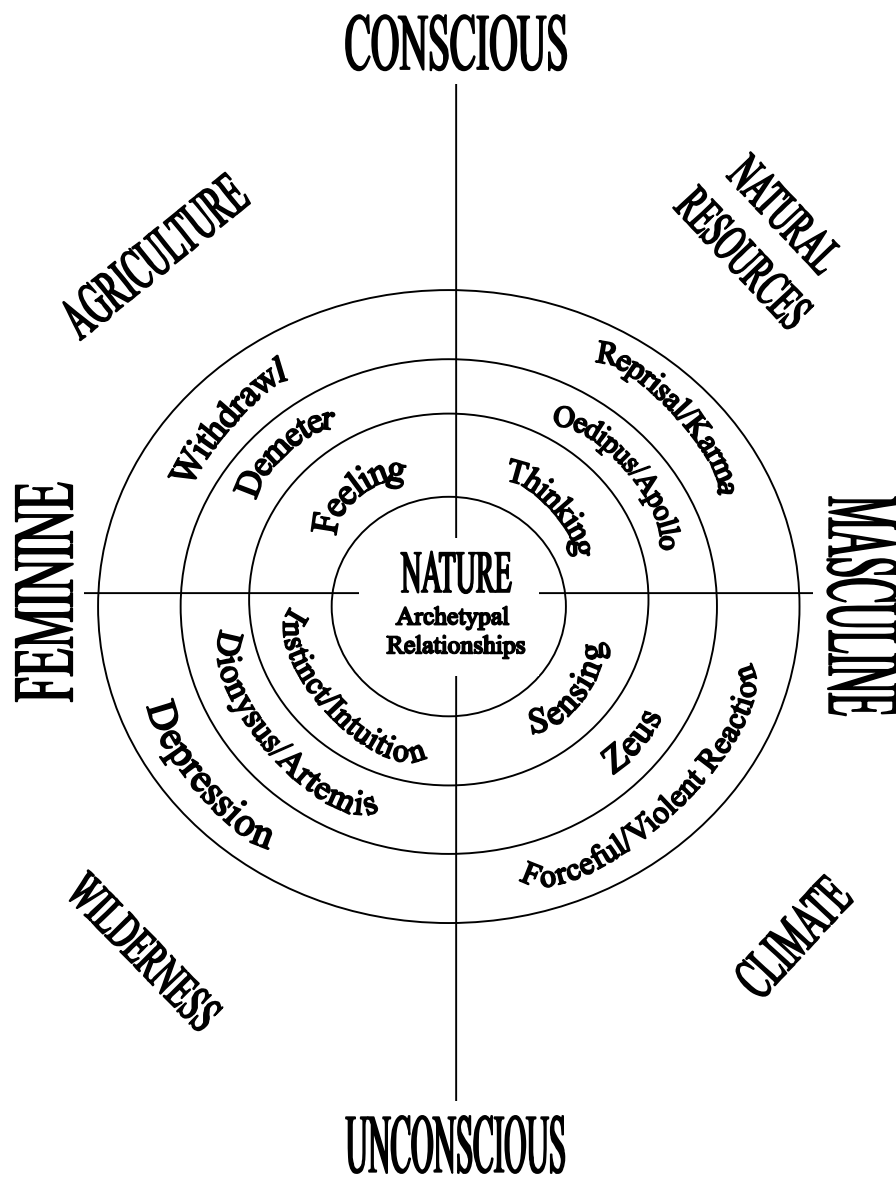
The earth/environment axis represents another continuum. On a micro scale the earth is the ground and our grounding. It is the primordial sense of place and belonging; the fertile soil from which the complexity of life emerges and the gravity that holds everything in place. On a macro scale, earth is the world as an integrated whole, a complex living planet, Gaia. As Chief Seattle said so eloquently, "we are a part of the earth and the earth is a part of us. . . Humankind has not woven the web of life. We are but one thread within it. Whatever we do to the web, we do to ourselves. All things are bound together. All things connect".

The environment is a more masculine and detached perspective denoting our surroundings. The environment is more a context than a connection, more circumstance than relationship.

## Framing the Context; Perceptions of Nature

### The Four Frames for Nature – #2 Archetypal Relations

Each frame seems to embody a different constellation of imagery and possibilities – as well as a dominant perception mode. The clear presence of a gender valence shows where and how some of our gender associations and cultural/political realities begin to play into this. This archetypal layer of the four frames also helps show those aspects of our conception of nature that reside more in the unconscious part of our selves and our culture; The big bad wolf relegated to story, etc. It is easier now to see why the Wilderness (biodiversity) quad is so far out of sight and mind. Zeus lives large yet Artemis largely unknown.



## Framing the Context; Perceptions of Nature

### The Four Frames for Nature – #2 Archetypal Relations

**Strategic Observations:** This chart helps reveal our main mode of interacting with or experiencing this nature frame. Clearly our **sensing** function is aligned with Climate. To know in this quadrant is to sense, or experience the climate. Agriculture and food are tied into **feelings** – food is the nurturing, life sustaining, and mothering element of nature. **Thinking** is the primary function related to the ways and the means of transforming natural resources into energy, money and power. It is also the function used in rationalizing the negative consequences such as pollution and degradation. **Intuition** is the human equivalent of instinct, it is the function most closely related to the wilds, the animals and the animal in us.

Agriculture – **Demeter** represents the fertile earth. She is the goddess of grain and the nurturing aspect of the earth. Her presence is perceived in the generative nature of the land, and her absence is felt in the barrenness of winter, infertility and drought.

Natural Resources—**Oedipus** lives! In waking up to the mounting crisis of critical environmental instability we, like Oedipus, have implicated ourselves. Here, scientists have delivered the oracle, we are responsible for the crisis. The first step towards restoration must be acknowledging our own blindness, and arrogance.

Climate – **Zeus** represents a mythic force we still relish thinking about. Type A, the controlling paternalistic father represents clear consequences and the punishments we deserve. Even in our anthropocentric world, Zeus is still king. Despite all our technological developments, we are still subservient to the weather.

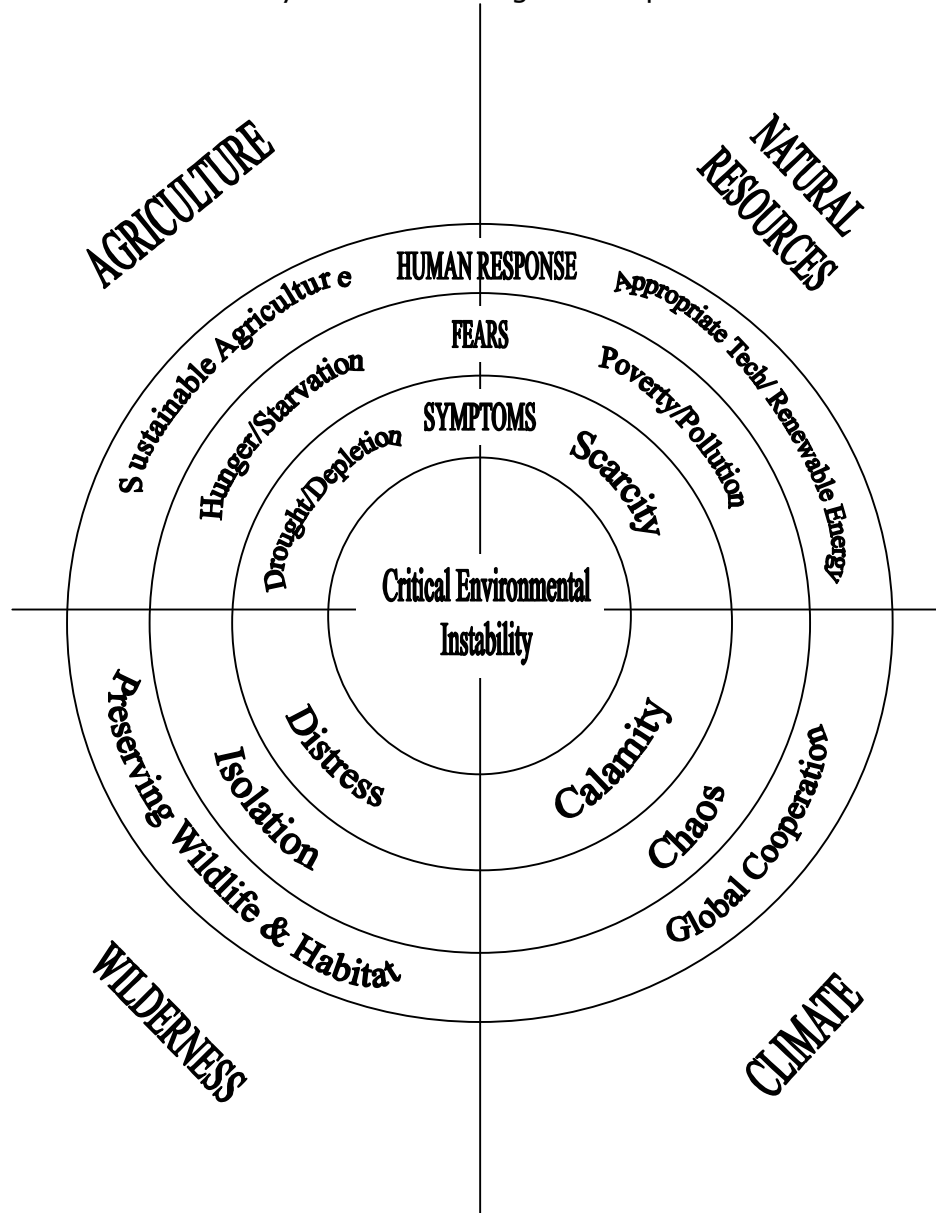
Wilderness – **Dionysus** and **Artemis** represent the spirit of the wild. Dionysus invites participation with the more animalistic, instinctual, and libidinal aspects of ourselves. From the objective, thinking, Apollonian perspective, Dionysus is wild, out of control and dangerous. Artemis is the keeper of the wilds, especially the animals--but not in a domesticating way. Artemis is the huntress and represents the instinctual, cyclical and sacrificial aspect of existence— in order to live, something else must die.

**Nature's responses** (outer ring) characterize the action or reaction of these different aspects of nature. In the myth of Demeter and Persephone, when upset, Demeter **withdraws** and leaves the earth barren. Oedipus represents the tragedy of our hubris in relation to natural resources as over consumption comes back to haunt us as pollution and climate change. This encompasses the notion of **karma**, or **reprisal** insofar as it intimates the presence of an over-arching principle of justice. Zeus, makes his reactions well known in direct **forceful** way; unfortunately we may respond best to the angry authoritarian father. A trip to the zoo or a clear cut is all one needs to feel the **depressed** state of the wilderness that once informed our sense of vitality.

## Framing the Context; Perceptions of Nature

### The Four Frames for Nature – #3 Human Response, Fears & Symptoms

This chart begins to 'depict' or 'imagine' Nature's response in the context of each frame. We can see why the Climate, Agricultural and Natural Resources frames (in that order) have such relevance for our current culture. And, too, we can see that we are already inured to the price we pay in the Wilderness quadrant. We are already used to dealing with depression and isolation.



## Framing the Context; Perceptions of Nature

### The Four Frames for Nature – #3 Human Response, Fears & Symptoms

**Strategic Observations: Distress, calamity, scarcity, and depletion** represent the symptoms of a world out of balance. The associated fears, **isolation, chaos, poverty** and **hunger** are legitimate fears that are a part of our experience either personally, historically, or archetypically. These fears are hard wired into our nervous system making it understandable why we have devoted so many of our human resources to controlling our environment in order to avoid the reality of these fears.

In the industrialized world we have effectively managed these fears primarily by over harvesting, extracting and consuming natural resources. But this strategy is not sustainable and it is becoming increasingly evident that the charade is over. In the third world the fears of hunger and poverty are often realities that are lived daily.

In the industrialized world, however, poverty and hunger are not fears that most people often experience, but the fears of **isolation** and chaos hit closer to home. In urban areas almost all interactions are with other humans or humanly constructed environments. Yet behind the hustle bustle this isolation is evident in the serious epidemic of depression and anxiety. We manage this isolation with an array of pharmaceuticals, therapies, and the illusion that our many forms of virtual interactions are real relationships. It is doubtful that we are even close to identifying these symptoms as products of our increasing isolation from experiences with places and things that aren't human. Yet even with all of the quasi-nature experiences available like the discovery channel, cartoon animals, and zoos, most people are still able to identify distinctive therapeutic benefits of nature. This is a start, but until we can face our **isolation** rather than creating more elaborate distractions, there is little traction other than ethical responsibility and guilt for the protection of wildlife, wildlife habitat and wilderness.

## Framing the Context; Perceptions of Nature

### The Four Frames for Nature – #3 Human Response, Fears & Symptoms

**Strategic Observations:** It isn't surprising that the fear that is present and most active in our privileged world is **chaos**. The weather and natural disasters are constant reminders that there is something beyond our control and outside our room of mirrors. Paradoxically, as it becomes increasingly apparent that we are responsible for climate change we must accept that the ensuing calamities are byproducts of our human fantasy of omnipotence and control. Consequently, the necessity to act quickly with regard to climate change needs to be handled carefully because the impulse to bind our fears through the flight to control may be one fundamental causes of the imbalance leading to climate change in the first place.

Climate change and the chaos that it threatens, becomes the gateway through which the western industrial/technological paradigm of nature is being challenged to be re-visioned. It seems to us that real challenge to the environmental crisis, including climate change, is for humanity to shift from a perspective of superiority over nature to a perspective of participation and cooperation with nature. As things continue to heat up more instances of nature's withdrawing, reprisals, and violent reactions will undoubtedly reinforce the notion of critical environmental instability and the appropriate human responses will find more traction. Many of these responses such as **local sustainable agriculture, renewable energy, and global cooperation**, are already finding more legitimacy in the public psyche, and this already represents this paradigm shift that is necessary to regain some sense of balance.

## Talking About Mass Extinction

### What are the Problems?

When asked to list out the problems facing our earth, nature and the environment, respondents had a very consistent and somewhat narrow range of issues they would regularly list;

- climate change
- degradation of water and air quality
- pollution
- deforestation
- individual species loss

On the more infrequent list we find the following;

- population explosion
- habitat loss/destruction
- chemicals and toxins from humans
- over-consumption

### Mass Extinction – even Biodiversity Not on the Radar

Probably no more than 3-4 people even mentioned bio-diversity during these sessions. We did hear the word extinction once or twice, but it was mentioned in association with a single species. Mass Extinction never came up until we introduced the idea in the group.

### Shocking Yes . . . Personally Relevant? Unfortunately Not!

Most respondents found the idea of Mass Extinction shocking. Fully one third of all respondents responded profoundly to it in the moment only to retreat into a kind of detached questioning of it. Most people stayed in their heads – and did not really allow this news to sink in and hit them in the belly.

### Diversity Not Valued or Relevant

Diversity, of all kinds it seems, appears to be too abstract in the context of nature or biology to really mean much. The word is clear to people, but its import or relevance is not. *How much biodiversity do we need? According to whom? Etc.* Most respondents did not know how to ascertain where we are, will be or even should be with regard to biodiversity.

The meaning of this word is clear. Its relevance and measure is not.

## Talking About Mass Extinction

### **Where is the Outrage?**

Outrage was a no-show at these groups. Despite recruiting about one-third of the groups to be composed of respondents who were self-declared 7-8-9-10s on a scale of environmental concern and engagement (10 being the highest) even these people did not appear terribly concerned or moved by vivid descriptions of and conversations about ME.

There were always one or two people per group who were deeply impacted by this, but even for these people the impact tended to be more about future generations, Armageddon style reveries, etc. There was almost no real empathy for departing plants or animals. None. Zip. Nada.

Wow!

### **Unwillingness or Inability or to Feel?**

In our first stop on our journey in Chicago after more than seven hours of focus group conversation – with open discussions around extinction and more, not one single respondent ever mentioned a single species being lost or their feelings about this! Not a single animal or plant was mentioned, mourned or sympathized with. This continued in every stop of our journey.

Again, the feeling in the room was more one of 'unavailability' and not one of denial or avoidance.

## Talking About Mass Extinction

### Neither Denial nor Disbelief

In truth we do not think we encountered denial or even disbelief. Instead we think we found a deeper and more systemic problem; the inability to register the problem. It was as if we were playing a tune on a flute that played notes that the human ear simply could not physically hear. In essence, what we are saying is that most respondents appear to lack the mechanisms, the means to hear, understand or *feel* this story when told from a ME perspective.

We think “biological life” as a doorway has gotten too small, too irrelevant to be viable for us. We must find other means to begin to communicate this.

There are a number of reasons why “biological life” has become irrelevant for us which warrant some discussion. They include the following;

- **Ascent to the Head** (we no longer really inhabit our sensate bodies, we have all migrated to the purely virtual realm of the mind – we are, in effect, dis-embodied most of our lives!)
- **Virtual Reality trumps all** (cartoons and stuffed animals, nature on The Discovery Channel beat the real thing!)
- **No sense of Place** (all the world is a mall, an urban zone, a wi-fi place)
- **Nature, Biological Life is Temporal** (temporal = death. Can we talk about something else please?)

## Talking About Mass Extinction

### Ascent to the Head

Related to the first point, the ascent to the head is a leaving behind of our embodied realms. The body, (my own very personal encounter with biology) when compared to the streamlined world of the internet, IM, seamless technology, automotive flow, and countless other 'PowerPoint' mantras we interact with in our daily lives, is a flawed, slow, stinky, and continually deteriorating thing. It needs to be cleaned, fed, exercised, placated, medicated and more. Increasingly we think of our bodies, our biology, as a kind of detached entity. Like a pet. Not a very virtual one though.

Regardless, our ascent to the head has created the illusion that we can get along just fine without any kind of biological reality. It seems that the mantra of French philosopher Camus, stated years ago, "Physical presence is always excessive." is playing out before our eyes. Nature here is a vivid reminder of the painful and increasingly unnecessary dimensions of biological life.

There also seems to be a correlation with the increasingly difficulty we have as humans in relating to our own biology and the animal aspect of ourselves. There appears to be an increasing desire to transcend our animal nature in favor of the virtual reality and the disembodied fantasies of the mind. It is almost as if we would welcome and even celebrate the extinction of the animalistic and biological aspects of our modern selves.

It is not hard to ignore the plight of animals and plants when we have already transcended our own bodies!!!

"I'm not really all that concerned but I think it is a sad state we are in. I don't buy into a lot of the fear aspect. Its trying to talk to my heart but my head steps in and responds. It has issues that affect me. Emotions are fear and guilt. Depressed."  
18-23 Men and Women – Somewhat Involved – Chicago

## Talking About Mass Extinction

### Virtual Reality Trumps All

And reality sucks (i.e. biological life). It is messy, dirty, hard to control, it is continually in a state of decline or change, etc. In all of the qualitative work that we at Harpoon do, we experience this reality from respondents. Our world has developed numerous highly idealized virtual niches for them to inhabit and in effect hide from the real, physical world. The internet is symptomatic of this and is prime territory for this behavior to develop. Television, video games, etc. all play a role as well.

Virtual realities are clean, efficient and very easy to control. There is no mold, cancer, or really unexpected surprises (or so we like to believe.) It also comes in so many handy formats; no need to inconvenience oneself.

Despite the fact that these groups were grounded in the natural world as a real phenomenon, we heard plenty about the cartoon side of nature. For some people stuffed animals, cartoon characters, etc. now carry the weight and legitimacy of the natural world. From Fantasia and Bambi we now have Ants, Chicken Little, the Farmyard and an ever increasing 'virtual zoo' around us. Who needs to encounter the real thing anymore?

One respondent from Chicago, a man in his young 20's who hailed from rural Wisconsin talked about his love of nature and how fishing was one of his main ways to experience the liberating, calm and renewing power of being in the wild. But watch his progress through the conversation as he begins to default to virtual reality over reality. His trajectory is emblematic of what we see everywhere we go.

"I see us as an equal part of nature . . . It is what sustains us . . . I personally relate to water, like you said I just moved to the city from Wisconsin, from a rural area, and it is a big difference. I lived right on a lake so I am into water sports . . .

Nature, when you are in it, you just kind of get this feeling, there is a feeling of peace, its just what feels right to you. I don't want to say it feels natural, but it kind of does - if you know what I mean. You are in it. You know its kind of hard for me to say, because I'm kind of on the fence. I'd much rather be sitting in my room on the computer. Like, I'd think that I'd want to go for a bike ride, it seems like Ohhh that's a good idea. But then I'd rather not stop what I'm doing. Its kind of like its important to me in theory. But then, when I go out there, its like your playing catch, its like - this feels great! I don't know, its kind of hard to explain. Cause you know that it is a great thing, and it feels great when you are doing it, but its just easy and simpler not to some times. Just like, its kind of hard to go out fishing sometimes, you have to go get the gear, you have to take the truck, get the boat in the water, put the boat away later. Like, I'd just rather play a fishing game [video!]. But like, it is important, and like when you are doing it [fishing], it feels right.

But it is hard to make that effort to get out there."

18-23 Men and Women – Somewhat Involved – Chicago

## Talking About Mass Extinction

### No Sense of Place

Most people really struggle with a sense of place or rather a lack of it. Oddly enough several people commented that their attachment to the environment and their ability to feel and sense it declined rapidly with their moves back to urban settings.

We have lost contact with a sense of place; we no longer need to or want to think of a sense of place – with a unique characteristic that is rooted in nature or biology. Instead we let our sports franchises and their oddly displaced 'animal mascots' take over for us. We are Mighty Ducks, Sharks, Raptors, Cardinals, etc. We no longer really belong to places as defined by nature. (True, we move to Denver because we love the mountains, or move to the coast to be near the ocean, but the associations can be more about a postcard reality than an actual engagement with the land.)

The real issue with this lack of a sense of place is that since we have exiled ourselves from our own "environment" it is easy to do that to others. Since people do not see, or sense themselves in a natural setting, they have a hard time even imagining one.

For most people there are two zones; places of man's activities urban areas, suburban and even rural areas (where humankind is in clear control) and places of nature or the wilderness. For some, it is important just knowing that there are wild places in the world, even if they will never venture there. For others, the wilderness has become irrelevant because wildlife can be experienced in zoos and on TV, while the instinctual intensity and predatory dangers that helped define wilderness is lived on the streets and is now a part of most urban environments (the urban jungle). In essence we have simply absorbed it.

Wilderness as a place of its own, distinct from the influences of humanity and human nature, is difficult for most people to justify. It seems harder and harder to find appreciation for something that isn't perceived to have a direct human benefit. Even those who are outspoken about the importance of protecting wilderness think of it first in terms of the benefits of rejuvenation, recreation, and relaxation that it offers. It is hard to find much of an indication that there is any intrinsic meaning or purpose to things outside the purview of humanity. We will work to save from extinction the animals that dignify us but the others we will work even harder to exterminate as pests. In a nutshell, the prevailing attitude is that human-nature is superior to biological nature; if nature disappears we can still construct a narrative and find meaning in its disappearance, but if we disappear the world itself would become purposeless and meaningless.

## Talking About Mass Extinction

### **Nature (biology) is Temporal**

Biological life has all kinds of shortcomings. Probably the most damning is that it is prone to death. And most people today are far removed from this.

Our food (meat!) our wars, and our everyday realities are carefully constructed to avoid getting too close to death. No blood, no bodies. Etc. For people who have exiled the notion of death extinction, is not an easily accessible topic to discuss or consider. No one, it seems, ever sees or directly experiences an extinction. If we have trouble experiencing the death and the sacrifice in the foods we put directly into our mouths, how can we begin to feel the tragedy and death in an extinction?

Plants and animals seem to inhabit a world and reality that most of us are working hard to get beyond. No wonder their plight and their situation falls on deaf ears.

**Strategic Observation:** Perhaps we need to rethink the term extinction. The word itself is used in a way that seems to absolve us from any responsibility. It is almost a term that has become synonymous with "disappear".

In fact it is a word that is in some remote and sterile lexicon – not ours. Extinction is the work of nature – not people! Extinction is something that plants and animals seem to do of their own accord when they can't adapt. In a sense mass extinction can be seen another example of nature at work. It seems like an easy construct to disassociate with. An environmentalist's term for an environmental event, perhaps sad, but not part of our purview.

There needs to be new language here that speaks to the suffering, the pain and the death of these beings. A word that brings humans squarely into the equation as causal agents. Bring back the public execution!

### **ME As an Issue Lacks Relevance**

Sad but true. When the sheer weight of these various hurdles is added up the truth is that most people simply are unable to hear this message because the requisite 'relevance receptors' have been turned off or are too disabled.

They simply do not and cannot receive the information. In four groups we also aired the Species Alliance film trailer and found the general response to be the same. It was no more effective at moving the needle, despite its potent visuals, artful direction, authoritative speakers or moving emotions. The issue isn't how well we tell our story, it is that it is a story we can not hear.

## Talking About Mass Extinction

### **Environmental Overload?**

It is also true that most respondents seemed to be maxed out – and unable to devote much time or energy to yet another situation or reality about their environment.

This is going to be a critical issue to contend with. The sense of overwhelm and the sense of having “given at the office” was palpable in these groups. Even though the issue is a very different one, at a certain level, it is perceived by our respondents as all part of the same big issue.

**Strategic Observation:** Most of the respondents we met with are simply unavailable to being educated about this issue. Their hard-drives are unavailable to us – at least in an overt, obvious way. If we gain access to their hearts and minds, we need to come in the back door. Our society is over-taxed and simply unwilling to engage in almost any kind of undertaking that starts with the premise of needing or wanting to educate them or invite them into their unconscious realms. This is true even with highly committed people on this issue! This is not just a question of the neutral or moderately involved people.

## Learning From Concept Statements

### Concepts Used as Provocative Stimuli

To facilitate the discussion, late in the group discussions, we used a series of 7-8 concept statements that all tried to address the ME issue from different kinds of frames. These helped us jumpstart the conversation and also gauge response and engagement with different kinds of imagery, arguments, perspectives and the like.

We also did some editing and tweaking as we went on our way. There were a core of 4-5 ideas that continually engaged people and which help illuminate what may work and what may not. We will discuss these and insights gleaned from them in the following section. The ones that fell away rapidly, are included in the appendix.

### Group Mindset

Almost everyone seemed to feel that ideas that were not articulated as collective were not as effective or relevant to them. When problems and solutions were articulated in terms of "our" vs. "you/me" the response and engagement was much higher.

Certainly, there is a desire to seek company in our misery and dodge personal responsibility. But, there are probably other dimensions at work here; only problems perceived and experienced by the collective are problems that warrant engagement with. Our issue is not there.

**Strategic Observation:** There is a bit of the, "If this is such a big issue, why haven't I read about it yet?" kind of logic in many people. This is harder to overcome than one might think. We think it takes a kind of Al Gore style endorsement to help it vault into the collective consciousness. At any rate, right now it is simply part of a myriad of world-ending problems that someone is standing on the corner holding a sign for. Do we have the time for this initiative to bubble up from the populace to the top? We don't think so. We need a high-profile crusader to get this issue into the public consciousness. Right now it is nowhere!

## Learning From Concept Statements

### S

Nature and its diversity is a transcendent gift for all of life. We, as humans beings, share the abundance and beauty of this bountiful earth. It sustains and nourishes us. It is our home. It is up to us to safeguard and protect it. We need to respect all of life – all of creation. We are the stewards of this planet. We must act now to safeguard and protect all of life.

### Positives

- This was seen as a broad and non-politicized perspective by almost all.
- It took a few radicals in San Francisco to see this as a 'religious' oriented concept.
- This idea had broad, but not spectacular appeal and engagement.
- This approach has a common sense and even practical appeal.
- The phrase 'it is our home' resonated with many – and got them to re-think their connections.

### Questions and Concerns

- Very little call to action here. While positive and embraced, it seems like a statement of the obvious and does not invite new or fresh responses.
- Seems more like a chore to many. Hard work that lies ahead of us.
- Beauty and transcendent gifts are easily forgettable it seems.
- The idea of diversity does not really come through strongly.
- Those self-professed Christians in the groups, did not seem to gravitate to this idea.
- This idea does not have the kind of emotional wattage or even rational specificity it needs to have more traction.
- Many already identify with this – and look where we are. This does not move the needle too much.
- Oddly enough, few people circled or engaged with the word or concept of 'steward'. It does not seem to inspire or engage many.

### Summary

This idea does not move the needle ahead for us. It does not seem to spark much response or significant engagement from respondents. It does not appear to shift the dialogue or move people to a different place.

## Learning From Concept Statements

### W

All of life is interconnected. From the moment we step outside our doors, feel the weather and breath in the air, we know that we are part of this vast, complex and interconnected system. Increasingly we are also learning that our natural world is unable to keep pace of growth with the pressures that human habits and lifestyles have imposed on it. Climate change, loss of habitat, over-consumption and more have radically taken their toll on our earth and nature itself. Nature can no longer regulate, renew, or protect itself. The quality of our air, water and the habitats that countless plants and animals depend on are now in jeopardy. Many scientists are beginning to speak of being in the midst of a human-caused mass-extinction! We are on the verge of ecological collapse. We must begin to assist nature, to play our part, by managing our impact on our earth, our habitat. The winds of change are blowing and more people are heeding the call. Will we be able to act fast enough?

"Humans need to take responsibility for the damage done to nature. But , also offers, hope." 45-64 Men and Women – Somewhat Involved – San Francisco

"It visualized the problem, animal, plant people. Re-orientes our idea of what's important." 45-64 Men and Women – Somewhat Involved – San Francisco

"It conveys the problem and a sense of urgency to get to work to fix it. It speaks to my mind. The feeling is scared; ecological collapse is a frightening phrase. It makes me want to get to work on fixing problems."  
45-64 Men and Women – Somewhat Involved – San Francisco

### Positives

- This concept was written late in the game and only exposed in San Francisco. It had the benefit of all of our learning. The connection of habitat to very relevant things like air and water quality got noticed.
- The call to action, in terms of stepping in to assist nature made sense to most people – even if they didn't know what to do. Being reminded that we must play our part strikes a resonant chord in people.
- Putting the focus on people, and their role in all of this was appreciated for its directness and candor.
- The logic of this idea is appealing and clear. It begins in a place of obvious relevance and then broadens the scope to include our ME issue. It plays to rational issues that many people acknowledge.

## Learning From Concept Statements

***W cont'd.***

### **Questions and Concerns**

- Largely a rational argument, this idea lacks much of an emotional leg to stand on.
- This approach does not seem to effectively call out the biodiversity crisis for people. It may be seen to be more about climate change.

### **Summary**

This idea attempted to begin by speaking to that part of the environment that most people relate to and value; weather, air and water. And to then move from there to other dimensions of our environment and an acknowledgement that it is in serious trouble and needs our help. Along the way the importance of biodiversity is mentioned and woven in as a key constituent, or gauge of our environmental health.

This idea seems to feel like a positive approach by many. The invitation to pitch in on a communal problem and move towards a solution acted as a rallying cry. Again, no one needs to be convinced that nature needs our help, and this face of nature, the “weather” face, is one we respond to.

We think this approach is fruitful – but unfortunately it was not conceptualized until our last market and therefore did not get broad exposure.

## Learning From Concept Statements

### H

You may have recently read that throughout the US, Europe, and South America that 2007 has brought repeated discoveries of the disappearance of countless honey bee colonies. Some experts believe that up to 80% of the honey bee population of the US has disappeared. While there is no single identified cause US experts are pointing to a mite infestation and some European experts have shown that EMFs (electro magnetic fields) created by cell phones and towers, satellite signals and other technologies are responsible for disrupting bees sophisticated navigational systems which results in their not being able to find their way home.

Honey bees represent a now critical part of all the natural pollination of our food crops. More broadly their role in the web of life prompted Einstein to comment; "If the bee disappeared off the surface of the globe, then man would only have four years of life left. No more bees, no more pollination, no more plants, no more animals, no more man."\_\_ Honey bees are, in a way, just the tip of the iceberg with regard to the delicate balance and fragile nature of the interconnected web of life we all depend on.

### Positives

- This idea built on the considerable intrigue and interest many people had in the plight of the honey bee. This one had lots of popular appeal
- The whole issue of causation and the "cell phone" in particular really got people to respond and really wonder. Oddly enough they did not outright reject the possibility, but rather did some very honest introspection and wondered aloud if they were willing to make the "ultimate" sacrifice were this true . . .
- The reputed Einstein quote had huge appeal as well.
- This idea sparked fear about our food web – far more than it did a concern about the web of life unraveling.
- The odd closeness to this issue, (most people feel like the know bees . . .) made this an interesting idea for many people. Bees lack the kind of poster presence of big charismatic and dominant animals like bears, wolves, eagles and whales. But they spark a great deal of attention none the less in large part because they are so woven into our lives (heightened relevance) and memories.
- The idea that one small part of nature can have far-reaching consequences was sometimes present for many people. (It obviously helps however when the consequences are so immediate for us!)

## Learning From Concept Statements

**H *cont'd.***

### **Questions and Concerns**

- Almost nobody saw the bigger picture issue here. They remained locked in on the Honeybees alone. The notion of the web of life was rarely noticed or connected up to this story.
- While people did not appear to reject the "science" in this idea, they also did not really connect with it. Our sense is that they really did not learn enough from this.

### **Summary**

This idea, as popular as it was, does not really go far enough for us. It does not introduce new ideas that will stick with people or get them to move beyond the example (honeybees) to the bigger picture of loss of biodiversity and ultimately systemic trouble.

It also does not really, in its current form, openly invoke the notion of some kind of broad environmental malaise. And, it seems to bring to mind the idea of having to give something up (cell phones) which brings up the picture of loss, instead of rallying to help, which feels like a positive action.

## Learning From Concept Statements

### **A**

Animal and plant species are disappearing (forever!) at alarming and ever increasing rates. Biodiversity experts largely agree that if the current rate of decline, roughly 1000 times faster than normal extinction rates, is not radically addressed within 10-15 years almost 50% of all plant and 50% of all animal species will go extinct. And, inarguably, the causes for this alarming rate of extinction are all human induced.

No one can precisely predict how this will play out but the likelihood of natural systems collapse is significant. Global Warming, which has everyone's attention, is a significant problem as well, but its causes and solutions are only part of the Mass Extinction equation. We need to tune into the unique problems and solutions that this significant loss of biodiversity represents, while we still have a chance. We must move fast to conserve life.

### **Positives**

- Probably the overall winner in terms of sheer numbers of people who found this compelling and impactful.
- This idea showcased the importance of certain clearly stated facts to drive home the point.
- 1000 times faster in particular really upped the ante for many. It was hard to argue with. (50% of all species gone however is something that no one can relate to or even meaningfully respond to. Use it sparingly if at all.)
- Again, linking this to human activity is critical and impactful.
-

## Learning From Concept Statements

### A *cont'd.*

#### Questions and Concerns

- This idea spawned tremendous push back from those on the fence. It helped us see that if we allow people to respond from a too rational place they will actually take refuge in questioning the logic and science and in fact never really take in what the paragraph is trying to say.
- Many considered this a "scare-tactic" kind of argument.
- Natural systems is not a clear idea for people. The language does not seem to hit close to home. It lacks human relevance.
- The second paragraph was largely beyond the ken of most. Again, invoking 'natural systems collapse' in terms of animal species, does not sound like a huge threat.
- This idea helps show the limits of making a too animal/plant (biology) centric argument. "We can live without them!"
- Having 10-15 years is neither believable nor motivating to most. It seemed to do very little to engage.

#### Summary

This idea was also lauded as being very factually clear and logical. It failed to move the needle a great deal, but seemed to offer up more grist to hold onto and potentially remember.

Still the argument, as we have learned, will only fall on deaf ears.

## Learning From Concept Statements

### G

In most areas of our lives we nurture, protect and provide for our children so that they may lead healthy, happy and better lives than ours. But alas, through our own actions we are actually destroying the most precious gift - the earth and risking our children's very existence. Through our behavior, our direct actions, we are threatening nature and the earth as we know it for our children and our children's' children.

What will we tell the children? When they ask where all the plants and animals went? How is it that we simply did not notice? Or care? What kind of legacy do we want to leave behind? How will future generations view the choices we made? Our habits and ways - habitat destruction, pollution, over-population, and more are endangering life at an alarming rate. Our actions created this situation and our actions can help to change it too.

### Positives

- Very strong and consistent appeal in this idea. Very strong in Philadelphia and Chicago.
- This idea managed to evoke emotion - perhaps the only thing that did throughout our discussions
- By calling upon the "legacy" part of our beings, respondents were able to feel and respond in ways that the other concepts did not allow them to.
- Respondents seemed to experience this idea through the surrogacy of their own children. (Even young people and those without children did this as well . . .)
- Many acknowledge that children need, want, see and feel differently than I do, so I can value something for them, that I may not value for myself.
- Children and future legacies are the lynch pin here.
- Men and women alike gravitated to this. Highly engaged and very neutral people did as well.
- The idea of "endangering life" was broad enough to allow people to take it very personally impacted.
- This idea does not have any kind of politicized perspective to leverage.

## Learning From Concept Statements

### **G cont'd.**

#### **Questions and Concerns**

- The idea of “endangering life” was broad enough to allow people to take it very personally impacted.
- A few mentioned the lack of specificity here – there was a desire to balance the strong emotional appeal with more fact and objective truth.
- 

#### **Summary**

This idea clearly had the greatest emotional wattage of anything we showed. It also had a way of forcing the respondent to take a kind of parent/adult/responsible elder kind of posture. This in turn had a profoundly engaging affect. People could not simply ignore this appeal.

This idea seems to very rapidly force people to put their lives, activities, and values in perspective. And, most do not like what they see and realize. The child is a kind of surrogate here. Only when the child is acknowledged and brought into the conversation is the adult willing and able to engage with this idea; to feel it, to sense it, to really begin to imagine what it might be like.

As we mentioned before, many of us have cut off the child in ourselves – and can only *experience* in this way through the eyes of a child. (not ourselves!) Children have a way of holding us accountable. We can sense and feel their excitement, wonder, awe, and joy at the world. And, on the flip side, we can also feel their pain, their loss, their devastation, their disappointment. Most of us readily believe that we toil endlessly to give our children a better world. This concept makes it abundantly clear that we have really dropped the ball in a big way. People really get it.

We think this idea holds a core insight; only through the eyes of a child can the broader public see, feel, sense and acknowledge the problems facing us from an environmental perspective. Only through the eyes of the child can people really begin to emotionally make themselves available to our story . . .

## Moving Forward

### **“I Don’t Care About Animals”**

The naked truth is that mass extinction is not a terribly motivating or even a meaningfully scary notion for many people. Even if we could convince people that a mass extinction is happening it will not move the needle. What is missing and is very hard to communicate is the realization that loss of life on this scale will bring cataclysmic changes to our entire world, the natural systems we all live on and with. It is very hard for people to see both of these pieces. They never get there.

### **Reframe the Problem as Environmental Instability, Move Away From Focusing on one Symptom; *Mass Extinction***

Mass Extinction feels like a door that will not open. One that is unavailable to us. It also feels more like a symptom, rather than a clear articulation of the problem.

**Strategic Observation:** We have learned that there is far more openness to the problem, ‘environmental instability/collapse’ than to the biodiversity/ME issue, which is just one symptom of the problem. It is our sense that we must wire humans into the equation if we are to succeed. Right now they are in a kind of biological exile that renders this task very hard. We must speak to them where they live.

The question is, how can we frame up this issue, to try and solve this pressing problem? Just as one incurable disease is morphed into a curable one in medical science, can we hope to re-define or re-frame this issue into a context where we can impact attitudes and behaviors?

As we have made repeatedly clear, the symptom we are focused on is not likely to get people to consider the Environmental Instability issue, but we think there are other issues that can and will.

### **Environmental Instability (Collapse!) Is the Thing**

We think that some articulation of 'Environmental Instability' is the angle. There are numerous reasons;

- Almost everyone viewed nature as overwhelmed and no longer able to assume one of its key roles (from their perspective) cleaning and tending our environment.
- Almost everyone felt like they were in direct, daily and intimate contact with the environment. This profound link *already* exists and is readily acknowledged. We must find a way to tell our story on this existent "story line".
- There was also strong agreement that Nature now needs our help, and in fact, it is something we owe. It felt like an axiomatic truth that we may be able to tap into.
- Environmental Instability is highly wired into very real fears and concerns that we can exploit, representing three of the four quadrants of nature; **Climate** (changing and weird weather), **Natural Resources** (pollution, air and water quality) and **Agriculture** (food safety and scarcity).
- This story line is one that the consumer believes, trusts and has had time to live with. From Silent Spring and other watershed moments in the environmental history of the past 30 years, much of this 'logic' has taken the form of accepted wisdom. We do not have to work hard to convince people here. We need to get the word out and mobilize.
- People are very concerned about living in, breathing in and eating from a dirty, messy, disorganized environment. This pre-occupation with dirt and mess clearly leverages a very prevalent mass-cultural trait of obsessive-compulsive disorder.
- We may well be able to align with, draft on and bundle ourselves into the growing Climate Change momentum. (more on this coming)

**Strategic Observation:** Our core premise here is that by getting people to being to more aggressively attend to 'Environmental Instability' we will begin to get them to address the very concerns and issues that contribute to ME and the loss of biodiversity. (Clearly we will need to create a patchwork strategy to address different dimensions of this multi-dimensional problem and to activate actions that support different unique concerns around the ME issue.) But at a mass-communication and activation level, we think this is the first and most important step.

## **Moving Forward**

### **Moving From Defining Our Problem to Articulating and Messaging Our Problem . . .**

- Developing the right language for our problem. (We should keep it close to accepted, embedded logic and language already in common parlance.) We think we are clearly in the right territory. But what is the ideal, exact wording to work with here? What is our version of 'global warming' or 'Climate change'? This work needs to be carefully considered and masterfully executed. We think this initiative calls for the services of specially trained language and naming experts.

### **Mass Solutions vs. Top Level Initiatives**

If this were our dime, we would spend one third on mass initiatives and focus two thirds of our resources on top level decision makers. We simply do not have the time to spend.

### **Through the Eyes of a Child . . .**

We are not alone in zeroing in on this kind of emotional approach to these issues. There is currently a global warming spot featuring a speeding train and a man who steps aside, casually dismissing his need to tune in, only to reveal a young girl standing behind him to face the oncoming train. It is graphic and clear.

We believe in the kind of emotional access this pathway gives us. There are many, many ways to bring this to life and to creatively tailor it to a range of institutions particular user bases and a range of orientations and values.

**Concept Stimuli**

**Screeners**

### **Additional Concepts – drew less response . . .**

C

All of life is sacred and deserves to be treated with respect. But beyond this we are learning that it needs to be nurtured and cared for as well, or it simply will not flourish. In most traditions it is the woman who is the keeper of the hearth, the life of the home, the guardian of all life. Preserving the rich tapestry of life on our earth calls on our nurturing, caring side. We need to begin to change our relationship with mother nature.

P

Humans are only part of the rich tapestry of life on earth. Through millions of years a vast and incredibly intricate web of life has developed. Nature in all of its varied forms has evolved into a thing of beauty. Each and every part of it is a treasure that we need to protect. We are a small part of the whole and need to begin to respect and responsibly our place in this amazing natural system.

The fate of humankind is intrinsically bound up in our natural world. For, when nature fails, so will we. We are supported and sustained by the incredibly intricate and inter-connected web of life that surrounds and encompasses us. If the web of life is weakened, then we are weakened. Each plant, animal, each and every species plays a unique role in the working of this complex system. How much more can we dismantle before we put it all in jeopardy?\_

E

Nature can be seen as a vast and efficient system that delivers countless benefits to all of human kind. Without out these numerous "services" life as we know it would quickly change. It behooves us to take notice of the significant degradation to our natural system and most importantly to tune into the fact that we are facing a biodiversity crisis now. If indeed we loose a significant percentage of our plant, animal and insect species we risk threatening the functioning of our earth's natural systems.

**CL SCREENER**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Fax \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

**Monday, May 7th**

**Chicago** 2:30-4:30 18-23 Mixed Gender - Somewhat Involved  
 5:00-7:30 45-64 Men - Highly Involved  
 7:30-10:00 24-39 Mixed Gender - Neutral

**Wednesday, May 9th**

**Philadelphia** 1:30-4:00 24-39 Women - Highly Involved  
 5:00-7:30 45-64 Mixed Gender - Somewhat Involved

**Monday, May 14th**

**San Fran.** 5:00-7:30 24-39 Mixed Gender - Highly Involved  
 7:30-10:00 45-64 Mixed Gender - Somewhat Involved

**RECRUIT 8-9 for 7 to show.**

1. Sometimes the type of work people do affects the products and services they buy. **Are you or any members of your immediate family employed in any of the following types of companies?** READ LIST AND RECORD ALL “YES” RESPONSES.
  - An advertising agency 1 – T&T
  - A market research company 2 – T&T
  - An entertainment company, such as a movie/television studio, a resort or theme park, etc. 5 – T&T
  - A broadcasting or media company 6 – T&T

*Note to interviewer: If at any point during the interview you are having difficulty understanding the respondent (e.g. heavy accent) terminate interview.*

**3. Do you currently have children, either living with you at home or on their own?**

Yes 1 – **What is your relation to the children?** Are you the mother of these children, grandmother, or some other relation to the children?  
Mother or Father 1 – Continue  
 Try for at least 50% with children.

4. These next few questions are to make sure we get a range of respondents in the study. **Which of the following categories includes your age?** READ LIST.

Under 24	<b>T&amp;T</b>
24 to 29	CONTINUE
30 to 34	CONTINUE
35 to 39	CONTINUE
40 to 44	CONTINUE
45 to 49	CONTINUE
50 to 54	CONTINUE
55 to 59	CONTINUE
60 to 64	CONTINUE
65 or over	<b>T&amp;T</b>

5. **Which of the following issues or concerns do you consider your self to be somewhat interested in?** READ LIST.

	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
Air Quality	1	2
World Hunger	1	2
Educational Reform	1	2
<b>Enviromental Issues</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Global Warming</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Protecting Endangered Species</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Conservation of Nature</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Protection of Forests and Wild Lands</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>

**IF NO TO ALL BOLDED ISSUES, TERMINATE**

6. Of the issues or concerns you indicated you were interested in, please indicate how well informed you consider yourself on each one . . .

	Not very	Somewhat	Very
Air Quality	_____	_____	_____
World Hunger	_____	_____	_____
Educational Reform	_____	_____	_____
<b>Enviromental Issues</b>	_____	_____	_____
<b>Global Warming</b>	_____	_____	_____
<b>Protecting Endangered Species</b>	_____	_____	_____
<b>Conservation of Nature</b>	_____	_____	_____
<b>Protection of Forests and Wild Lands</b>	_____	_____	_____

TO QUALIFY FOR A HIGHLY INVOLVED MUST CHECK “VERY” TWICE+ FOR BOLDED STATEMENTS

TO QUALIFY FOR A SOMEWHAT INVOLVED MUST CHECK “SOMEWHAT” AT LEAST TWICE FOR BOLDED STATEMENTS

TO QUALIFY FOR A NEUTRAL MUST NOT HAVE CHECKED VERY AND CAN ONLY CHECK SOMEWHAT ONCE FOR BOLDED STATEMENTS

**READ LIST FOR ALL ‘BOLDED’ QUESTIONS MARKED YES ABOVE – CHECK ANSWERS WHERE APPROPRIATE.**

	<u>Joined an Org.</u>	<u>Donated money</u>	<u>Volunteered Time</u>
Global Warming	_____	_____	_____
Environmental Issues	_____	_____	_____
Global Warming	_____	_____	_____
<b>Protecting Endangered Species</b>	_____	_____	_____
<b>Conservation of Nature</b>	_____	_____	_____
<b>Protection of Forests and Wildlands</b>	_____	_____	_____

TO QUALIFY FOR A HIGHLY INVOLVED MUST CHECK “VERY” TWICE+ FOR BOLDED STATEMENTS

TO QUALIFY FOR A SOMEWHAT INVOLVED MUST CHECK “SOMEWHAT” AT LEAST THREE TIMES FOR BOLDED STATEMENTS

TO QUALIFY FOR A NEUTRAL MUST NOT HAVE CHECKED VERY AND CAN ONLY CHECK SOMEWHAT ONCE FOR BOLDED STATEMENTS

7. Of the issues or concerns you indicated you were interested in, which ones have you ever done any of the following? **READ LIST FOR ALL ‘BOLDED’ QUESTIONS MARKED YES ABOVE – CHECK ANSWERS WHERE APPROPRIATE.**

	<u>Joined an Org.</u>	<u>Donated money</u>	<u>Volunteered Time</u>
Global Warming	_____	_____	_____
Environmental Issues	_____	_____	_____
Global Warming	_____	_____	_____
<b>Protecting Endangered Species</b>	_____	_____	_____
<b>Conservation of Nature</b>	_____	_____	_____
<b>Protection of Forests and Wildlands</b>	_____	_____	_____

TO QUALIFY FOR A HIGHLY INVOLVED MUST HAVE DONATED MONEY OR VOLUNTEERED TIME AT LEAST THREE+ TIMES FOR BOLDED STATEMENTS

TO QUALIFY FOR A SOMEWHAT INVOLVED MUST HAVE JOINED AN ORGANIZATION AT LEAST ONCE AND DONATED MONEY OR VOLUNTEERED TIME ONE TO TWO TIMES FOR BOLDED STATEMENTS

TO QUALIFY FOR A NEUTRAL MAY ONLY HAVE JOINED AN ORG. MUST NOT DONATED MONEY OR VOLUNTEERED TIME FOR BOLDED STATEMENTS

9. Now, using a 10-point scale, where “1” means you completely DISAGREE and “10” means you completely AGREE, please indicate how much you agree or disagree with each of the following statements:

Completely DISAGREE COMPLETELY AGREE  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

ROTATE LIST.

- Global Warming is a critical issue \_\_\_\_\_
- Environmental Issues are critical \_\_\_\_\_
- \*- Protecting Endangered Species is a critical issue \_\_\_\_\_
- \*- Conservation of Nature is a critical issue \_\_\_\_\_
- \*- Protection of forests and wildlands is a critical issue \_\_\_\_\_

TO QUALIFY FOR A HIGHLY INVOLVED MUST RATE AT LEAST ONE OF THE STARRED STATEMENTS AS A 8-9-10.

TO QUALIFY FOR A SOMEWHAT INVOLVED MUST RATE AT LEAST ONE OF THE STARRED STATEMENTS AS A 6-7.

TO QUALIFY FOR A NEUTRAL MUST RATE AT LEAST ONE OF THE STARRED STATEMENTS AS A 4-5.

.

11. Are you **currently employed** on a full-time or part-time basis?

RECRUIT SOME PER GROUP WHO SAY “YES”.

Yes, full-time            1

Yes, part-time            2

No, not employed      3 – Is another adult in your household employed?

PLEASE TRY FOR 2/3’S EMPLOYED AT LEAST PART TIME. FEEL FREE TO RELAX FOR AFTERNOON AND STUDENT GROUPS AS APPROPRIATE,

12. What is your/their **current** position and industry? Any other adults in your household?

Respondent

Spouse/Other Adult in HH

Position/Job title: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Company/Industry: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

14. Which category includes your **total annual household income** before taxes?

**READ LIST. GET A MIX OF INCOMES IN EACH GROUP.**

Under \$20,000	1 – Max 2
\$20,000 but less than \$40,000	2 –
\$40,000 but less than \$50,000	3 –
\$50,000 but less than \$75,000	4
\$75,000 but less than \$100,000	5
\$100,000 but less than \$150,000	6
\$150,000 or higher	7

15. If you could have lunch tomorrow with any person in the world, who would that be and what would you want to talk about and why? **MAKE SURE RESPONDENT IS ARTICULATE WITH NO LANGUAGE BARRIER - OTHERWISE, T&T.**