

# DEEP ECOLOGY

## FRITJOF CAPRA



# Crisis of Perception

- Environmental concerns have become very important today
- We face a series of global problems harming the biosphere and human life
- All the major problems of our time are inter related
- They cannot be understood in isolation
- They are systemic problems- ie, they are interconnected and inter dependent
- Example: poverty and world population is interconnected

# Butterfly effect



- The **butterfly effect** is an idea that says that a small change can make much bigger changes happen; that one small incident can have a big impact in the future.
- The term butterfly effect comes from an analogy where a butterfly flaps its wings in Chicago and a tornado occurs in Tokyo.

# Water pollution



# Air pollution



# Failure in Waste Management









# Population growth





# Deforestation/endangering species



An aerial photograph of a forest fire in the Amazon, showing a large area of charred ground and smoke rising from the burning trees. A semi-transparent map of South America is overlaid on the image, with the fire's location corresponding to the Amazon basin. The text 'Why the Amazon is burning' is superimposed on the right side of the image.

# Why the **Amazon** is burning

**Global  
NEWS**



- All the problems faced by us must be seen as just different facets of a single crisis- A CRISIS OF PERCEPTION
- What is this Crisis of perception?
- Most of us and our social institutions have a concept of an **outdated world view**
- This world view is inadequate for dealing with our overpopulated, globally interconnected world
- Therefore, **we need a radical shift in our perceptions, thinking and values**
- But this realization has not yet reached to most of our leaders, administrators or university professors

# We need 'sustainable' solutions

- The solutions we have today for the problems we face may affect the future generations- therefore they are not the actual solutions
- The solutions we have today are therefore not sustainable
- Today, the concept of sustainability has become key concept in ecology movement
- What is sustainable society?
- “A sustainable society is one that satisfies its needs without diminishing the prospects of future generations” - Lester Brown
- Creating sustainable communities is our great challenge

SOCIETY

ECONOMY

SUSTANABLE  
DEVELPMENT

ENVIRONMENT



# The new Paradigm- Holistic World view/ Deep Ecology

- What is holistic world view?
- Seeing the world as an integrated whole rather than a dissociated collection of parts
- It is a kind of deep ecological awareness
- What is meant by deep ecological awareness?
- This awareness recognizes **the fundamental interdependence of all phenomena**
- A belief that individuals and societies are all embedded and dependent on the cyclical process of nature





**WRONG**



**RIGHT**

# Deep ecology as a philosophical school

- Norwegian philosopher **Arne Naess** in early seventies made the distinction between **'shallow'** and **'deep ecology'**.
- **Shallow ecology-** **anthropocentric-** human centered- Views that humans are above or outside nature- stands as the source of all value
- **Deep Ecology-** **ecocentric-** everything in the world is fundamentally inter connected and inter dependent- Humans are only just one particular strand in the web of life

# Arne Naess



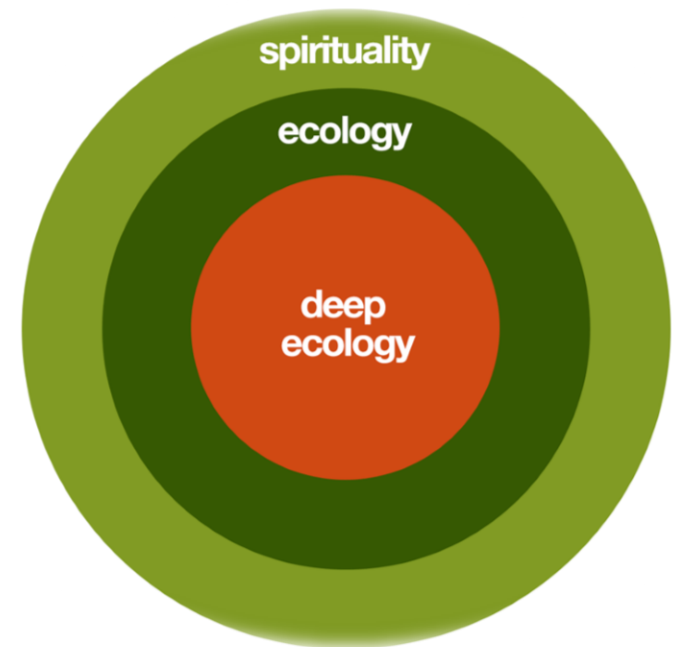
# EGO VS. ECO





# Deep Ecology is a spiritual awareness

- Human spirit is a mode of consciousness
- Individual feels a sense of belonging, a connectedness to the cosmos as a whole
- This thought is related to the so called 'perennial philosophy' of spiritual traditions like that of Christian mystics, Buddhists, Native American traditions etc.





*Om Ishaa vaasyam-idam sarvam*



*Yatkincha jagatyaam jagat*

*Tena tyaktena bhunjeethaa*

*Maa gridhah kasya svid-dhanam*

~~~~

*Yajur Veda 40/1, Isha Upanishad 1*

~~~~~

*O men, the Entire Universe is pervaded by God!  
Enjoy all of nature as gifts from God, but with a  
spirit of renunciation! Do not be attached to them!  
And do not covet the wealth of others. Control Greed!*

***Yastu sarvani bhutani atmanyev  
anupashyati*** (Yajur Veda 40: 5)

***Yastu***

Whoever

***atmanyev anupashyati***

realizes that his true self is  
his soul, sees a similar soul

***Sarvani bhutani***  
in all living beings





# Deep ecology also asks 'deeper questions' and demands a paradigm shift

- Deep ecology asks **profound questions** about the very foundations of our modern, scientific, growth oriented, materialistic world view and way of life
- It questions this entire paradigm from an ecological perspective
- The important questions are:
  - a) What is our relation to one another?
  - b) Are we concerned about our future generations?
  - c) How do we look at the web of life of which we are a part

# Social Ecology and Ecofeminism

- These are two important philosophical schools of ecology
- **Social Ecology**
  - focuses on **cultural characteristics** and **patterns of social organization** that have brought about the current ecological crisis
  - Finds that many of our social and economic structures are anti-ecological
  - The technologies of our social and economic structure are rooted in '**the dominator system of social organization**'- Riane Eisler
  - Eg. Patriarchy, imperialism, capitalism, racism etc.

# What is Ecofeminism?

- A special school of social ecology
- Addresses the basic dynamics of social domination within the context of patriarchy
- Ecofeminists argue that the patriarchal domination of women by men is the **prototype** of all domination and exploitation
- **Exploitation of nature has gone hand in hand with the exploitation of women** who have been associated with nature throughout the ages
- There is therefore a natural kinship between feminism and ecology

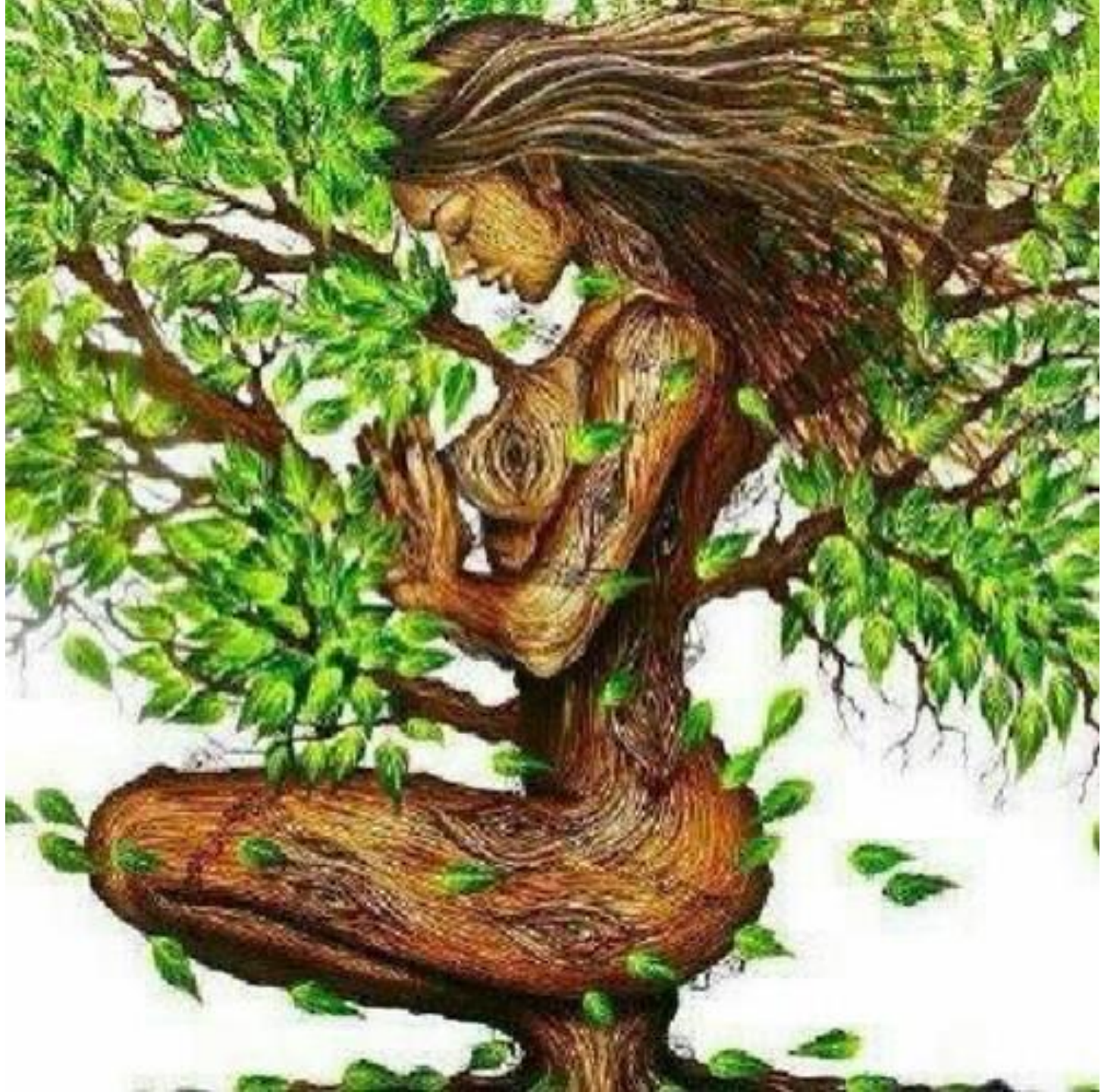
# THE END



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# Mother earth nourishes us



"An extraordinary collage which, for all the research and hard intellectual work underlying it, becomes an intense physical experience." —ADRIENNE RICH

# WOMAN AND NATURE

## THE ROARING INSIDE HER



SUSAN GRIFFIN

*By the author of *The Eros of Everyday Life* and *A Chorus of Stones**



# Ecofeminism



W O M E N

C U L T U R E

N A T U R E

Edited by Karen J. Warren



# ECOFEMINIST PHILOSOPHY

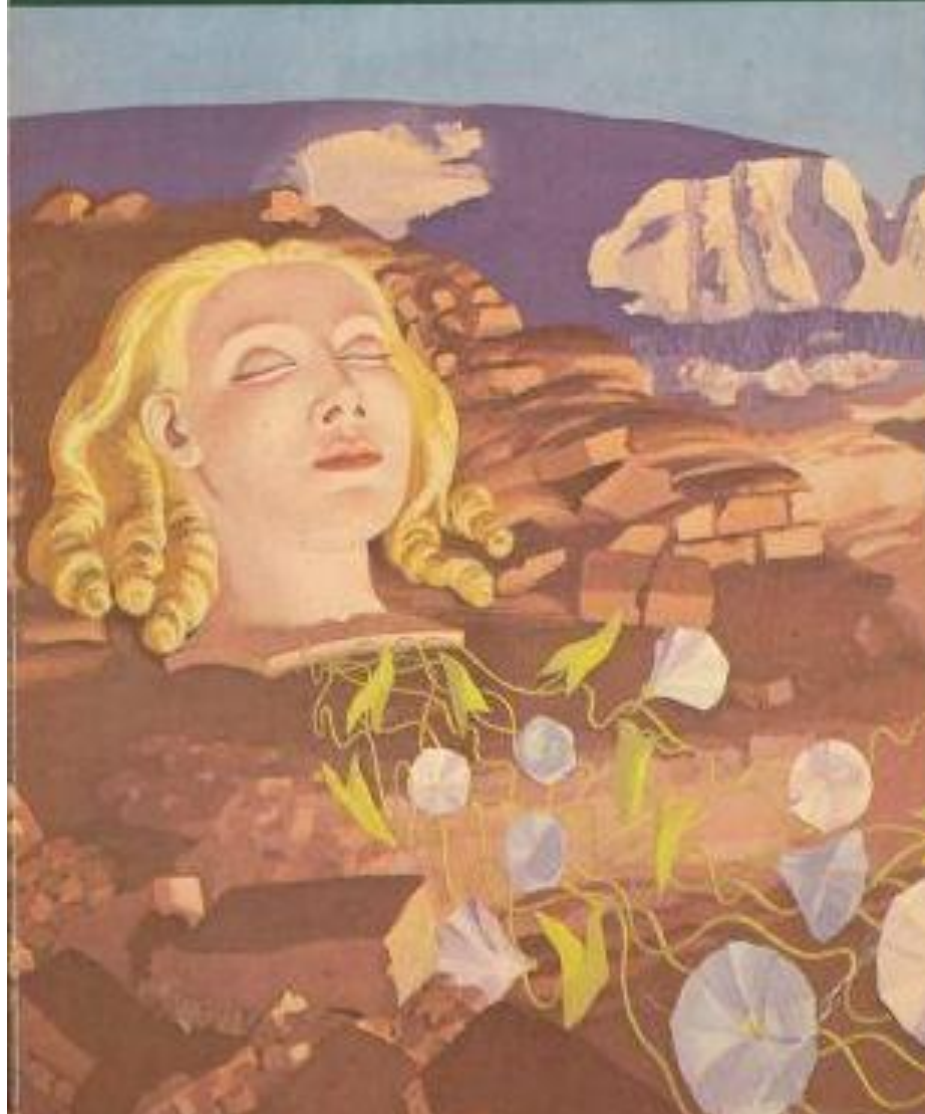
A WESTERN PERSPECTIVE  
ON WHAT IT IS AND  
WHY IT MATTERS

KAREN J. WARREN

Virago Modern Classics

Margaret Atwood

Surfacing



# We need new values and ethics

- The central defining character of deep ecology is its new values and ethics
- Replace the old anthropocentric values with new ecocentric values
- Acknowledge the inherent value of nonhuman life
- Consider all living beings as members of ecological communities bound together in a net work of interdependencies
- If then a radically new system of ethics emerges

# WE ARE NATURE



Close-up of a small leaf



Blood vessels of a human heart



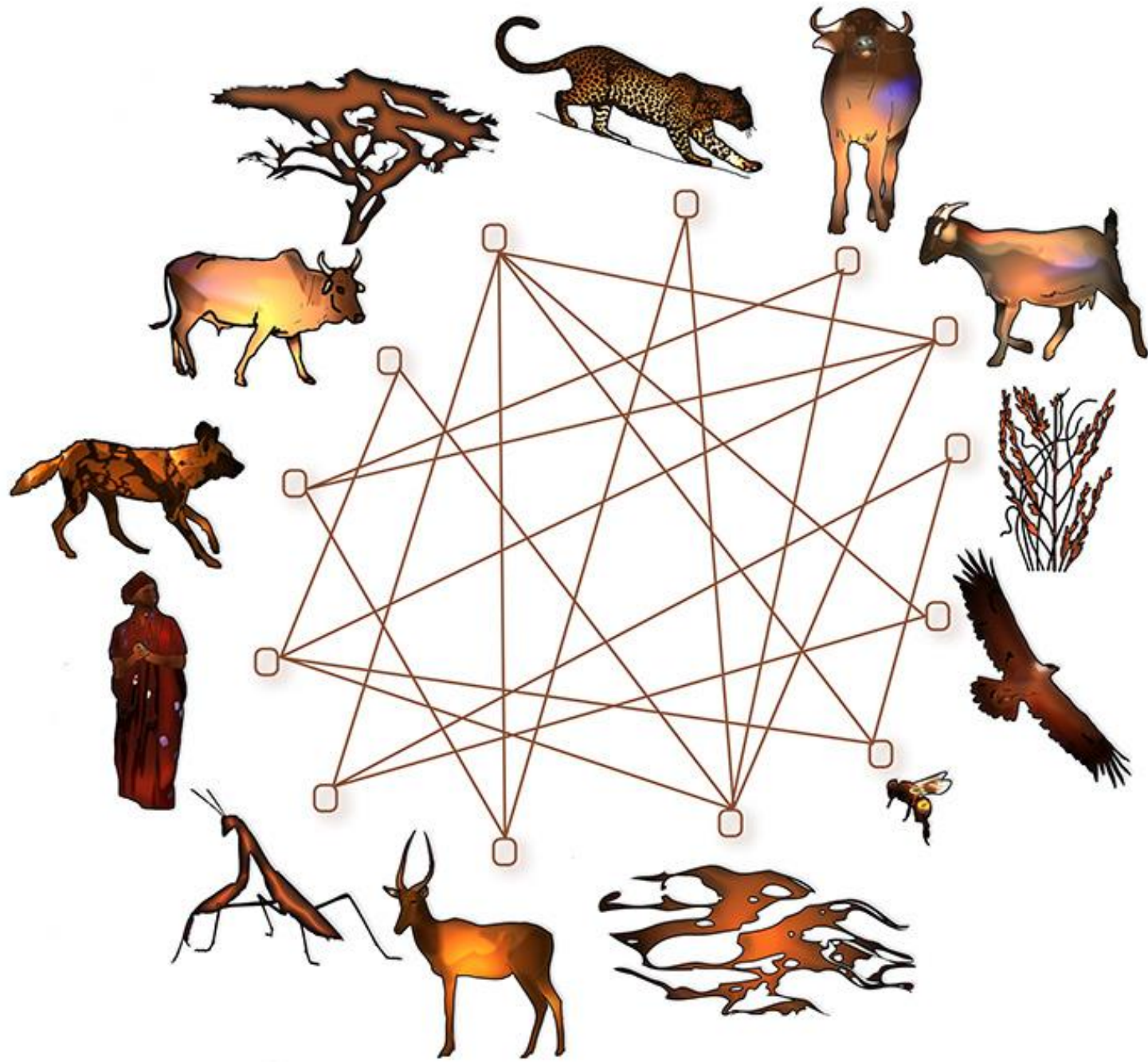
River network of the Amazon

# Deep ecological ethics urgent today

- We need a deep ecological ethics urgently in science today
- Because the scientists today are doing not life furthering or life preserving but actually life destroying
- Physicists- designs weapons that threatens to wipe out life on the planet
- Chemists- Contaminates the global environment
- Biologists- releases new and unknown types of micro organisms
- Psychologists and other scientists- torturing animals in the name of scientific progress
- Therefore we need urgently to introduce 'ecoethical' standards to science
- Scientists in their research are not 'value free'

# We are only a part of the web of life

- Values are inherent in all living nature
- Nature and self are one
- Self's identification with nature- foundation of deep ecology
- We are an integral part of the web of life and we need certain norms to live
- If we have deep ecological awareness we will definitely have a concern and care for all living beings
- There is a connection between deep ecology and psychology too







# THE WEB OF LIFE

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.

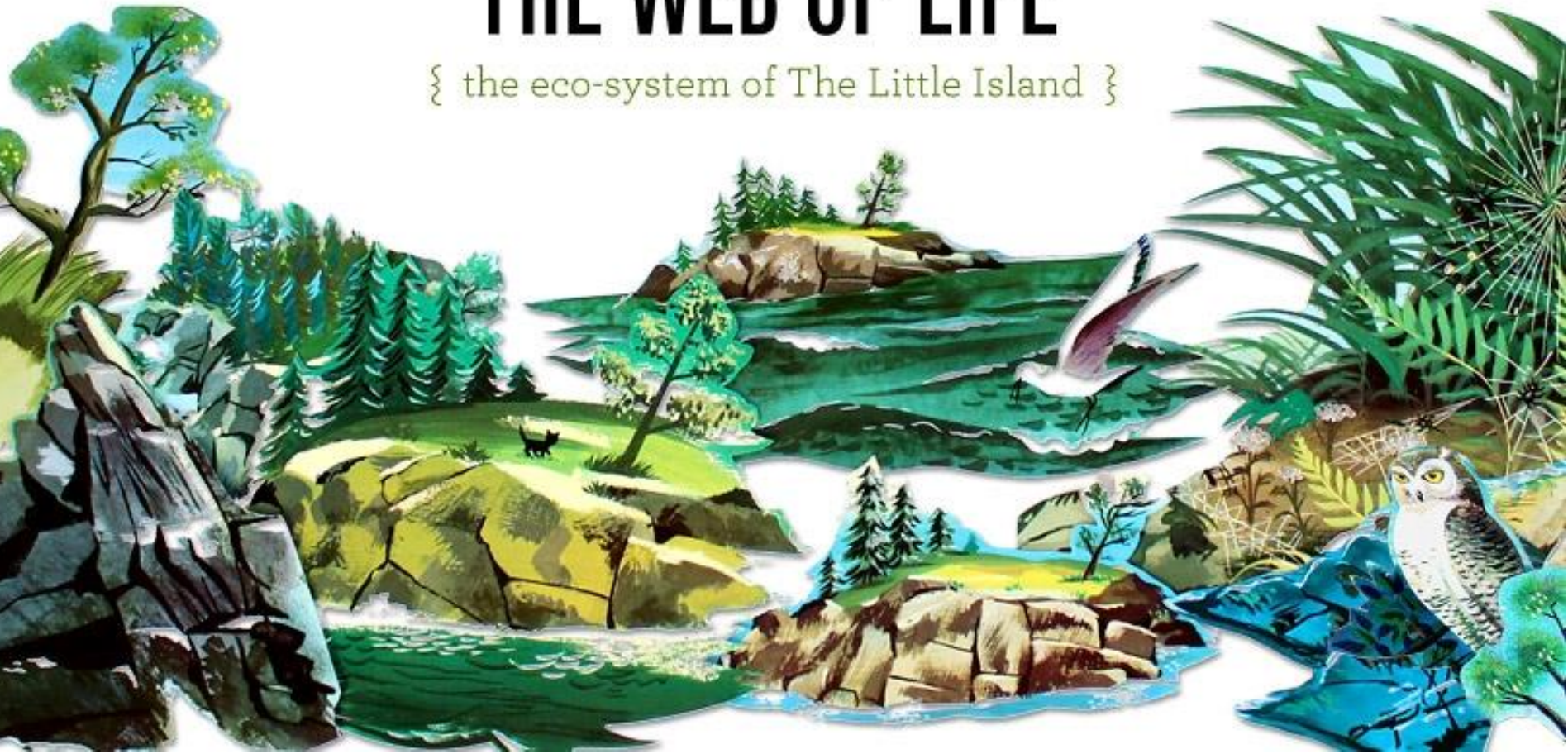
-CHIEF SEATTLE, 1855

PHOTO POSTED ON FLICKR  
BY CLAIRITY  
[HTTP://FARROUTLINKS.NET/BLOG](http://farroulinks.net/blog)

*Heart Environmental Ethics*

# THE WEB OF LIFE

{ the eco-system of The Little Island }





EVERYTHING  
IS  
CONNECTED

