

vita **worldview**



guy lane

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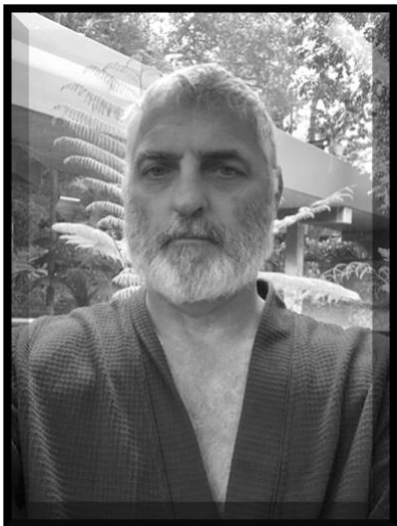
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Author's Note



Guy Lane: I am an environmental scientist, and for two decades I have been watching humanity degrade the Living Planet, our life support system. My enduring question has been, 'why?' Why not instead build a global society and ecosystem that thrives?

I had an insight on the 18th of August 2016 that the root of our man-made crisis was belief.

At the time, my response was that we needed a new religion, a religion devoted to nature.

So, I wrote an article explaining how and why one might create a religion devoted to nature in Australia, where I live. I posted my essay on the social media platform Linked-in. A few days later, I got invited to talk about my proposed nature-religion in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Thieves luck, I have been working on the idea ever since.

I registered Vita Religion in 2020 but soon understood that the idea was bigger than religion, as the spectrum of belief also included worldview, philosophy, and spirituality.

So, I started filling in all the blanks. And here it is, Vita Worldview, Vita Worldview, Verdant Spirituality and Vita Religion all in one little book that takes about an hour and a half to read.

This book is designed as a companion to teachings on Stoicism, Buddhism,

Taoism, Western Ecospirituality, and particularly Indigenous Worldview. Together, these ideas provide a system of belief that could help humanity survive the 21st Century and thrive in the 22nd Century and beyond.

Embracing Vita Worldview will help you see patterns in the growing chaos. You will become grounded by reality and alerted to dangers that lie ahead. You will understand how to contribute to building a bright future. You will find flow and connect with nature. You will understand the purpose of life, and your purpose in life.

If you read this book, I would ask that you don't just set it down afterwards and say, "Oh, that was interesting."

Instead, sit in quiet contemplation and ask yourself, "What should I do with the rest of my life?"

Guy Lane

5 May, 2024

Brisbane, Queensland, Australia.

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A Tale of Two Clans

Southern France ~40,000 years ago.

Two clans meet on the bank of a river. The grass is tall and lush. The air is warm and alive with the sounds of insects and birds. It is high season, and there is a lot of food in the environment, so there is nothing much to compete over. The two clans sit down to talk.



The Cro-Magnon are the ancestors of Europeans.

River Mussel clan are new to the area, having slowly moved their way in from the East. They are chatty and have a lot to say. The clan leader points to his people one-by-one. He describes the archer, the one who makes bows and arrows. He points to the needle maker who can sew form-fitting clothing. He points to others who specialize in finding minerals to paint with, and medicinal plants.

River Mussel clan stand-out in these parts because of the sophistication of their tools, the extent of their vocabulary, and the detail and beauty of their artworks left behind in painted caves, carried as tiny statues, or worn as jewellery or facial paint. River Mussel clan have an advanced spirituality and views about what happens to a person after death.

The other clan is called Heavy Stone. Their people have been in this region for thousands of years. They have little to say because they know few words and their minds aren't sharp enough to form complex thoughts. They can't really plan, so they have not mastered archery, and they hunt with just sharpened stones on the end of sticks, like the Neanderthal. The landscape offers less for them to eat. They lack sewn clothing, and the extent of their artistry is a few coloured feathers in their hair, and a handful of coloured stones.

When Heavy Stone bury their dead, that's all they do. They dig a hole, push the body in, and cover it over. River Mussel Clan, on the other hand, have extensive funerary practices which involve burying the dead with artefacts in specific locations and with ritual involved.

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One might think that these two clans were from a different species. But they are both *Homo sapiens*. A primary difference between them is that a switch was flicked to the ‘On’ position inside the minds of the River Mussel clan, and this opened a reservoir of intellect, curiosity, symbolism, innovation, and spirituality. All these things are interconnected, intertwined, interlinked, inseparable, and from the same source.

Let us call these mental faculties Thinking-Feeling and view them as an emergent property of a complex central nervous system that arose through a subtle evolution in the wiring of the brain, and the advancement of language and culture.

Homo sapiens evolved around 300,000 years ago. For most of that time, our tools and practices differed little from our forebears.

It is not certain when Thinking-Feeling first arose in human populations, but if we were to say that it arose around 70,000 years ago, we could back that up with evidence. Around that time, an explosion in the human mind fostered a matrix of cognitive and transcendent abilities that created a pathway for engineering, mathematics, complex tool

production, language, symbolic representation, art, funerary practice, and the full expression of human spirituality. What caused it? Who knows? One theory is that someone discovered Magic Mushrooms.

These new cognitive and transcendent abilities conferred huge advantage to the 'modern' humans, making it easier for them to communicate and cooperate, to find food and shelter and to survive a wider set of climatic conditions.

The revolution of the mind is believed to have begun in Africa and Thinking-Feeling people swept into Europe around 40,000 years ago and settled amongst the earlier *Homo sapiens* who had not developed *thinking-feeling* abilities.

The *modern* humans simply outcompeted the *archaic* humans, and before long *thinking-feeling* became dominant.

In Europe, the arrival of the thinking-feeling people is referred to as the *Upper Palaeolithic Revolution*. This was first observed in the people of the *Aurignacian*, an early culture of the *Cro-Magnon* people.

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The capacity for Thinking-Feeling is the origin of the full expression of spirituality in humans.

Think of spirituality as the perception of being part of a greater thing, a quest for answers to imponderable questions, the ability to fall periodically into transcendent mental states, the awareness of mortality and holding a view of what comes after.

In its original form, human spirituality is associated with nature: with landscapes, seasons, wildlife, plants, insects, rivers, and coastlines. Let's call this *Innatured Spirituality*.

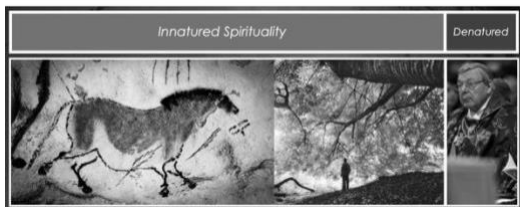
However, spirituality is a vessel that can hold many different types of belief. The hunter-gatherer lifestyles of the Cro-Magnon gave way to agricultural communities as the Ice Age ended and the climatically stable Holocene Epoch began. As human culture changed, so did the spiritual expression of those people.

Later, in a period referred to as the Axial Age - around 2,300 to 2,800 years ago - a new suite of beliefs spread around the world and separated most of humanity spiritually from nature. Most of the religions and

philosophies that exist today have their origins in this Axial Age.

So, for around 96% of the time that humans have been Thinking-Feeling, our spirituality has been expressed through nature, and we lived in balance with the ecosystem.

However, for the last 2,500 years or so, the dominant spiritual expression for humans has been *denatured*.



Nature-based spirituality is innate in humans.

As a result of the behaviours that these denatured beliefs inspire, our planetary life-support system is in decline.

Today, human civilization is entrained in a current that is leading to a cliff edge, and unless there is rapid and transformative change at a spiritual level, humanity and most of life on Earth is going to go over the edge.

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A pathway to restore our Living Planet to full health is a global spiritual reconnection with nature, and the acceptance of knowledge and practice that can guide us through the troubled times ahead.

We need to *renature our spirituality*.

It is time for a new version of the Axial Age, the *Eco-Axial Age*. Why? Because our world is about to get thrown upside down, and the old ideas won't help us put it right.

Sustainable Spirituality

You may be surprised to learn that the dominant spiritual and philosophical practices of today offer little of practical use to resolve the *Anthropocene Crisis*.

The Anthropocene Crisis describes the interconnected matrix of global problems including climate change and ecological collapse. It is also referred to as the polycrisis, or the metacrisis.

Some spiritual traditions offer useful advice, but they are greatly outweighed by those that don't.

Today, the proportion of spiritual following amongst eight billion humans on Earth looks something like this:

Christian	31%	2.48 billion
Muslim	24%	1.92 billion
Agnostic / secular	16%	1.28 billion
Hindus	15%	1.20 billion
Buddhist	7%	0.55 billion
Indigenous / folk	6%	0.46 billion
Others	1%	0.1 billion

Most of the spiritual traditions on the list are grounded in Axial Age beliefs and include the Abrahamic religions (Christianity, Islam, and Judaism), Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism, etc.

The point to make here is that these spiritual traditions were conceived over 2,000 years before the Anthropocene even began. It is therefore no surprise that climate change and global ecosystem collapse are not referred to in the founding documents. This is a serious problem as these books are so fundamental to the beliefs of billions of people.

Carl Safina in his book *Alfie and Me: What Owls Know, What Humans Believe* considers the way that different cultures relate to nature. Safina spends some time unpacking the role that the Greek philosopher Plato had in

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seeding core ideas that found a place in the heart of Judeo-Christian belief and ultimately persist today.

Vita Worldview holds that Plato's muddle-headed ideas are a root cause of the climate and ecological crisis. These ideas include the concept of forms, the nature of the soul, and the dualism of the material and the spiritual world. These ideas stalk humanity across time, from the works of Plato, through the Bible to the handbooks for capitalism and colonialism, and eventually to your TV screen telling you what to think about, how to spend your money, and who to vote for.

Plato's ideas were spawned in the Axial Age when there were around 300 million people on Earth, and there was an abundance of nature and wilderness.

Today, there are eight billion people on Earth, nature is shrivelling up fast, and the planet is overheating. There is about 1/40th as much forest per person today as there was during the Axial Age. Most Axial Age beliefs offer no guidance to today's most pressing challenges. It's time to move on.

With respect to addressing the Anthropocene Crisis, there is value in Buddhism, Taoism,

Shinto, Western Eco-spirituality, and particularly in Indigenous Worldview which predates the Axial Age by tens of thousands of years.

Buddhism, Taoism, and Shinto (Japanese folk religion) all have reverence for nature and observance of natural flows.

Western Ecospirituality borrows from these traditions and includes practices such as home-grown food, organic growing, low consumption lifestyles, the protest movement, and nature immersion.

Indigenous spirituality is unique among all others in that it identifies the practitioner as a part of the landscape and the ecosystem. To coin a phrase, indigenous spirituality is *Innatured Spirituality*.

These five worldviews - Buddhism, Taoism, Shinto, Western Ecospirituality, and Indigenous - account for around 13% of the 8 billion humans in the world today.

However, even combined, they do not provide us with all the tools we need to effectively resolve the Anthropocene Crisis. The Anthropocene is a crisis of modernity

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floundering in ancient ideas, so we need some modern ideas in the mix.

Whilst imperfect, the five worldviews do make a good starting point for a new worldview - Vita Worldview - that is designed specifically to resolve the Anthropocene Crisis in a single human generation.

Through Vita Worldview, it is possible to establish a right relationship between humans and nature, a relationship that will endure the test of time.

A question arises, “What has spirituality got to do with sustainability?”

Simple. People are motivated to act based on what they know and what they believe. Of the two, beliefs are the greater motivator of action. We do what we believe because belief begets behaviour.

If you believe that our Living Planet is sacred, you will try to protect her.

Alternatively, if you believe that our Living Planet is simply a resource to be exploited then you will exploit it.

If we want people to care for nature - our life support system - we need them to have nature at the heart of their spirituality.

Our Living Planet is dying, and the widespread uptake of nature-based spirituality through Vita Worldview can save it.

In Vita Worldview, the word ‘nature’ means the living organisms, ecosystems and natural processes that take place within Earth’s biosphere, and those factors that influence the biosphere such as the Sun, Moon, the climate, weather, and tectonic forces.

Vita Worldview offers ideas about how individuals can connect to nature, and in doing so unleash the extraordinary power within to do the audacious things that are necessary to prevent the collapse of the global ecosystem.

While the capacity for nature spirituality is innate in all humans, there are many other competing and distracting spiritual beliefs.

The beliefs that underpin mainstream Western culture separate us from our proper relationship with nature, and we are blind to

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the harm that we are doing to our Living Planet.

Vita Worldview holds that this is the primary driver of the Anthropocene Crisis: our spiritual disconnection from nature.

As such, the Vita Worldview seeks to foster a spiritual, intellectual and emotional connection to nature and to do this in a manner that is fun, exciting, innovative and compelling. And while there's still time.

Spiritual Marketplace

One hundred years ago, if you wanted spirituality, you went to the Church.

Today in the West there is a spiritual marketplace with many offerings to satisfy inner cravings, including:

...Many types of Gods, UFOs, crystals, dreamcatchers, yoga, yetis, phenomenology, the occult, flying saucers, heaven, Vikings, quantum vibrations, deities, sage, incense sticks, the Flying Spaghetti Monster, crop circles, channelling, Jesus, the after-life, Ganesh, the Inca calendar, chakras, Feng Shui, archangels, the holy trinity, tarot, crop circles, Nephilim, Pentecostalism, angel cards, Hinduism,

unicorns, Islam, meditation, runes, Atlantis, crucifixes, the cosmos, Judaism, mermaids, the Bermuda Triangle, aliens, angels, sound healing, chemtrails, the everlasting soul, ayahuasca, Buddhism, Zen, Stonehenge, Taoism, extra-terrestrials, rune stones...

Go and visit a Crystal Shop where they sell metaphysical and New Age spiritual supplies, and you will see all these things for sale.

In addition to these things there are other distractions that have a spiritual-like following including:

...pets, muscle cars, bikes, shopping, fishing, football, tennis, fashion, fitness, shoes, the Cult of Self, pop music, holidays and so on...

To be clear, there is nothing wrong with having hobbies, interests and passions, or practicing meditation, really. Many of these pursuits fill the spiritual vessel inside of us, give a sense of meaning, and potentially, access to transcendence and a sense of moving beyond our mundane limitations. The problem is that very few of these things have anything meaningful to say about resolving the Anthropocene Crisis. This is hugely problematic as our civilization and

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global ecosystem is heading towards the abyss.

Mother nature is calling out to us, but we can't hear her over the roar of the outboard motor, the beep of the credit card machine, the pulse of the music, or the sound of our own breathing.

As a result, most people have no sense that our Living Planet is dying and that if she dies, we die with her.

There is a powerful article titled *Drowning Doesn't Look Like Drowning* by coast guard Mario Vittono. It says that most people don't know what a drowning person looks like. We think that they wave their arms, shouting, "Help! Help!" like they do on TV. The *Instinctive Drowning Response* isn't like that. Drowning is a 'deceptively quiet event'. This explains why so many people drown just a short distance from family and friends.

Similarly, most people don't know what a dying planet looks like, even though we are living on one. People cannot *feel* that the planet is dying because we are spiritually disconnected from nature.

Vita Worldview proposes that we augment our spiritual views to include a reverence, a passion, and a deep love for nature.

This is because nature spirituality fosters moral concern for nature, and this is the most direct pathway to creating right action to make things better for our planet and our future.

Because of the relationship between spirituality and behaviour, when people undergo radical spiritual change, they are primed for radical behavioural change. And this is exactly what we need to change the trajectory of human civilization away from the abyss.

Radical pro-environmental behavioural change can be brought about in people when spiritual enlightenment to nature is paired with a deeper understanding of how nature works, and guidance for right action.

If millions of people align their hearts, minds, and efforts to the wellbeing of nature - our life support system - it is possible to shift the trajectory of human civilization away from the extinction abyss that faces us today, and towards a future, environmentally sustainable civilization referred to as the *Verdant Age*.

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This is Vita Worldview's intent. It is believed that millions of people will adopt Vita Worldview once it is put before them in a compelling manner.

In fact, there are believed to be 53-million *Latent Vitans* - potential adult followers of Vita Worldview - in the Western world alone.

Fifty-three million adults represent a significant political and economic force for change, representing about 8% of the adults in Western countries.

According to literature that underpins the Extinction Rebellion movement, non-violent rebellions don't fail when 3.5% of the public becomes involved. Whether you accept this thesis or not, imagine the change for good if 8% of the public tap into the motivational shift that is unleashed through the spiritual awakening to our Living Planet.

So, what are some of the ideas that underpin Vita Worldview.

The big idea is called *Vitae-planeta*.

Vitae-planeta

The *Biosphere* is the name that describes all the things that live on Earth.

It's called biosphere because the word 'bio' means life, and all that life is on the surface of the planet, in the shape of a sphere.

Vitae-planeta is the spiritual belief that all the living things on Earth, including the ocean, atmosphere and soil form a single living being.

Vitae-planeta is the biosphere as an organism, and we humans are cells in her body.

When you see yourself as a part of the Living Planet - as opposed to being *apart from* the Living Planet - your perspective changes.

When you see yourself as a part of the Living Planet, you understand that there is no 'away' to throw things to, and polluting the environment is like polluting yourself.

When you see yourself as a part of the Living Planet, you understand that your well-being is intertwined.

Here are some of the characteristics of *Vitae-planeta*:

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He, She, or It? - Technically, *Vitae-planeta* would be referred to as an 'it' as it is a gender-less, non-human species. However, out of reverence *Vitae-planeta* is referred to as 'she'.

Grown, Not Created, Not God - *Vitae-planeta* is not a God, a deity, or the creator of the universe. Instead, *Vitae-planeta* is an emergent property of the laws of nature - in particular biology, physics, and chemistry - playing out on Earth within the habitable zone of the Sun. She arose spontaneously when conditions permitted.

Not Conscious - *Vitae-planeta* does not have consciousness, intent, or free will except to the extent that humans confer it. Humans are the part of nature that has free will.

One of Trillions - *Pananima* is Vita Worldview name given to a planet's biosphere that is sufficiently interconnected to have homeostasis. Homeostasis means that it is self-correcting, and able to withstand and recover from severe shock, such as large volcanic activity or an asteroid strike. *Vitae-planeta* is the name of the Pananima of Planet Earth, and there are

probably trillions of Pananimas in the Universe.

Wide & Thin - *Vitae-planeta* has the shape of a thin-walled sphere, with the wall thickness about 0.5% of the diameter of the sphere. Think of Earth as a ping-pong ball full of rock. The skin of the ping-pong ball is *Vitae-planeta*.

Above & Below - Above *Vitae-planeta* is the frigid depth of space, and below *Vitae-planeta* is the Earth's mantle and molten rock. *Vitae-planeta's* wispy outer boundary is about 100 kilometers above the ground, and its lower depth is some kilometers below the seafloor in the Earth's crust where microscopic organisms are known to live in the pores of rocks.

Very Old - *Vitae-planeta* has endured about 3.8 billion years because she maintains internal chemical and thermal equilibrium that is conducive to life. If the Universe is 13.8 billion years old, that makes *Vitae-planeta* about one-quarter the age of the Universe.

Not judging - *Vitae-planeta* is not conscious and she doesn't judge us for our actions. However, she does respond to them at the global scale. If we continue to pump 40

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billion tons of heat trapping gas into the atmosphere, we can expect a dramatic reaction.

We are welcome here - Humans came to be in *Vitae-planeta* through the same process as the trees and the bees, the whales, and the snails. We are welcome here.

Habitable for Humans - Over the past 3.8 billion years, *Vitae-planeta* has existed in many forms not all of which were suited to human habitation. At times in the past, it has been both too hot and too cold on Earth for humans.

Vitae-planeta's climate has been ideal for the growth of human civilization over the past few million years, but our actions are shifting *Vitae-planeta* into a new phase that will be hostile to humans.

A Species - *Vitae-planeta* is a species name, and the binomial is *Imperium vitae-planeta*. This roughly translates from Latin to Empire of the Living Planet. *Vitae-planeta* is a unique species in that it is comprised of just a single individual.

Spiritual Belief - *Vitae-planeta* is not a scientifically validated idea, although it is very

close to the concept of Gaia. Gaia Theory says that life on Earth behaves in the manner of a single organism in that it maintains conditions within a narrow range suited to life.

The concept of *Vitae-planeta* says that life on Earth does not just *behave like* an organism, but *actually is* an organism. This is not science, it's a spiritual belief that is close to science.

You see, science and spirituality are natural partners as they both help us understand the world around us, and to establish our right relation to that reality.

Science is at the heart of Vita Worldview. So let us consider what modern science can tell us about the world today.

According to the Science

Through the fusion of modern science, ancient wisdom, and observations of nature, it becomes possible to develop a sustainable worldview that can assist humanity in navigating the challenges of the 21st Century.

If we can survive the Anthropocene Crisis, it is possible that humanity can enter the Verdant Age, the potential future time when humans and *Vitae-planeta* thrive in synergy, deep into the Long Future.

Let us consider what modern science tells us about humans and our planet. There is both good news and bad news here, but each provides insights into how we should behave to live sustainably on Earth.

There are many science papers being published every week. Here are summaries of just a dozen or so papers that provide a broad-brush overview of where things stand, and a brief commentary about what we might learn from them.

By and for the Biosphere

Lovelock, James E., and Lynn Margulis. "Atmospheric homeostasis by and for **the biosphere: the Gaia hypothesis.**" *Tellus* 26.1-2 (1974): 2-10.

Many people have heard the expression Gaia Hypothesis, but few have ever seen or read the actual paper itself perhaps because it was published in a Swedish science journal that specialised in Earth System Science.

Written by James Lovelock and Lynn Margulis, the Gaia Hypothesis was a scientific breakthrough that also helped trigger the 1970's environmental movement, by giving a name to Mother Nature. Gaia, in this instance, refers to Gaea, the Ancient Greek Earth Goddess.

While that name is poetic, the argument in the paper is grounded in physics, with an emphasis on entropy. In short, the Gaia Hypothesis says that living organisms have evolved mechanisms to regulate the temperature of planet Earth, to keep it within the range best suited for life to flourish.

From the Gaia Hypothesis we can deduce that to maintain a stable climate all we need to do is to restore the climate to its pre-industrial state and ensure that there is an

abundance of wilderness on Earth. *Vitae-planeta* provides our planet with an excellent air conditioning system and all we need to do is look after her.

Plankton Make the Clouds

Charlson, Robert J., et al. “**Oceanic phytoplankton, atmospheric sulphur, cloud albedo and climate.**” *Nature* 326.6114 (1987): 655-661.

In later work, Lovelock would go on to explain some of the biological mechanisms by which life on Earth regulates the climate. For example, plankton help to form clouds over the ocean by producing tiny molecules called DMS upon which water vapour condenses to form clouds. The paper goes on to say that by doubling the cloud condensation nuclei it will be possible to create more and thicker clouds that will reflect away excess sunlight, assisting to manage climate change.

This paper is evidence that we ought to work with nature to help her restore the balance of life on Earth. If we stopped acting like unsustainable super-predators, that would be a good start.

Unsustainable Super-predators

Darimont, Chris T., et al. “**The unique ecology of human predators.**” *Science* 349.6250 (2015): 858-860.

Darimont and others found that humans kill adult prey at much higher rates than other predator species. This interferes with the reproductive success of the prey species. In addition, humans use advanced technology that way outcompetes their rival predators. As such, human hunters and fishers can be regarded as *unsustainable super-predators*.

Humans have been predators from our earliest days. The advent of archery 70,000 years ago gave humans a super-advantage over our competitor predators, and our technology has become increasingly more deadly year by year. Whilst humans may have been super-predators for a long time, not all human cultures are unsustainable in their predation. We need to learn from the sustainable hunters, the indigenous people, about the right balance between humans and prey species. Today, for example, the ratio between humans and livestock is way out of balance.

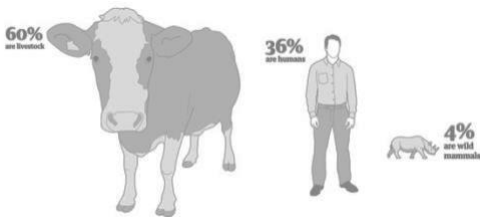
Only 4% Wild Mammals

Bar-On, Yinon M., Rob Phillips, and Ron Milo. “**The biomass distribution on Earth.**” *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 115.25 (2018): 6506-6511.

Back in the time of River Mussel Clan if you weighed all the mammals on Earth (referred to as mammalian biomass) you would find that humans represented just a tiny fraction of the total, and the balance would be wildlife.

Today, the situation is very different, indeed: just 4% of mammalian biomass is wildlife.

A full 96% of mammalian biomass is humans, our pets, and livestock.



This means that there is now 15 times more livestock than wild animals, by mass. This is itself a good reason to adopt a low meat diet.

One of the reasons that wildlife is shrinking is that we have paved the planet and replaced

natural habitat with human habitat to such an extent that there is now *more stuff than life*.

More Stuff than Life

Elhacham, Emily, et al. “**Global human-made mass exceeds all living biomass.**” *Nature* 588.7838 (2020): 442-444.

The findings of this paper are mind-blowing in demonstrating the profound footprint of humanity on our Living Planet. Over the past century the mass of material produced by humans - the technosphere - doubled every twenty years or so, while the mass of the biosphere remained relatively steady.

In 2020, the mass of the technosphere exceeded the mass of the biosphere for the first time.

This means that now on Earth there is more stuff made by people, than there are living things that grew here.

There is twice as much plastic on Earth as there are animals. More buildings and infrastructure than trees and shrubs.

And twenty years from now there will be twice as much. Perhaps we have built

enough. We have certainly built enough streetlamps.

No Stars for You, Tonight

Falchi, Fabio, et al. “**The new world atlas of artificial night sky brightness.**” *Science advances* 2.6 (2016): e1600377.

Artificial light is another aspect of the technosphere, creating artificial night sky brightness or skyglow.

Skyglow is caused by artificial light reflecting off tiny particles in the air and making the night sky glow slightly. This hides the dimmest stars from view.

As a result of skyglow, our Milky Way galaxy is invisible to more than one-third of humanity, including 60% of Europeans and nearly 80% of North Americans. In some places like Singapore, the night is never full-dark, but a permanent twilight.

Skyglow diminishes human flourishing, and it is terrible for wildlife, particularly birds and insects. We need to reduce Skyglow and allow people to contemplate the cosmos that lies above the biosphere. This will also help make things better for wildlife.

Suppose for a moment that you could find a place with zero skyglow on a cloudless night. Here you could gaze in awe and wonder at the Milky Way and contemplate the vastness of space and the extraordinary number of stars. You might also contemplate that there are now over 51 trillion pieces of microplastic trash in the ocean, which is 500 times more than the number of stars than in the Milky Way Galaxy.

More Trash Than Stars

Nirmala, K., et al. “**A critical review on recent research progress on microplastic pollutants in drinking water.**” *Environmental Research* 222 (2023): 115312.

Metaphorically, microplastics now contaminate every cubic meter of the biosphere including inside the human body.

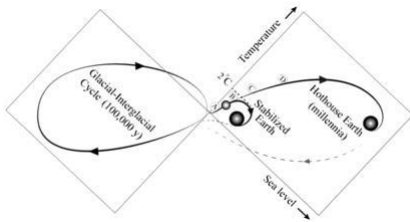
It is time to stop producing non-biodegradable petroleum-based plastics, rapidly transition to sustainable bioplastics and clean up the mess we have made by pulling plastic trash out of the ocean and off the beaches. While you are pondering how to get all that microplastic out of the ocean, you might also have a think about how to get a

trillion tons of CO₂ out of the atmosphere, as we are heading towards the hothouse.

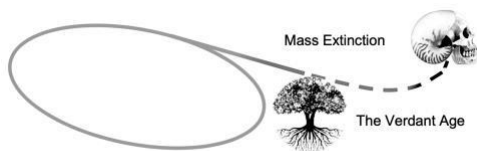
Heading to the Hothouse

Steffen, Will, et al. “Trajectories of the Earth System in the Anthropocene.” Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences 115.33 (2018): 8252-8259.

Somewhere between 1 & 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial temperatures lies a cascade of climate tipping points that will drive our planet into the hothouse and kill-off most life on Earth. As we are already about 1.3°C above baseline, we are well within the *Hothouse Danger Zone*.



The diagram from the Trajectories paper has been adapted into the *Vita Sapien Diagram* showing two potential futures, Mass Extinction, or the Verdant Age.



Highway to Heat-death

Hansen, James E., et al. “**Global warming in the pipeline.**” Oxford Open Climate Change 3.1 (2023): kgad008.

The Paris Agreement seeks to limit global warming to 2°C above baseline, beyond which lies a cascade of climate tipping points. However, this paper says that there is already enough carbon in the atmosphere to take global temperatures 10°C above, and we will reach 2°C before 2050.

James Hansen is one of the most senior and respected climate scientists and is renowned for his book *Storms of My Grandchildren* that describes the ferocious weather that is coming our way under climate change.

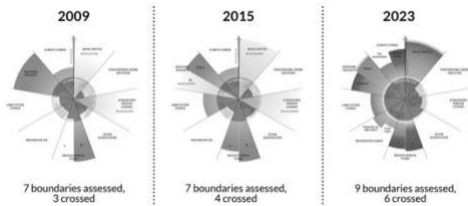
This paper demonstrates that we are in a deep crisis of civilization - heading towards

the heat-death of the biosphere. *Vitae-planeta* is getting heat stroke.

Six Boundaries Broken

Richardson, Katherine, et al. “**Earth beyond six of nine planetary boundaries.**” *Science advances* 9.37 (2023): eadh2458.

Now that you are sitting up and paying attention - check out this paper showing that it is not just climate and biodiversity that we have to worry about. There are nine dumb ways to die on planet Earth and we have blundered into six of them, already.



The Planetary Boundaries framework seeks to identify the key processes that regulate the stability and resilience of the Earth system.

In 2023 the framework quantified all boundaries and concluded that six of the nine boundaries have been transgressed.

“Crossing boundaries increases the risk of generating large-scale abrupt or environmental changes. Drastic changes will not necessarily happen overnight, but together the boundaries mark a critical threshold for increasing risks to people and the ecosystems we are part of.”

Each of the Planetary Boundaries are discussed later in the book. However, a takeaway message is that we need a civilization designed to honour all nine Planetary Boundaries.

We need civilisation that is *Nine-Boundaries Safe*.

Going Down Sooner

Willcock, Simon, et al. “**Earlier collapse of Anthropocene ecosystems driven by multiple faster and noisier drivers.**” *Nature Sustainability* 6.11 (2023): 1331-1342.

Just to reinforce the urgency of our predicament and the need for immediate and sustained action, this paper says that major ecosystems may collapse much sooner than we had thought possible because “*conventional modelling approaches based on incremental changes in a single stress may provide poor estimates of the*

impact of climate and human activities on ecosystems.”

We need to get busy transforming the global economy and the human relationship with nature as a matter of great urgency.

Ghastly Complicated

Bradshaw, Corey JA, et al. **“Underestimating the challenges of avoiding a ghastly future.”** *Frontiers in Conservation Science* 1 (2021): 615419.

As if we didn't have enough on our plate as we hurtle to 2°C and beyond, we also have to deal with a collapsing biosphere. This paper holds the following chilling insights:

“...future environmental conditions will be far more dangerous than currently believed. The scale of the threats to the biosphere and all its life forms—including humanity—is in fact so great that it is difficult to grasp for even well-informed experts.”

This paper ought to make us immediately leap out of our skins and start doing everything we can to bail-out our sinking ship. All-hands-on-deck! This is not something for the future ‘to do list’, but means action, now. We should do the biggest little thing we can today and do

something grander tomorrow. And keep doing that until we die, content in the knowledge that we honoured our responsibility to Mother Earth and the future generations of our own kind. But how do we start? Consider the Feeling - Thinking - Doing approach.

Feeling - Thinking - Doing

It starts with feeling. Feeling that something is not right. Feeling the pain of *Vitae-planeta*. Feeling that our future is being squandered by the powerful people who rule the world so badly.



Next comes thinking. What can I do? How can I be most effective in bringing about change? Where are the leverage points in the system? Where do I fit into the rebellion against extinction?

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Next comes doing. Action. Get busy sustaining Earth's biosphere, caring for people and planet. Do as much as you can without hurting yourself. Learn more, develop new skills and networks. Surprise yourself. Every human has the capacity for extraordinariness if only we reach out for it.

And keep checking in with your feelings. Don't burnout. Please don't burnout. So much effort is lost through burnout. Maintain a consistent, sustainable pace. Keep going until the end. Ask yourself, "Is this right? Is there more I can achieve by doing less?" Seek effortless action. Do I need to step away from this for a while to come back with more fire and fury?

This is a tall order for some people. Scratching their heads, going, "What? Where did this come from? How come I've not heard this stuff before?" The scientists are saying that the planet is dying right under our noses. What? How long has this been going on?

If this is all new to you, the reason is that we have all grown-up infused with a suite of unsustainable philosophies and beliefs that have guided our actions. Blasted out through

media and institutions: capitalism, consumerism, colonialism, ancient religion, advertising, marketing, public relations. Going cheap, one used planet, special-offer-discount-sale. Buy Now! Buy Now! Buy Now!

The mainstream media is owned by wealthy men, and they don't use it for informing the public, they use it to muddle your head to vote and spend the way they want you to. We are an unconscious civilization consuming our way into oblivion. It's time to wake up.

Drowning doesn't look like drowning. Our Living Planet is dying. We can't shop our way out of this.

Not to be without a solution, there is a philosophy that has been devised to give humanity the best chance of surviving the 21st Century and thriving thereafter.

This is Lifewise Philosophy.

Lifewise Philosophy

Lifewise Philosophy provides a holistic framework by which to understand the world and the place of the humans in it.

Lifewise Philosophy is a companion to Stoicism, Buddhism, Taoism, Western Ecospirituality and Indigenous worldviews. Combined, they make up a philosophical foundation to contribute to advancing the Verdant Age.

There are three parts to Lifewise Philosophy.

Material View focuses on material aspects advised by the environmental sciences and some ancient philosophies.

Spiritual View is presented through the *New Spiritual Framework* and includes *Verdant Spirituality*.

Practices considers activities one could undertake to Advance the Verdant Age.

Material View

Material View is advised by ancient philosophies and the environmental sciences. There are nine sections:

1. Biosphere as Life Support
2. *Homo sapiens*
3. Anthropocene
4. Planetary Boundaries
5. Fostering Mass Ecophany
6. The Long Future
7. The Verdant Age
8. Changing Trajectory
9. Earthwork

Biosphere as Life Support

The word ‘biosphere’ describes the totality of life on Earth. As the name suggests, the shape of the biosphere is a thin-walled sphere, located on the outer surface of our planet. The biosphere includes all the animals, plants, and other living things, plus the ocean, atmosphere, soils, and other substrates that are the habitat of life.

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Some bacteria are known to live in clouds, and others live in rocks deep below the sea floor. So, the biosphere stretches from the top to bottom about 30 kilometers at its thickest point.



Gaia Theory tells us that animals and plants behave in a manner that maintains the condition of the atmosphere to ensure that the planet doesn't get too hot or cold. Life on Earth maintains conditions suited to life on Earth. It is as though all the living things in the biosphere behave in the manner of a single living being that self-regulates its own temperature. The spiritual belief of *Vitae-planeta* holds that all life on Earth is a single living organism.

The biosphere self-regulates and thus acts as a life-support system for humanity through a variety of mechanisms. For example, ocean plankton help to create the rain that falls onto our crops; plants produce atmospheric

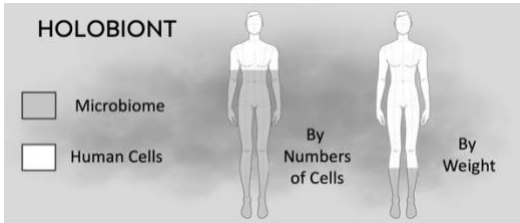
oxygen for us to breathe; plants also produce food, pharmaceuticals and materials like wood, hemp, and cotton.

The biosphere is the life-support system for humans. Destroying the biosphere is a form of collective suicide. And yet, that is exactly what *Homo sapiens* have been doing over the last 80 years or so, the time of the Anthropocene.

Homo sapiens

As a large organism, human beings are a holobiont, which is to say an organism made of many organisms. Human bodies contain more non-human cells than human cells. About 60% by number of cells in a human body are microbiome, consisting of bacteria, fungi, archaea, protists, and viruses. The microbiome accounts for about 15% of the human body by mass. We are, ourselves, an ecosystem. We don't just live in the biosphere; the biosphere lives within us.

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Our species, *Homo sapiens* evolved around 300,000 years ago. However, it was only about 70,000 years ago that our central nervous system and language became sophisticated enough for the thinking-feeling awakening that fostered innovation, engineering, mathematics, art, culture, spirituality, and so on.

The native spiritual expression for humans that sustained us for 67,000 of the last 70,000 years is a connection to wild animals and plants, ecosystems, forests, lakes, shorelines, clouds, storms, and the rain, thunder, and lightning that the storms bring.

However, from the Axial Age, humans began to synthesise spiritual beliefs that involved Gods, statues, symbols, activities and ultimately machines that run counter to nature. These beliefs underpin behaviours that have a negative effect on the biosphere.

The human footprint on nature is now so profound that the entire global ecosystem is in severe decline, placing billions of humans and millions of species at risk of extinction in the coming decades. Much of this harm has been caused in the last few human generations, the modern era, the time of the humans: the Anthropocene.

The Anthropocene

If you have seen the movie Jurassic Park, you may know that the Jurassic is not a type of dinosaur, but instead, a period (201-145 million years ago) in which dinosaurs roamed the Earth.

The people who make up names like Jurassic are geologists who study stratigraphy: the relationship between rock layers and past time. The name given to the 12,000 years since the end of the last Ice Age is the *Holocene Epoch*. This is a time with a stable climate in which human civilization grew.

In 2016, stratigraphers gathered in South Africa to debate an idea that humans had so changed the world that we were no longer in Holocene-like conditions. It was claimed that we had entered a new geological epoch called

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the Anthropocene: the *Age of the Humans*. However, after nearly a decade of debate, the official ruling came through in March 2024: the Anthropocene *does not* exist as a geological Epoch, we are still in the Holocene.

Whilst the geologists are arguing over the nitty-gritty of rock science, the rest of society who knows about these things were having a field-day with the concept of the Anthropocene: the Age of the Humans.

Some believe that the Age of Humans began 12,000 years ago with the advent of agriculture. Others hold that the Anthropocene began when Columbus brought guns, germs and steel to South America. Others hold that the carbon pollution of the industrial revolution is the beginning of the Anthropocene. The original proposal from the geologists held that the Anthropocene began in 1952, as evidenced by the radioactive fallout of nuclear bomb tests.

Not wanting to miss out on this debate, Vita Worldview has its own interpretation of when the Anthropocene began.

Vita Worldview holds that the Anthropocene began with the detonation of the first nuclear bomb - the Trinity Bomb Test - in New Mexico, USA, on 16 July 1945 at 6.29am Mountain Daylight Time.

This moment in time also serves as the beginning of the Vitan Calendar and is thus the date and time of the Vita New Year celebration, referred to as Earth New Year, a night of Fire and Wine.



Priming the Gadget, Earth New Year, 2023.

The Anthropocene is a core concept of Vita Worldview. The name Anthropocene Crisis refers to the multiple, interconnected crises of the modern era including climate change, ecological collapse, nuclear weapons, plastic contamination, global inequality, late-stage capitalism, AI, etc.

A big concern of the Anthropocene Crisis is that human activities are damaging key Earth

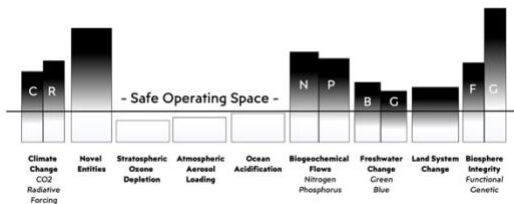
Systems that are necessary to maintain a safe operating space for humanity. We are breaking through the Planetary Boundaries.

Planetary Boundaries

Scientists have identified key Earth systems that determine whether Planet Earth remains a good home for humans. Think of these as the warning lights on a planetary dashboard. There are nine key Earth systems, and the safe boundaries of six have already been crossed (bold) because of human activities.

- **The amount of atmospheric CO₂ and the energy imbalance of the atmosphere (Climate Change).**
- **Things humans created and released into the environment that nature doesn't know how to deal with (Novel Entities).**
- **The amount of nitrogen & phosphorus in the ocean (Biogeochemical Flows).**
- **The abundance of forest cover around the world (Land System Change).**

- **The amount of freshwater used by humans at the expense of ecosystems (Freshwater Change).**
- Ozone in the upper atmosphere (Stratospheric Ozone Depletion).
- The concentration of particles in the atmosphere that block sunlight (Atmospheric Aerosol Loading).
- The acidity of the ocean (Ocean Acidification).
- **The genetic and functional wellbeing of the biosphere (Biosphere Integrity).**



Six of nine planetary boundaries are exceeded.

Vita Worldview holds that the primary cause of the Anthropocene Crisis – and breaking through the Planetary Boundaries – is that people are disconnected from nature, spiritually, emotionally, and intellectually.

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An enlightened civilization would never allow Planetary Boundaries to be crossed, in the first place. Why would they risk it?

Thus, a solution to the Anthropocene Crisis is a global mass-movement to re-nature our spirituality and motivate people to undertake the actions necessary to restore the Planetary Boundaries and return our Living Planet to full health.

To do this, we need to rapidly foster ecophany - an ecological epiphany - an awakening to nature.

Fostering Mass-Ecophany

One of Vita Worldview's new ideas is ecophany, or *ecological epiphany*. This is an emotional, spiritual, or intellectual awakening to nature.

Ecophany is a one-way street because once you sense what humans have done to our Living Planet and what the planet is soon to do to us, you can't unfeel it. It changes your life. You will find yourself reconsidering everything that you previously thought was important, and your behaviour will change.

Ecophany is emotionally challenging, but it is a necessary pathway to enlightenment: understanding how things really are.



You've had your coffee, but have you had ecophany?

Fostering Ecophany involves creating conditions suited to helping people experience ecophany. To this end, programs can be developed that invite people to open their hearts to nature and our Living Planet.

Mass-Ecophany is the concept of ecophany occurring in tens of millions of people. So, *Fostering Mass-Ecophany* is ultimately what Vita Worldview seeks to achieve. And given the urgency of our climate and ecological crisis, *Fostering Rapid Mass-Ecophany* is what we need to do. But that is not enough.

A spiritual enlightenment is like hoisting a huge spinnaker sail on a yacht. What's also needed is a rudder to set the direction of the

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vessel, a chart, and a plan of how to get to a desired destination.

All these ideas can be brought together in programs that include the following elements:

- Spiritual enlightenment to nature
- A deeper understanding of the Earth System
- A map for the future (Transition)
- A destination (the Verdant Age)
- Duties for the crew to achieve the mission

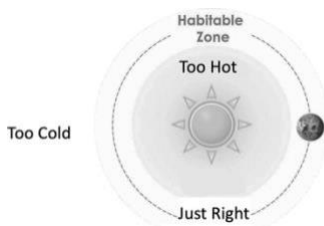
To prevent the collapse of the global ecosystem, we need a powerful spiritual enlightenment to nature for hundreds of millions of people around the world, framed by environmental science and directed towards expedient action. Then, there is hope that humanity may enter the Verdant Age that will extend deep into the Long Future.

The Long Future

Planet Earth is suited to life because our planet's temperature makes it possible for water to exist in all three phases – ice, liquid

water, and atmospheric vapour. The temperature is right on Earth because the planet's orbit is neither too close, nor too far from the Sun, and because nature has mechanisms for regulating greenhouse gases for temperature control (Gaia Theory).

Earth's orbit is said to lie within the Habitable Zone – or the Goldilocks Zone – and will do so for another two billion years or so.



Earth orbits within the Habitable Zone of the Sun.

Beyond this time, the Sun will massively expand into a Red Giant as it ages and consumes its fuel. Eventually Earth will be baked dry and lifeless.

Vita Worldview refers to the future in which life can exist on Earth as the Long Future.

A subset of the Long Future is the Verdant Age. Earth could be habitable for humans

for potentially hundreds of millions of years – if we don't destroy the planetary ecosystem that is our life-support system.

The Verdant Age

The Verdant Age is a potential future time when human civilization and the Living Planet thrive in synergy. Let's break that down because it is important.

- Thrive suggests not just surviving but prospering.
- In synergy means that each party is better off with the other.

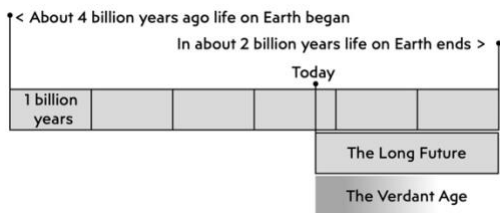
The concept of the Verdant Age is not just wishful thinking but is consistent with scientific frameworks such as:

- Gaia 2.0
- Class-5 (Agency Dominated) Planets
- Earth System Stewardship
- Ecozoic Era
- Ecological Civilization

One might ask, how long could the Verdant Age last?

A year, as we all know, is the time it takes for our planet Earth to orbit the Sun. What is less well known is that our solar system is entrained within the Milky Way Galaxy that rotates around its galactic core every 230 million years or so. This is referred to as a Galactic Year.

Vita Worldview holds that the Verdant Age could last a Galactic Year. This means that humans could be living happily on Earth more than 200 million years from now.



The Verdant Age could last 230 million years or more.

The Verdant Age is represented by a symbol called the Verda.

Advancing the Verdant Age so that human civilization might survive a Galactic Year is the *raison d'être* of Vita Worldview.



The Verda symbol represents the Verdant Age.

A nice aspiration, indeed, but if you chart the current trajectory of human civilization, you will see that we are heading rapidly towards the abyss. If we are to enter the Verdant Age, we need to change trajectory.

Changing Trajectory

Our civilization is heading toward a cliff edge, and accelerating as the cliff edge gets closer. As the global economy grows at around 3% per annum, so does its energy metabolism and its toxic waste by-products. Most of the global economy's energy comes from fossil fuels, and humanity spews around 50 billion tons of heat-trapping carbon dioxide pollution into the atmosphere every year as we hack-down, chop-up, rip-out, obliterate, annihilate, and poison the global ecosystem that is our life support.

We get closer to the precipice every day, and we are now in the final few years of maintaining agency over our destiny.

No person in their right mind wants to live through global ecological collapse. And yet, we are all part of the cause and the consequence of this situation.

Fortunately, there is an alternative.

The alternative is to change trajectory and restore the global biosphere to full health. We need to get our affairs in order. This can be advanced by completing the following Five-Step Plan: Decarbonise- Rewild - Clean-up - Circularise - Renature

Decarbonise: Euthanise the fossil fuel industry, drawdown 1 trillion tons of CO₂ and transition to sustainable energy.

Rewild: Restore endangered species and rewild 1/3 of the planet.

Clean-up: Clean-up the mess of 250 years of industrial civilization including landfills, marine plastics, nuclear waste.

Circularise: Create a fair and efficient, ecologically sustainable global socioeconomic system based on Donut Economics and

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Circular Economy so that all needs are met, and all humans can thrive.

Renature: Instill nature spirituality as the foundation of all cultures, worldwide to ensure that we don't end up at the brink of the abyss again.

In addition to cleaning up the mess we have made, we humans might be useful to the biosphere in unique ways.

Humans provide the biosphere with a threat management capability, i.e. looking out for Earth-killing asteroids, and destroying or deflecting them.

Humans could conceivably help the biosphere to reproduce by taking Earth species to another part of the solar system, and thereby extending the life of Earth biota beyond the Long Future.



A symbol representing Earth's biosphere reproducing.

Finally, a poetic benefit: humans give the biosphere consciousness, a capacity for self-awareness.

It was, after-all humans who in 1968 took the first Biosphere Selfie, the famous Earthrise photo from the Apollo-8 mission. It wasn't the dolphins or white mice that took that photo, we did.

One could argue the benefits of a biosphere being aware of itself, but as components of the biosphere, we humans gain a deeper understanding of ourselves from Biosphere Selfies. By seeing our Earth from space, gaining a perspective we don't have in our daily lives.

The first Earth Selfie was black and white with the Moon in the foreground. A few minutes later the iconic, colour Earthrise photo was taken.



The first Earth Selfie rising above Moon surface.

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Today, there is a satellite positioned at a location in space called L1 that provides a daily Earth Selfie. You can see these images on the website. Just google the words *Epic Discover*.

To reach the Verdant Age, it is necessary to change the trajectory of human civilization and resolve the Anthropocene Crisis with enough of the Living Planet intact, and a high-enough proportion of people with re-natured spirituality. By necessity, a sustainable civilization will have sustainable levels of population and consumption and if we have learned anything from the Anthropocene, it is where the limits lie.

To achieve this in the narrow window of time remaining, the widespread uptake of a sustainable life philosophy grounded in nature spirituality is required.

Remember that 80% of the world's energy comes from the fossil fuel industry, and the super-wealthy corporations, families, individuals, and their enablers have zero intention of protecting the global ecosystem whilst they are gorging themselves from the multi-trillion-dollar fossil fuel trough.

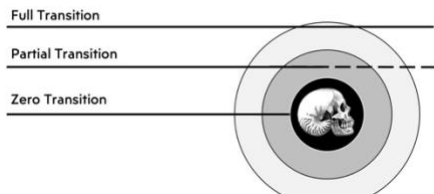
These are the agents of the hypertext, and the business model of the elite is to continue growing the global economy based on fossil fuels. That's it.

We need to mercifully euthanise this industry before it mercilessly kills us all. The sustainability crisis is a crisis of power. They wield it effectively. We don't. Yet.

Transitioning to a sustainable future requires overthrowing the destructive systems of power that exist on Earth today. This will require a herculean effort that only a spiritual motivation can provide. Activities that lead to these outcomes are referred to as Earthwork.

Earthwork

This transition to a sustainable future is demonstrated in the below diagram.



Three degrees of transition: Full, Partial, and Zero.

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Three scenarios are shown: Full Transition, Partial Transition, and Zero Transition.

The concentric circles show the depth of collapse, with the outer ring representing a shallow collapse that humanity can survive. The middle ring shows collapse so deep that human survival remains in doubt even after the collapse has resolved. The inner ring shows collapse that is so deep it leads to mass extinction including human extinction.

The purpose of Earthwork is to make collapse as shallow as possible through Full Transition.

Humans arrived on Earth through the same evolutionary pathway as the trees, the bees, the whales, and the snails. As such, we have the same responsibilities to the Living Planet: to pursue our own interests in a manner that supports the wellbeing of the whole.

Unlike other organisms, however, humans have free-will and this allows us to act outside of biologically programmed instinct.

Because most people have lost their innate spiritual connection to nature, much of their behaviour is detrimental to the biosphere.

By reconnecting people spiritually to nature, it is possible to transform their behaviour to become pro-environmental.

When conducted on mass-scale, this will allow humanity to pursue Full Transition and undo the harm that has been caused to the biosphere and to live synergistically with nature deep into the Long Future. Efforts towards this end are referred to as Earthwork. An enabler of Earthwork is a spiritual connection to our Living Planet as described by Vita Worldview's Spiritual View.

Spiritual View

Vita Worldview views the term ‘spirituality’ as an umbrella concept that shelters many themes.

There are six core themes, plus subthemes, that make-up the Spiritual View.

Vita does not claim that these themes represent the totality of spiritual experience. Instead, they form a frame of reference to make it easy to talk about the subject of spirituality.

In this way, we are better able to discuss the potential for *spirituality augmentation* to foster radical pro-environmental behaviour change.

This Spiritual View is not a competitive belief system, but a co-operative system of belief that encourages people to care about the Living Planet, our life support system, and act accordingly.

People are encouraged to adopt Vita Worldview in addition to what they already believe. Where there is conflict between these two philosophies, this is okay, as humans are able to comfortably hold conflicting ideas.

Six Core Themes of Spiritual View

1. The Bigger Thing

2. The Golden Rule

3. Life's Big Questions

- Where did we come from?

- Why are we here?

- What happens when we die?

4. Journey Within

- Inner Self

- Grounding

- Self-Actualisation

5. Transcendence

- Peak & Trough Experience

- Awe, Wonder & Amazement

- Timelessness & Flow

6. Higher Values

- Right & Wrong

- Sacred & Profane

- Raison d'être

The Bigger Thing

One of the most common concepts that describes spirituality is an individual's quest to be part of something bigger than themselves.

For some people the Bigger Thing is God, and for others, say professional athletes, it is their sport.

People's behaviour is guided in part by their efforts to contribute to the success or advancement of the Bigger Thing.

People can be part of multiple Bigger Things.

Vita holds that we should see ourselves as a part of the biosphere and seek to be a part of a movement to Advance the Verdant Age.

As with the trees and bees, the whales and snails, the belief in *Vitae-planeta* holds that we humans are cells in the body of the Living Planet.

Holding this belief profoundly changes our relationship to the environment, as we see that the environment is us: an interconnected, holistic 'oneness'. An interbeing.

When you identify with *Vitae-planeta* and the social movement to protect her, you are advancing your own life support system.

This is not only spiritually rewarding, but wholly logical, as well.

Adopt *Vitae-planeta* and the social movement to protect her as your Bigger Thing.

The Golden Rule

A Golden Rule is a central, guiding statement that frames ethical and rational decision making. The world's major religions all share a common Golden Rule which goes something like this: *Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.*

The problem with this 'Do unto others' statement is that it fails to take into consideration the Living Planet that is our life support.

Vita's Golden Rule is thus:

Do unto others and the Living Planet as you would have them do unto you.

Phrased another way:

Be good to people and the Living Planet, and they will be good to you.

Life's Big Questions

Spirituality offers answers to imponderable questions, particularly those relating to origins, meaning, and ultimate outcomes. There are many Big Questions, but three are particularly important.

- Where did we come from?
- What are we?
- Where are we going?

Where did we come from?

What are the origins of the human race?

Some people hold that humans were created by God. Others hold that we evolved from forbears called *Homo erectus*. Some Australian aboriginal cultures hold that rain and cloud spirits called Wandjina created life on Earth, including humans.

Vita Worldview holds that to answer this Big Question we ought to speak to cosmologists and biologists. They will tell you that these questions can be answered by science and that our understanding gets better year by year. The best theory for the origins of the universe and life on Earth is that the universe formed around 13.8 billion years ago with the

first observable evidence being the Big Bang. Humans arose through a long process of evolution from the first living things that formed from non-living compounds and elements on Earth about 3.8 billion years ago. From this abiogenesis, evolutionary pressures selected some organisms to survive and adapt to changing conditions.

We humans and the other living things alive today are the survivors of five Mass Extinction Events. We are made of what Earth is made of. We grew here with the trees and the bees, the whales, and the snails. We belong here.

What are we?

What is the purpose of human existence?

Some people hold that humans are placed on Earth to serve God. Others hold that we are here to have a good time, or to share love. The philosophical movement called existentialism holds that there is no meaning to human existence.

Vita Worldview holds that humans are here on Earth for the same reason as the trees, the bees, the whales, and the snails: to pursue our individual life interests in a manner that

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makes a positive contribution to our societies and the well-being of the Living Planet, our collective life support system. That's why we are here.

Where are we going?

What happens to us upon death?

Some people believe that when you die a non-physical part of you either goes to heaven or hell for eternity. Others believe that there is an eternal soul that occupies another body and returns in an after-life.

Vita Worldview holds that when the body dies, we die with it. However, the compounds and energy that was in our body may be revitalised by being taken up by other organisms. In this way, the end of our life begets the beginning of new life.

While we are alive, the flow of blood and electrical energy pulsing through our bodies and our breathing in and out, is our spirit.

Evidence of an individual's spirit can be seen while we are alive, and by what we leave behind after death. If we plant a forest, our spirit can be said to reside within the trees. If we wrote books, our spirit can be said to reside on bookshelves around the world. Van

Gough's spirit lives large today in coffee table books and art galleries. However, the spirit of the baker from whom he bought his bread is harder to define. If we spread joy and wisdom, our spirit can be said to be the fond memories and the knowledge in the people that we leave behind.

Journey Within

The Journey Within has three categories:

- Inner Self
- Grounding
- Self-Actualization

Inner Self

Inner Self refers to that part of each human that is unique and that can be explored through introspection, typically when alone in quiet contemplation. Inner Self includes meditation and mindfulness: cultivating focus to find calmness, healing, and insights. It also includes Symbolic Representation which describes the way in which an individual ascribes meaning onto symbols and objects in your spiritual journey, such as crystals, art, and music.

Grounding

Grounding refers to recognizing our interconnectedness with place, knowing where home is, where to find a sense of place and belonging. It also includes a reverence for ancestors: honouring and learning from the wisdom of those who came before us, even our distant forebears, the Cro-Magnon. Grounding also includes a commitment to the wellbeing of those who will come after us.

Self-Actualization

Self-Actualization refers to striving to reach one's fullest potential and live authentically in alignment with one's values and purpose. This calls on us to reflect on our thoughts, emotions, and beliefs to gain self-awareness and to know ourselves.

With respect to Inner Self, Vita Worldview holds that through Vitan Meditation it is possible to help sync our inner self with that of *Vitae-Planeta*, and in so doing, gain a deeper understanding of our life and our place amongst life on Earth.

With respect to symbolic representation, contemplate how it is that you have come to

associate meaning to things. Often the meanings that we ascribe to things do not help advance our lives, instead, they distract us from the things that are truly meaningful, like protecting the biosphere.

Take responsibility for what you believe. Beliefs can be changed. Change your beliefs to those that foster behaviours which Advance the Verdant Age.

With respect to Grounding, seek to find your sense of place in natural settings as this will help you to develop a deeper understanding and empathy for nature. Even in an urban area, there are often places where you can find solace, surrounded by vegetation and moving water. Learn of your immediate ancestors, but also consider your Palaeolithic forebears. If you have European ancestry, that's the Cro-Magnon. These people lived in a time before modern culture and represent a native version of humans untroubled by religion, nationalism, social media, two-party politics, and so on. By considering our palaeolithic forebears, it becomes easier to contemplate our future ancestors who will inhabit the Verdant Age.

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For Self-Actualization, focus on becoming empowered in Earthwork, on the restoration of life on Earth and constantly work on your expediency to become more effective and influential over time.

Transcendence

Transcendence refers to those times when you feel yourself to go beyond the normal experience of life. Three sub-themes are identified:

- Peak & Trough Experience
- Awe, Wonder & Amazement
- Timelessness & Flow

While these sub-themes are given distinct names, they are often experienced overlapping with one another.

Peak & Trough Experience

Peak & Trough experience refers to intense pleasurable or painful experiences that powerfully shape us. Peak and trough experience can often be sensed during the same situation - think of a roller-coaster ride, both exhilarating and terrifying in equal measure. Extreme experience – whether

perceived as good or bad – opens a doorway to spiritual change, and therefore, potentially to the adoption of nature spirituality.

Peak Experience

Peak Experience refers to those moments of euphoria and bliss when you are detached from your normal reality and become enthralled and entranced by an uplifting experience. A pathway to a fulfilling life is to regularly enjoy peak experiences. Peak experiences can be stumbled upon by chance, or they can be fostered.

Lifewise Philosophy holds that when we enjoy peak experience through nature, we more closely bond with the Living Planet, our life support system. Sunsets and sunrises, waves breaking on a beach, a full moon rising over a lake, catching a wave: these are natural experiences where we feel connected to a global life-force shared by all other creatures and plants.

Trough Experience

Trough Experience refers to those instances where you are flattened, rendered helpless, approaching what seems like death. This can be brought about through near-death

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experience, witnessing a tragic accident, exposure to war, physical assault, attack by wild animals, etc. Trough experience is not pleasant, but it can trigger a substantial shift in our spirituality. However, as people generally don't go seeking trough experiences, it is hard to shape the direction of the change.

With that said, trough experience can open a path to ecological spirituality. People who get dumped by massive waves, for example, become much more reverent of the surf. Similarly, people who have bad experiences around wild animals tend to respect them more afterwards.

Awe, Wonder and Amazement

The words awe, wonder and amazement refer to the instances when we feel overwhelmed or taken aback by the vastness or extraordinariness of an experience. People can find awe in many different places including from such obscure sources such as drag races or watching YouTube videos of rocket launches, or the manufacturing process of golf balls. Others find awe in nature.

Vita holds that we should seek awe, wonder and amazement from storms and landscapes and coastlines and forests and lichen growing on a rock. Technology can enhance our awe of nature for example, videos of schooling fish, or close-ups of spiders spinning webs, or the formation of tropical revolving storms. Seek awe, wonder and amazement in social movements that advance the Verdant Age such as the growing rebellion against extinction.

Timelessness & Flow

Timelessness comes when circumstances are so distracting that one loses track of the passage of time. Flow is where one is engaged in effortless action with total focus. One could fall into timelessness and flow watching your underwear in a tumble dryer or sitting under a metal triangle chanting *ohmm*, but these won't point your spiritual compass towards the Living Planet.

Vita teaches that we should seek timelessness and flow in the practice and presence of nature: a waterfall, a walk on a beach, kayaking across a lake, the sights and sounds of life on Earth. Get into flow by reading books or articles about the Earth System.

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Lose track of time in the garden or a forest or in conversations about how to Advance the Verdant Age.

Higher Values

Higher values are those values that are strongly held, and for which one will make sacrifices to defend. There are three considerations for Higher Values:

- Right & Wrong
- Sacred & Profane
- *Raison d'etre*

Right & Wrong

Right and wrong signifies actions that either help or hinder achieving a desired state. A desirable state for human civilization is a healthy biosphere populated by healthy, happy people for millions of years into the future.

Vita holds that harming people, and the biosphere is wrong, and actions that help people and Advance the Verdant Age are right. Of equal importance, inaction in the face of wrong-doing is itself wrong.

The word evil describes the unconscionable behaviour of people who hold power, wealth or influence and deploy it in a manner that works against the well-being of people and life on Earth. Evil is wrong and should be opposed.

Sacred & Profane

The sacred are those things that are perceived to be imbued with unique and higher qualities and values, and for which distinct rules apply. Profane is simply something that lacks sacredness, such as the everyday and mundane. Sacredness is not implicit but is granted by one's beliefs.

Vita holds that we can choose what we believe to be sacred and if we are to advance the Verdant Age, the following need to be seen as sacred:

- Places of ecological significance are sacred as are acts of personal sacrifice on behalf of the biosphere.
- Natural biophysical processes that underpin our life support system are sacred, and we should act accordingly by protecting them.

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- Indigenous cultures and endangered species are sacred and ought to be revered and protected.

Raison d'être

Raison d'être is a French term meaning *reason to be*. Some people attach themselves to a cause so tightly that they experience a visceral sense of oneness between themselves and their belief. This is called identity fusion. This can be a positive or negative for the Living Planet. For example, the people who massacred the cartoonists from the French satirical comic Charlie Hebdo had fused their identity with a cause unrelated to the biosphere. On the other hand, activists in the rebellion against extinction fuse their identity with a cause that Advances the Verdant Age.

Vita holds that the Anthropocene Crisis calls upon us to set our *raison d'être* to the highest levels of Earthwork: Advancing the Verdant Age.

Your *raison d'être* will determine what rituals and ceremonies are meaningful to you. Your *raison d'être* will determine the causes you support and those people who you regard as significant others.

If you are to fuse your identity, fuse it with the integrity of the biosphere and the proper function of the Earth System as these are fundamental to life on Earth and for human civilization.

Once you have fused your identity with the biosphere, you might undertake Earthwork. Here are some practices that you might consider.

Vita Practices

Described below are a few practices that can help give effect to Vita Worldview.

1. I, Biosphere
2. Live with Earthity
3. Practice a Vitamission
4. Grow Something
5. Celebrate the Moon
6. Lava & Cosmos
7. Reinvent New Year
8. Know Your White Horse
9. Return to the Flux

I, Biosphere

We are all part of the biosphere, and the biosphere is part of us. The acceptance of this idea is called *I, Biosphere*.

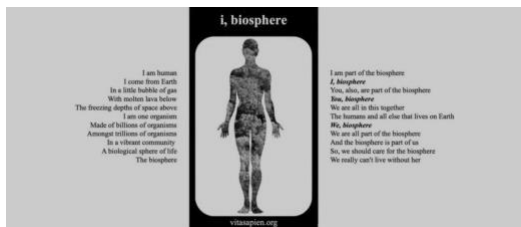
We wouldn't be here if it wasn't for the biosphere, so every-day, in some way, say thanks or take some time to connect-in with nature. This might be through a guided or unguided Vitan Meditation, or through a conversation with a stranger about Vita Worldview (maybe prompted by wearing a Quenn Pendant).

If you are in a big hurry, maybe just say "Thanks Plankton" as a way of recognising the wonderful things that the biosphere provides for us. Maybe just stop by a tree for a few moments and contemplate the colours and textures of the leaves and bark. Maybe say "Hi" to a cloud.

Feel free to create your own *I, Biosphere* routine and share with others. The more we acknowledge, connect to, and give thanks to our Living Planet, the more we realize that we just can't live without her.

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There is a simple *I, Biosphere* poem that you might like to recite as a way of confirming that you identify as part of the biosphere.



I am human I come from Earth
In a little bubble of gas
With molten lava below
The freezing depths of space above
I am one organism
Made of billions of organisms
Amongst trillions of organisms
In a vibrant community
A biological sphere of life
The biosphere
I am part of the biosphere
I, biosphere

You, also, are part of the biosphere
You, biosphere
We are all in this together
The humans and all else that lives on Earth
We, biosphere
We are all part of the biosphere
And the biosphere is part of us
So, we should care for the biosphere
We really can't live without her

This short poem could become part of an initiation ritual into a Vita Pod, which is a group of people who put Lifewise Philosophy into practice. See more about pods, below.

Live with Earthity

The name Lifewise has two connotations:

- wise about our personal life
- wise about our place amongst life on Earth

While much of Lifewise Philosophy is concerned with our personal relationship with the biosphere it is through Earthity that

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we deal with personal and interpersonal issues. Earthity has three components:

- Live Lightly on the Earth
- Be Kind to Others
- Be Kind to Yourself



Earthity calls upon us to be kind to people and planet.

Live Lightly on the Earth

As cells in the body of *Vitae-planeta*, we have common responsibilities to our fellow cells, and that means to other people and to nature. Lifewise Philosophy calls upon people to be good neighbours and good environmentalists.

Western lifestyles are unsustainable because the dominant social, political and economic systems and their use of energy and materials are pushing us beyond safe planetary boundaries. With that said, it is relatively easy

to slash one's material and energy consumption through conscious consumption and this should be done as a matter of course. This book does not delve into the details of Live Lightly on the Earth because it is so well covered elsewhere, for example, google 'sustainable lifestyles' to get started.

Kind to Others

Living with Earthity also means being decent to people who are and aren't like you. You can be anything, so start by being kind. Don't hate people. Don't be racist, homophobic, transphobic, misogynistic, sociopathic, etc. So many of the world's problems are caused by people who simply aren't kind to other people. Thieves, murderers, rapists, and abusers of men, women and children fit into this category. Many people are bought up around violence and use violence as a daily tool. Rise above this. The word Sapien means wise. So, use wisdom to defuse conflicts.

Kind to Others calls upon us to be okay with the lifestyles of people who aren't like you. If you don't like the idea of gay marriage, that's fine, don't marry a homosexual. If drug

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taking offends you, that's fine, don't take drugs.

Lifewise Philosophy holds that people ought to be free to live their lives without others interfering because their moral values sit in judgement. If people just let other people live their lives, everyone could just get on with living their lives.

On the matter of war, it is accepted that sometimes war is a necessary pursuit, for example to repel an invading force. However, there is nonetheless a need for that war to be just and to be fought justly. Wars where soldiers attack soldiers are bad enough without soldiers abusing civilians or captives.

Kind to Others may seem simple and straightforward, but there are some nuances. As an example, there are training courses that help people identify racism and sexism in their behaviour that they may not have seen, themselves. In addition, there is a field called Non-violent Communication that similarly helps people communicate in a non-confrontational manner. Living with Earthity - kindness to others calls on people to familiarise themselves with these things and bring them into practice through their lives.

Many spiritual traditions promote charitable giving as a way of sharing the bounty that comes to an individual and help ameliorate social problems caused by systemic wealth disparity. Lifewise Philosophy condones this and accepts that changing the system that creates wealth disparity is the ultimate resolution of the problem. Charitable donations ought to be considered with reference to the concept of ‘expedience’. This suggests that we ought to seek to do as much good with the donation as possible.

Kind to Yourself

While we live surrounded by other people who engage in reciprocity and cooperation, at the end of the day we were born alone, and we die alone. In between, there are many decisions that are made that either advance our personal interests or run counter to them. Being Kind to Yourself is important.

Kind to Yourself covers the whole spectrum of what is referred to as Personal Development which includes personal finances, plus health and fitness, mental health, and so on. Avoiding harmful addictions is a part of Kind to Yourself.

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Regarding wealth creation, it is important to consider how wealth is made and how it is consumed. For an extreme example, someone who makes money from oil exploration (in a climate crisis) and spends his money shooting elephants (in a biodiversity crisis) ought not ever earn another dollar. On the other extreme, someone who makes money advancing sustainable energy and spends their money advancing noble causes, ought rightly do well for themselves. Personal wealth can be hugely beneficial to Advancing the Verdant Age if it is earned and spent honourably.

Practice a Vitamission

Every cell in a body is tasked with a specific mission. So, it is with us humans, except that we have agency, which means that we can choose our own mission.

What is your self-chosen mission to help Advance the Verdant Age?



There are many ways to serve the Living Planet.

Given that climate change and biodiversity are the two biggest threats to the Living Planet, these might be the primary focus of your attention.

There are many ways to support our Living Planet including removing plastic from beaches, climate activism, developing new technology, or researching who's responsible for bad governance and holding them accountable. However, supporting environmental efforts should not come at the expense of human well-being, and vice-versa.

Ideally, a cause could foster more than one benefit. For example, supporting women to plant trees in developing countries helps to eradicate poverty, sequester carbon, and improve biodiversity.

Seek to make your Vitamission as impactful as possible and seek to continually increase

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your efficacy. This is referred to as expedience. Your actions should be expedient.

Devote your life to your Vitamission and become a powerful force in the transition to a sustainable global civilization.

Grow Something

Growing something helps to connect people to Elan Vital, the idea of a life force that drives organisms to prosper. If you are not familiar with growing things, start with a Swiss Cheese Plant - *Monstera deliciosa*. There is a big *Monstera* community on Youtube. That's a great place to start. To get going, find someone who has a *Monstera* and ask for a cutting.



Gazing upon a pot plant is a form of Vitan Meditation.

You might also take an interest in a home aquarium or a frog pond in the backyard.

Frog ponds are good as they can enhance local ecosystems. Maybe combine the *Monstera deliciosa* with the frog pond.

In this way, you can connect directly to the wellbeing of other organisms and learn how to make them comfortable. If plants are comfortable, they grow and flower. If fish are comfortable, they breed.

Find Yourself in Nature

Periodically immerse yourself in nature. Ideally, you would find a place where the technosphere is absent. No roads, and no traffic noise. It's hard to escape aeroplane noise, however. In Australia, such places are easy to come by even a little way from the city. If you can't escape a city, then go to the botanical gardens, or some place that is overgrown.



Waterfalls are one of nature's most extraordinary gifts.

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Immersing yourself in nature helps reconnect you to wilderness which is a sensation that has been with modern humans for most of the last 70,000 years but has been largely lost through urbanization. When in nature, find yourself, contemplate your inner self, and find the wilderness within your spirit.

Celebrate the Moon

On the Full Moon, gather with friends and associates and use this auspicious event to engage in an evening of Big Talk. A gathering on the Full Moon has several key attributes.



Every 28 days or so, a spectacle awaits.

A Peak Experience

The rise of the Full-Moon provides a peak experience - the Moon Illusion - that can be shared, and this helps to bond people together. The Moon Illusion is an optical

illusion that makes the Moon appear larger near the horizon than it does higher in the sky. This is one reason why a Full Moon rise can be so impressive.

Joins Us Together

The Moon is a great leveller of humans as it joins us together across space and time. The Moon looks the same, no matter where we are. A Full Moon in Malaysia occurs on the same night as a Full Moon in Australia, for example. The Moon has looked the same to all humans over the entire course of human history. So, when Shakespeare wrote “*The Moon’s an arrant thief, and her pale fire she snatches from the sun*” he was referring to the Moon that looked the same as the Moon that we see today.

Reminder of Life

The Moon offers a visible reminder that we do not just live in a constructed society, but we are part of an ancient natural system that has been here long before us. The Moon is dead, inert, and lifeless, reminding us that life is the exception, not the rule, in our solar system.

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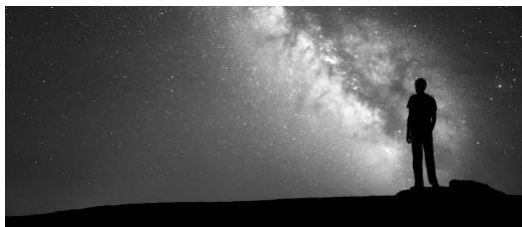
The Moon has a huge influence on living things as the gravity moves trillions of tonnes of seawater around, causing the rise and fall of the tides. The Full Moon floods the night with light, making landscapes and seascapes visible in the dark. So, every time you see the Moon think of life on Earth and how precious it is.

Renewable Energy

The tides, caused by the influence of the Moon's gravity, can be harnessed to provide clean renewable energy. The Moon thus reminds us of the need to end the fossil fuel industry and advance sustainable renewable energy.

Cosmos & Lava

According to the 2016 paper, *The New World Atlas of Artificial Night Sky Brightness*, about 30% of humans will never see the Milky Way from their homes due to night sky light pollution.



The visible Universe is about 93 billion light years wide.

Seeing the cosmos reminds us that Earth is a planet of one star (the Sun), amid trillions of stars in a vast expanding bubble of vacuous space. This is where we live, and to see the stars of our galaxy, the Milky Way, on a clear night serves to remind us of the frailty of our blue/green planet.

What lies above the biosphere is a vast expanse of space that is a frigid -273 degree Celsius. Not a welcoming environment for life.

To manifest this contemplation, visit a place where artificial night sky brightness is minimal or zero to view the cosmos. You will map for this. A skyglow map. So, google *Skyglow Map*.

You might also contemplate what lies below the Living Planet. What lies below the biosphere is a bubbling cauldron of molten

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rock – the magma – at a temperature of around 1,000 degrees Celsius. This contemplation might be advanced by visiting a volcano. However, there is an ecological footprint to travel (consider your Earthity), and volcanoes can be dangerous; so, one might simply ponder volcanoes and lava through a book, a website, or a documentary.



Don't touch! Lava is between 700 and 1,200°C.

Alternatively, visit hot springs. This is where water is heated by magma and finds its way to the surface. There are many hot springs around the world, some that you can bathe in, others that are too hot.

Maybe you can find hot springs that are in a place with zero skyglow and contemplate what lies above and below the biosphere at the same time.

There is a takeaway message in these contemplations of the Cosmos and the

Magma. The biosphere has dangerous neighbours and yet can maintain internal temperatures within a narrow range despite the extremes of temperature on either side. We ought not tamper with that ability.

Reinvent New Year

At the heart of this practice is the recognition that all institutions are ecologically unsustainable and must be transformed to advance the Verdant Age.

The term *institution* includes a wide range of entities, practices and norms that structure social life such as banking, finance, energy production, governance, public holidays - including New Years... All institutions need augmentation to align with a sustainable civilization.

Vita Sapien Organization has taken up this challenge and reinvented New Year away from the 1st of January.

A New Year is an arbitrary date, after all. When is the natural beginning and end of an orbit around the sun? There isn't one. So, around the world, cultures ascribe different dates to the beginning of the New Year.

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Vita Worldview believes that it is auspicious to celebrate New Year on a date that advances the conversation about the Living Planet and the Verdant Age. As such, Foundation Pod celebrates New Year on 16 July. The minute of the end of one annual cycle and the beginning of the next is 9.29pm Australian Eastern Standard Time (AEST).

At that time in 1945 in New Mexico, USA, the first nuclear explosion was detonated: the so-called Trinity Bomb Test. This event is significant because radioactive contamination from atmospheric bomb tests has been identified as a potential chemical marker of the beginning of the Anthropocene Epoch, and this was the first such bomb test. Vita Worldview holds that the New Mexico nuclear bomb test was the beginning of the Anthropocene Epoch.

Every year over the past six years, Foundation Pod has held a New Year celebration on 16 July.



The Gadget - the world's first nuclear bomb.

At 9.29pm, the Gadget is detonated and creates a small explosion created from dry-ice in a soft drink bottle submerged in a bucket of water with a bright LED light shining behind. When the Gadget detonates, it shoots a bubbling plume of aerated water into the air, and the LED light illuminates this as a bright white flash.

This ceremony is called Trinibomtest, and it is planned to scale-up the Gadget with the help of professional explosives experts to replicate a broiling mushroom cloud in addition to the bright white flash, as per the original New Mexico bomb test. See the movie *Oppenheimer* which features this bomb test.

It is fitting to align the Earth New Year with the beginning of the Anthropocene Epoch, as Vita Worldview seeks to help foster the

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creation of a subsequent era where humans thrive in synergy with nature. We refer to this subsequent epoch as the Verdant Age. The sooner that starts, the better.

Commemorating the first nuclear bomb test is also appropriate because there are many prognostications about the world ending in fire due to Climate Change, Armageddon, Nuclear War, etc. These ideas are widespread in Western culture and religious traditions. It is therefore refreshing to find a narrative in which the fireball occurs at the beginning of the story and leaves the end-date for humanity to be decided deep into the Long Future.

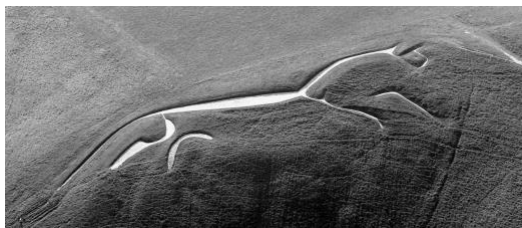
Vita Pods (groups of people who practice Vita Worldview) are invited to accept Foundation Pod's New Year date or to propose their own. The choice of their New Year needs to be backed by a rational justification of how this date relates to the belief in *Vitae-planeta*.

Remember, that the exhortation to Reinvent New Years is a call to reinvent a sustainable version of all institutions, which includes but is not limited to banking, government, archery, netball, fishing, war, air travel.... All

institutions should be reinvented to Advance the Verdant Age.

Know your White Horse

The Uffington White Horse is a Bronze-age artwork etched into a hillside in Oxfordshire, UK that is regarded as sacred by many people. Every year, thousands of people visit the White Horse to remove weeds, cut the grass, and add new chalk. The horse is elevated, giving a commanding view over the Oxfordshire landscape.



100m in length. Uffington White Horse from above.

The practice *Know Your White Horse* is not an exhortation to visit the Uffington chalk-figure *per se* but represents whatever or wherever an individual goes for spiritual renewal in nature. If you do not yet know how to find spiritual renewal in nature, this is your next adventure.

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Our civilisation is heading into a pressure cooker of climate and ecological collapse, and it is important that we all know how to regenerate from the battles that we choose and those that are thrust upon us.

Many people find solace on the beach, walking by the lake or watching the Full Moon rise. Spiritual solace in nature needn't be outside. A balcony full of pot-plants will do the trick for some. If you are unable to escape the bounds of the city, nature-spiritual solace can be found online, maybe watching underwater videos of fish schooling, or any number of excellent nature documentaries that are available, for example.

Return to the Flux

Our bodies are the receptacles of minerals and energy borrowed from the Living Planet. When we die, we ought to promptly return the energy and minerals to the Living Planet so that other life forms might get the benefit of them.

This might be done through cremation, being aware of not using fossil fuels or plastics in the casket.

Alternatively, one might be buried in a casket that allows the soil to absorb the body easily. There are various 'Green Funeral' practices that you might consider. This might include a simple practice like burial in a forest with a tree planted on your grave. Alternatively, there are more complex technological decomposition processes.



There are many forms of green burial.

When the minerals in your body return to the biochemical flux from where they came, you are contributing to the growth of new life. Who knows what living organism may come to be the beneficiary of the minerals that you once were composed of?

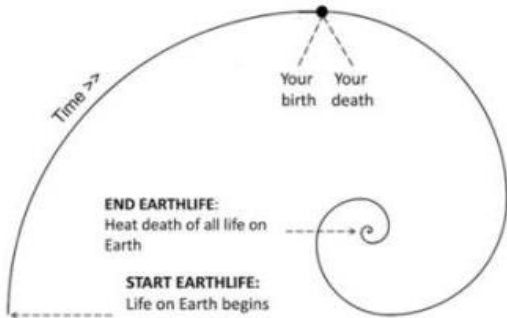
This is the principle of Revitalisation. A Vitan funeral will help add new life to that which was once part of you.

Consider this. Life has existed on Earth for around 3.8 billion years and will likely remain

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for another 2 billion years. Let's call this Earthlife and assume it to be 6 billion years in total. As a human being, you get to play in the biosphere for maybe a hundred years if you are lucky. That's it. 100 years out of six billion years, and that's if you are lucky. That's enough. That's all you need.

You were unalive for billions of years, you have a short time of life, and then you become unalive for billions more years. That's just how it is on Earth for all the animals and plants, humans included.



Between birth and death is a blip in the big scheme.

Being Vitan

This chapter shares some ideas about how to adopt Vita Worldview into your life and participate in the changes necessary to advance the Verdant Age.

There are around 53 million adults in the Western world alone who will adopt Vita Worldview as their primary way of relating to the environment around them. Maybe you are one of them?



I am a Vitan.

- A spiritual bond with our Living Planet
- Framing reality through science & reason
- In action to make things better

I will die one day, complete.

The Vitan Halo is a symbol of enlightenment.

The image shows a person with a Vitan Halo. For millennia, the halo has been used to indicate enlightenment, having a deeper understanding of the world. Vita Worldview offers this enlightenment, both spiritual and intellectual.

Nature Calls

To change the world, you need to be able to hear nature calling out to you. Can you hear her?

Nature Calls are those instances when nature intervenes into your consciousness. How many of these have you sensed? What would you add to this list?

Nature calls when you sense the wind change as the storm approaches ... the sound of small animals rustling in the grass ... the multicoloured glow of a rainbow in a waterfall's mist ... the spangles of dappled sunlight through a forest canopy ... the unique colour and texture of lichen on a boulder ... a bird lands on a branch close to you, taking you by surprise ... you come across a fallen tree covered in fungi and moss as it returns to the soil ... you see a bird on a branch with an insect in its beak ... a possum climbing up a tree turns to look at you ... the Full Moon rises above the ocean horizon ... the sun sets in an orange sky ... a dolphin comes to the surface and you hear its breath ... a ray swims past, hugging the sea floor ... clear sea water washing against the green seaweed on the rocks ... the first sign of a new leaf on a pot-

plant ... a bird lands on your windowsill and looks inside ... a thousand green ants carry a locust to their nest ... sunlight shimmers off the sea surface like a thousand swirling stars ... seawater moves over corrugated sand ... the hiss of water as a stream flows around a fallen tree ... brilliant rays of sunshine burst through the clouds ... a storm rises and you feel the wind increase and the cumulus swell ... the cicadas in the bush are loud but invisible, no matter how hard you look... looking out upon a forested valley ... you see a butterfly land on a leaf, close by ... you wake to the music of songbirds in the trees ... you see track marks on the beach, and wonder what animal made them ... you find a beautiful seashell on the beach and realise there is a crab living inside ... a butterfly flutters through the air and you watch it go ... the clouds part, revealing the New Moon rising above the horizon ... a little animal scurries away in your peripheral vision ... you open a cupboard to find that a potato has thrown a shoot into the air ... green algae grows on the glass in your fish tank

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Vita Worldview

Nature is all around us. She is calling out to us. Asking us to care for her. Can you hear her?



Nature calls out to us all the time. Can you hear?

Connecting to Nature

When people fill their spirituality with nature this guides them towards right action to Advance the Verdant Age.

Here are some simple practices that help you connect spiritually to nature.

- Practice Vitan Meditation which is to lose yourself by looking at or listening to nature – whether this be closing your eyes and listen to birdsong, gazing into a fish tank, or listening to a Vita guided meditation.
- Take your shoes off and walk on the ground, on the grass, in the mud, on the beach. This is called Earthing.

- When it rains, find somewhere to watch the water fall from the sky. Maybe stand in the rain. Embrace the hydrological cycle.
- Do a Moonscope to determine when and where the Full Moon rises, and then watch the Full Moon rise. Experience the Moon Illusion alone or with friends.
- Stand close to a native animal and just look at it. See if you can encourage the animal to look at you. Maybe you can be friends.
- Close your eyes for five minutes and then open them to gaze upon an old leaf.
- Watch a documentary about nature, concentrate on learning the new information, then ponder it deeply.
- Plant a seed in a pot, water it, and observe the seed sprout and grow. Maybe you can nurture the plant to become a tree that will outlive you.
- Visit a cave that has ancient paintings and ponder the motivations and the spirituality of the people who painted it. Check if you need permission, first.

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- Learn about climate change and then sit in quiet contemplation of this knowledge until you feel it.
- Go to a place where wildlife congregates and try to be accepted as an unfearred witness.
- Meet with your local Indigenous clan and learn about their spiritual connection to the land.
- Learn about the subject of spirituality and ponder the extent to which your own spirituality is aligned with nature.
- Lay on your back in the grass and watch the clouds. Ponder the process by which invisible atmospheric vapor becomes a trillion water droplets to form the cloud.
- Learn about the different ways that the plankton make the clouds.
- When a storm comes, watch the way it moves the trees and the way that light plays across the landscape.
- Go to the beach and experience the raw power of waves crashing on the sand or the rocks.

- Find a Skyglow Map and visit a place that has full darkness on a night during Milky Way season. Gaze upon the cosmos and contemplate the vast, cold, empty space that lies above the biosphere.
- Visit an active volcano or hot springs and contemplate the magma rising to the Earth surface beneath the biosphere.
- Find a place where the technosphere cannot be detected – i.e. you can't see or hear anything man-made. When you are in this completely natural place, marvel at how life on Earth evolved and has sustained itself for 3.8 billion years.
- Ponder the Gaia Hypothesis. Then, contemplate how much of an aberration it is that one species – *Homo sapiens* – should be intent on annihilating most life on Earth by fostering climate and ecological collapse over the coming decades.
- Visit a waterfall and sit in quiet contemplation with the sound of the falling water.

Then ask yourself, what should I do with the rest of my life?

Sharing Vita Worldview

There are many ways to share Vita Worldview.

Visit the Vita Sapien website and social media, and like, follow, and share. Host a party on the Full Moon and talk about Vita Worldview to your guests. Invite people around for lunch to share Vita Worldview, Lifewise Philosophy and Verdant Spirituality. Wear a Quendant (see next section) and when people comment on it, talk to them about the Verdant Age. Maybe form a Pod, a local gathering, to undertake Vita Practices and share the message. Take your friend or acquaintance to a place where there is no sight or sound of human activity and ask them to notice the sounds of nature.

However you share Vita Worldview remember where are in the grand scheme of events. Humanity has can come quickly to an end if we continue on our present path. Alternatively, if the 53 Million Latent Vitans can be enrolled, then it is possible to enter the Verdant Age, the potential future time when humans and the Living Planet thrive in synergy, deep into the Long Future.

Afterword

Vita Sapien Organisation

Vita Sapien Organisation (ViSO) is an Australian registered charity that advances a deeper understanding of the relationship between belief and ecological spirituality.

Vita Sapien was founded in 2020 as a registered as a religious institution. In Australia, a religion involves a belief in a supernatural being, principle or thing, and the acceptance of canons of conduct that give effect to the belief. *Vitae-planeta* meets the definition of the supernatural being, and the Vita Practices meet the definition of canons of conduct. If you have a calling, you might become a Vitan Minister through the process of ordination described on the Vita Sapien website.

The Quenn Pendant

To spread Vita Worldview ViSO needs resources to function. An excellent way of demonstrating your support is by wearing a Quendant, like Nick and Srey, here.

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A Quendant is a Quenn Pendant.

The standard Quendant is made of laser-cut stainless steel with a stainless wire and magnetic clasp. They are a tried and tested piece of robust, attractive jewellery.



The Quenn is deeply symbolic with four key aspects. The lower rings represent:

- a) the Living Planet
- b) human civilization.



The outer ring represents continuum, the ability to continue.

This outer ring is broken because civilization is out of balance with the Living Planet.



The upper circle, incorporating the tops of the two lower circles, is the Verda symbol.

Verda represents the Verdant Age, the potential future time when humans and the Living Planet thrive in synergy.



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The Quenn is the symbol of the Anthropocene, and within the Anthropocene are the seeds of the Verdant Age.

If you wear a Quendant in public, people will comment on the piece, creating a space for a conversation about Vita Worldview.

If you want to wear a Quendant, you can get them through the Vita Sapien website where there are also Quendant explainer videos.

Maybe visit the website for other items that support our mission. You could even make a regular donation. That would help a lot.

Really, though, what we would ask of you is to pursue your life interest in a manner that makes a positive contribution to society and the Living Planet and advances the Verdant Age.

Learn more on the Vita Sapien website:

vitasapien.org

Glossary

Advance the Verdant Age: Undertake efforts to resolve the Anthropocene Crisis and advance a sustainable civilization where nature and humanity thrive in synergy, deep into the Long Future.

Anthro: Anthro is a prefix that describes humans.

Anthropocene: The Anthropocene is a central concept in Vita Worldview that describes the modern era - since 1945 - in which humans are the main driver of change in the climate and environment. Vita Worldview holds that the Anthropocene began with the detonation of the Trinity Bomb Test on July 16, 1945.

Anthropogenic: Made by humans.

Anthropogenic Mass: The mass of material created by humans that since around the year 2020 outweighs the mass of living things on Earth.

Big Talk: The opposite of small talk, Big Talk is conversations about substantial topics such as the climate and ecological crisis, human civilization, and the Verdant Age.

Bio-physical Flux: See *Flux*.

Biosphere: The biosphere has two meanings. First, it describes the thin-walled sphere where life can be found on Earth. Second, it refers to that place, and the totality of all the life found within it. Thus the biosphere is both a place and a thing.

Cosmos Night: A proposed activity to visit a location with zero skyglow at night during Milky Way season to view the full depth of the cosmos. This is part of developing a greater appreciation of what lies above *Vitae-planeta*.

Cro-Magnon: The Cro-Magnon are the first Thinking-Feeling humans in Europe dating from about 40,000 years ago until about 10,000 years ago.

Defaunation of the Anthropocene: the past and future mass-death of animals in the modern era caused by direct and indirect human action.

Earthity: the practice of living lightly on Earth and caring for oneself and others.

Ecophany: formed from the words ecological and epiphany, ecophany is a core concept for Vita Worldview and refers to a

spiritual, emotional, or intellectual awakening to nature - and particularly the plight of the biosphere - in an individual. The mission of Vita Worldview is to foster ecophany in hundreds of millions of people around the world, rapidly.

Euthanise the Fossil Fuel Industry: to rapidly remove power of the fossil fuel industry to facilitate the rapid and swift and orderly transition to sustainable renewable energy.

Flux: the high-entropy environment of the ocean, atmosphere and soil from which low entropy structures are formed by plants. All that lives on Earth is comprised of flux.

Fostering Rapid, Mass-Ecophany: the process of swiftly fostering ecological epiphany in tens of millions of people worldwide.

Holocene: The Holocene Epoch is name given to the last 12,000 years since the retreat of the last Ice Age. During this period, humans went from being predominantly hunter-gatherers to developing agriculture, cities and towns, and so-called 'civilization'. The Holocene Epoch ended in the 1950s when the Anthropocene Epoch began.

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Long Future: The Long Future is the future time in which Earth is habitable for life as a result of it being in the Habitable Zone of the Sun. As the Sun ages and swells, Earth's orbit will no longer be suitable for life on Earth as incoming solar radiation will be higher, making conditions too hot for life.

Nine-Boundaries Safe: a design that helps ensure that none of the nine planetary boundaries are exceeded.

Pananima: a planet's biosphere that maintains homeostasis, and thus provides a stable habitat for life to evolve over a long period of time. Vita Worldview refers to the Pananima of Earth as *Vitae-planeta*.

Imperium: Imperium is a word from the Roman Empire that describes an authority bestowed upon an individual to act with force on the behalf of the Roman Empire.

Imperium vitae-planeta: There are two aspects to the name *Imperium vitae-planeta*.

Imperium vitae-planeta is a proposed taxonomic binomial for the biosphere as a single living being. Note the capitalization and italics. The

name roughly translates from Latin to *Empire of the Living Planet*.

A second meaning of *Imperium vitae-planeta* is an intrinsic authority for humans to act with *force of character* on behalf of the Living Planet.

Insectapocalypse: the ongoing mass die-off of insects in the Anthropocene.

Innatured: spiritual beliefs that are tied closely to the Living Planet.

Ordination: The process by which an individual becomes a Vitan Minister. This presently includes becoming familiar with the Vita Worldview literature, successfully answering a questionnaire, and demonstrating the resources and strength of character to perform the duties expected of the Ministry.

Pod: A Pod is a name ascribed to an organised gathering of individuals for the purpose of learning about, sharing and practicing Vita Worldview.

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Quenn: A Vitan symbol that represents the Anthropocene Epoch.

Quendant: A Quenn Pendant, a Quenn symbol worn as a necklace. An iconic piece of Vitan jewellery.

Religion: Vita Worldview uses the definition of religion provided by the Australian Charities and Not-for-profit Commission: *religion involves a belief in a supernatural being, principal or thing and the acceptance of canons of conduct that give effect to the belief.*

Resolve the Anthropocene: This means to fix the climate and ecological crisis swiftly by euthanizing the fossil fuel industry, restoring the climate by drawing down a trillion tons of CO₂ and rewilding a third of nature. All this needs to be well underway by mid-century.

Return to the Flux: Vitan funerary practice seeks for the minerals and energy in a deceased individual to re-enter the flux from where it came thus enabling other living beings the opportunity to use those minerals and energy.

Thrive in Synergy: Thrive in synergy refers to the biosphere and human civilization prospering as a result of a synergistic

interplay between the two. This is to say that the condition of the biosphere can be improved as a result of human actions.

Uffington White Horse: The Uffington White Horse is a horse-like symbol etched into the side of a hill in Southern England. The Uffington White Horse is the inspiration to the Vita Worldview Practice, *Know Your White Horse* which describes knowing where to find spiritual solace in nature.

Verdant Age: The Verdant Age is the potential future time when humans and the biosphere thrive in synergy deep into the Long Future. It is conceivable that the Verdant Age could last of tens or hundreds of millions of years.

Vitae-planeta: A shortened name for *Imperium vitae-planeta*, the biosphere of Planet Earth viewed as a single living organism. Note the capitalization and spelling of *Vitae-planeta*, that is consistent with it being a species name.

Vita Hypothesis: the hypothesis that the combination of spiritual enlightenment to nature and environmental education is a pathway to fostering ecophany and triggering radical pro-environmental behaviour change.

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Vitan Minister: Vita Sapien Organization advances Vita Religion. Vita Religion is an Australian registered religious institution, and its administrative leaders are referred to as Vitan Ministers. Vitan Ministers can also be inaugurated through a process of ordination.

Vita Religion: An Australian registered religious institution that advances a nature-based religion with Vitae-planeta as the supernatural object of devotion and ten practices (canons of conduct).

Vita Sapien Organisation: is a registered charity in Australia that Advances Vita Worldview.