

# Ethics and Principles of Permaculture

Compiled by Marisha Auerbach

[sowingevolution@gmail.com](mailto:sowingevolution@gmail.com)

[www.permaculturerising.com](http://www.permaculturerising.com)

**Prime Directive:** The only responsible decision is to take responsibility for our existence and that of our children.

## Ethics

\* Care for the Earth    \* Care for People    \* Redistribute the Surplus

## David Holmgren's Permaculture Principles

1. **Observe and Interact:** *"Beauty is in the eye of the beholder"*
2. **Catch and Store Energy:** *"Make hay while the sun shines"*
3. **Obtain a Yield:** *"You can't work on an empty stomach"*
4. **Apply Self-Regulation and Accept Feedback:** *"The sins of the fathers are visited on the children unto the seventh generation"*
5. **Use and Value Renewable Resources and Services:** *"Let nature take its course"*
6. **Produce No Waste:** *"A stitch in time, saves nine"*
7. **Design from Patterns to Details:** *"Can't see the wood for the trees"*
8. **Integrate Rather Than Segregate:** *"Many hands make light work"*
9. **Use Small and Slow Solutions:** *"The bigger they are, the harder they fall", "Slow and steady wins the race"*
10. **Use and Value Diversity:** *"Don't put all your eggs in one basket"*
11. **Use Edges and Value the Marginal:** *"Don't think you are on the right track, just because it is a well-beaten path"*
12. **Creatively Use and Respond to Change:** *"Vision is not seeing things as they are, but as they will be"*

## Mollisonian Permaculture Principles

- **Work with Nature, Not Against:** By working within natural law, we can be most effective
- **The Problem is the Solution, Everything Works Both Ways:** It is all in our own perspective if something is beneficial or not, by gathering knowledge, we can figure out how to make the best of what we have.
- **Make the Least Change for the Greatest Effect**
- **The Yield of a System is Theoretically Unlimited:** the only limit is the knowledge, information, imagination and creativity of the designer.
- **Everything Gardens:** Every living organism has an effect on its environment. It is up to the designer to learn what these things have to contribute and place them in beneficial connection.
- **Relative Location:** Elements in a system are viewed, not in isolation, but for the multitude of functional interconnections that they can have with the other elements of the design to enhance harmony.
- **Each Element Performs Many Functions:** By stacking functions, the designer has the forethought against the failure of one or more elements.
- **Each Function is Supported by Many Elements:** Maximizing beneficial connections between elements creates stability.

### **Mollisonian Permaculture Principles (cont.)**

- **Energy Efficient Planning:** Through thoughtful design, we can make the most from the least. (zone planning, sector planning, slope)
- **Use Biological Resources:** By including a plant or animal in our design, we can increase our opportunities to save energy and increase yield.
- **Energy Cycling:** Each cyclical opportunity in the system increases the opportunity for yield.
- **Small-Scale Intensive Systems:** It's all about scale. Smaller systems are easier to respond to.
- **Accelerating Succession & Evolution:** Natural ecosystems develop and change over time. By observing these systems, we can design for effective restoration and productivity.
- **Diversity:** Functional relationships between elements creates stability and design innovations we never could have thought of alone!

### **Rosemary Morrow's Permaculture Principles**

#### ***Rosemary Morrow's Attitudinal Principles***

<b>Basic Position</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>
<b>* <i>Work with Nature, Not Against It</i></b>	* Results in minimum negative impact and long term sustainability
<b>* <i>Value Edges and Marginal and Small</i></b>	* Small and different can be vital
<b>* <i>See Solutions Inherent in Problems</i></b>	* Overcomes blockages to design and implementation
<b>* <i>Produce No Waste</i></b>	* Move towards a closed ecosystem
<b>* <i>Value People and their Skills and Work</i></b>	* Draws people in, enables, appreciates, and supports them
<b>* <i>Respect for all Life</i></b>	* The delights of all natural and cultural diversity are valued
<b>* <i>Use Public Transport and Renewable Fuels</i></b>  <b>* <i>Calculate Food Miles</i></b>	* Move towards people-scaled sustainable urban planning, friendlier places and less pollution * Support local farmers, bioregional produce, lower food costs, truck-free roads
<b>* <i>Reduce Your Ecological Footprint</i></b>	* Accept responsibility, simplify your life, become more self-reliant * Remember the future & save resources

### Rosemary Morrow's Design Principles

<b>Design Principle</b>	<b>Where it applies</b>
<i>* Preserve, Regenerate, and Extend all Natural and Traditional Permanent Landscapes</i>	* Watersheds, valleys, roadsides, remnant forests, ridges, and steep slopes, AND Your Backyard
<i>* Water: Conserve and Increase all Sources and Supplies of Water, and Maintain and Ensure Water Purity</i>	* Catchments, tributaries, wetlands, rivers, lakes, aquifers, springs & estuaries, underground wells, canals, AND Your Backyard
<i>* Energy: Catch and Store Energy by All Non-polluting and Renewable Means</i>	* Look to the natural inherent energies of where you live; Catch by vegetation; Use passive solar design and technology; look to wind, hydro, & solar for power generation
<i>* Biodiversity: Preserve and Increase Biodiversity of all Types</i>	* From rainforest to desert; from invisible to macro; in niches, habitats, seeds, pests, human settlements, religions, knowledge, skills, and attitudes

### Rosemary Morrow's Strategic Principles

<b>Strategic Principles</b>	<b>Where it applies</b>
<i>* Focus on Long-term Sustainability</i>	* Careful Thinking
<i>* Cooperate, don't compete</i>	* Share best knowledge and practice
<i>* Design from Patterns to Details</i>	* See the whole picture first
<i>* Start Small and Learn From Change</i>	* Avoids expensive errors
<i>* Make the Least Change For the Largest Result</i>	* Efficient and economical detail
<i>* Make a Priority of Renewable Resources and Services</i>	* Establishes a feedback loop to long-term sustainability
<i>* Bring Food Production Back to the Cities</i>	* Empowers food security and risk avoidance

### Resources:

Earth User's Guide to Permaculture. Morrow, Rosemary. Kangaroo Press, Pymble NSW 2006.

Introduction to Permaculture. Slay, Reny and Mollison, Bill. Tagari Tyalgum, 1991.

Permaculture: A Designer's Manual. Mollison, Bill. Island Press, Covelo, CA, 1990.

Permaculture: Principles and Pathways Beyond Sustainability. Holmgren, David. Chelsea Green, White River Junction, VT, 2002.