

# Finding Hope in the End: An Ecocritical Analysis of The Voluntary Human Extinction Movement

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## Abstract

Our planet is experiencing climate change, drastic losses in biodiversity, and many other environmental issues. While many individuals may be struggling to find ways in which they can do something to help address the current ecological crisis, one movement presents a radical option. The Voluntary Human Extinction Movement, which advocates for extinction of humankind by simply choosing not to reproduce, represents a resolute and surprising spirit of hopefulness in the face of environmental crisis.

For this paper, I studied The Voluntary Human Extinction Movement (VHMET) website and identified the organization's beliefs and values. I then analyzed them from an ecocritical perspective, drawing on deep ecology and ecofeminist thought. To do this, I performed a discourse analysis of the website to locate language that expressed values and beliefs. After conducting my analysis, I discovered that VHMET clearly expresses several core values, including: biocentrism, freedom, voluntariness, unity, responsibility, and hope.

I conclude that VHEMT does reflect the ecological values and takes these values to a radical, but nonviolent, conclusion. The sincerity of its biocentrism perspective allows members to see positivity and hope in the vision of a human-free planet. Ultimately, I do not think VHEMT will ever reach its goal. I believe that VHEMT members know and accept this. However, I argue that this social movement organization represents a sincere and passionate response to climate change that our society desperately needs, offering a fresh, albeit challenging, perspective on what the actions of humanity should be in the face of climate change.

## Introduction

“Choosing to refrain from producing another person demonstrates a profound love for all life”

–The Voluntary Human Extinction Movement

A couple months ago, I read Elizabeth Kolbert’s books *The Sixth Extinction: An Unnatural History* (2014) and *Fields Notes from a Catastrophe: Man, Nature, and Climate Change* (2006). Her books left me with a flood of mixed feelings: despair, passion, sorrow, inspiration, guilt, determination, and hopelessness. What was I supposed to do with the realization that it is most likely too late to stop climate change? Or the fact that species after species are fading into nonexistence? Or the awareness that humanity is destroying Mother Earth, the only home of ours and nonhuman others? While I may be struggling to find ways in which I can do something to help address the current ecological crisis, one movement presents a possible, yet radical, option—reducing the human population.

The Voluntary Human Extinction Movement (VHEMT) is a social movement whose goal is to encourage individuals not to have children in order to allow humankind to go extinct and thereby allow Mother Earth to recover from the abuse she has experienced as the result of human greed. This radical movement promotes this long-term goal of a completely voluntary human extinction by appealing to values held by environmentally-minded individuals and taking them to a conclusion not often reached.

The movement was named by spokesperson Les U. Knight (a pseudonym), though their website claims “no one person is the founder” (VHEMT, “About the Movement”). The movement’s motto summarizes its goal quite clearly: “May we live long and die out” (VHEMT, “About the Movement”). The movement claims that there are millions of like-minded individuals, saying:

There must be millions of people around the world who are independently arriving at the same conclusion. A large portion of today’s Volunteers were vehement extinctionists [sic] before they learned of the title ‘VHEMT’... We are millions of individuals, each doing what we feel is best (VHEMT, “About the Movement”).

While it does seem hard to believe that VHEMT has millions of volunteers (the movement’s term for members and supporters), many deep ecologists and other environmentalists have expressed concern about the growing human population. Noteworthy, is Stephen Emmott’s 2013 book *Ten Billion*, in which he discusses the consequences of the growing population and what a human population of ten billion would mean for the planet.

VHEMT argues that it “presents an encouraging alternative to the callous exploitation and wholesale destruction of Earth’s ecology” (VHEMT, “About the Movement”). Does this radical alternative offer a glimmer of hope in the face of a global environmental crisis? Or is it too unrealistic and unappealing to gain widespread support? In this paper, I will be examining The Voluntary Human Extinction Movement (VHEMT) website and analyzing its beliefs and values from an ecocritical perspective, drawing on deep ecology and ecofeminist thought. In the literature review, I will briefly review ecocritical, ecofeminist, and deep ecologist values and thoughts which that I will be using in my analysis. After my analysis of the VHEMT website, I will discuss what the movement has to offer and how its values and beliefs compare with the values and beliefs of other types of environmental thought.

## Literature Review

### Review of Ecocriticism

According to author Pippa Marland, “Ecocriticism is an umbrella term for a range of critical approaches that explore the representation in literature (and other cultural forms) of the relationship between the human and non-human, largely from the perspective anxieties around humanity’s destructive impact on the biosphere” (2013, p. 846). Today, ecocriticism has expanded to be quite interdisciplinary. Ecocritics ought to be ecologically literate and address the current environmental crises facing the Earth. Deep ecology, posthumanism, environmental justice scholarship, and ecofeminism are sometimes considered to be under the umbrella of ecocriticism. As Marland explains, ecocritic Lawrence Buell developed a list of four aspects that determine an environmentally orientated work:

1. The nonhuman environment is present not merely as a framing device but as presence that begins to suggest that human history is implicated in natural history. [...]
2. The human interest is not understood to be the only legitimate interest. [...]
3. Human accountability to the environment is part of the text’s ethical orientation. [...]
4. Some sense of the environment as a process rather than as a constant or a given is at least implicit in the text. [...] (2013, p. 849, emphasis in original).

While this list was meant to be used to critique literature, I believe that this list is useful in analyzing other texts and cultural products. Since current ecocritics draw from the scholarship of deep ecologists and ecofeminists, I will be reviewing these two areas and drawing upon their insights and theories for the analysis of VHEMT.

### Review of Ecofeminism

While ecofeminist sentiments have almost certainly occurred earlier, “ecofeminism’s first articulation in the 1980s was shaped by the convergence of the peace, antinuclear, and feminist movements” (Gaard, 2003, p. 117). Ecofeminist analysis and theories have examined the intersectionality of gender, race, class, nature, often species, and more. Importantly, ecofeminism seeks to address and critique forms of domination that result from the hierarchal and dualistic logic of patriarchy. Ecofeminism is typically thought of as having four subcategories of thought: liberal, Marxist, spiritual, and vegetarian (sometimes called animal ecofeminism).

While the theories and focus of these categories may differ to some degree, ecofeminism as a whole is “the position that there are important connections—historical, experimental, symbolic, theoretical—between the domination of women and the domination of nature” (Warren, 1990, p. 126). Ecofeminism has always been concerned with justice, ethics, and activism and includes values of interconnectedness, care, and interdependence. Author Ophelia Selam (2006) argues:

Ecofeminist practice pushes one outside of oneself, it highlights the presence of anthropocentrism, and includes, without reservation, the notion of ‘nature’ (including animals), within a typical human discourse. This is its most basic and powerful point, as a result, ecofeminism demands a rethinking of ‘nature’ itself (p. 88).

Thus, ecofeminism provides a way to challenge not only sexism, but also anthropocentrism, as well as all of the many intersections with race and class as well.

When discussing human population, it is crucial to note that women in developing countries, who are often blamed for high birth rates, do not contribute to the ecological issues anywhere close to amount that many developed countries and industries do, specifically the environmental exploitation and recklessness of fossil fuel companies.

## Review of Deep Ecology

Often viewed as more radical than most environmentalist thought, deep ecology is an anti-anthropocentric environmental philosophy that focuses on the inherent value of all life. In his paper titled “Managing Climate Change: A View from Deep Ecology,” author Patrik Baard lists seven characteristics of deep ecology. The first three are “a relational, total-field image, biospherical egalitarianism, and diversity and symbiosis” (Baard, 2015, p. 25). These three characteristics combine to create an anti-anthropocentric view of ecology. The mainstream environmental movement, or shallow ecology, maintains an anthropocentric perspective, even as it tries to conserve or protect aspects of nature. In contrast, deep ecology opts “for a view that respects intrinsic value ecosystems” (Baard, 2015, p. 25). Deep ecology is therefore characterized as biocentric.

Author Michael P. Nelson explains that deep ecology questions and challenges the fundamental assumptions of Western society and calls for a radical transformation of our current anthropocentric society (2008, p. 206). Deep ecologist theories are based upon an eight-point platform of beliefs which relate its biocentric, rather than anthropocentric, position. These eight points are:

1. The well-being and flourishing of human and non-human life on Earth have value in themselves...These values are independent of the usefulness of the non-human world for human purposes.
2. Richness and diversity of life forms contribute to the realization of these values and are also values in themselves.
3. Humans have no right to reduce this richness and diversity except to satisfy vital needs.
4. The flourishing of human life and cultures is compatible with a smaller human population. The flourishing of non-human life requires a smaller human population.
5. Present human interference with the non-human world is excessive, and the situation is rapidly worsening.
6. Policies must therefore be changed. These policies affect basic economic, technological, and ideological structures. The resulting state of affairs will be deeply different from the present.
7. The ideological change will be mainly that of appreciating life quality (dwelling in situations of inherent value) rather than adhering to an increasingly higher standard of living. There will be a profound awareness of the difference between bigness and greatness.

8. Those who subscribe to the foregoing points have an obligation directly or indirectly to try to implement the necessary changes (Naess 1986, p. 14, as cited in Nelson. Emphasis in original).

These eight points reflect the values and attitudes of deep ecologists and give an idea of the radical, biocentric positions that are often supported by this philosophy.

## Method

To study VHEMT, I conduct a discourse analysis of the VHEMT website. Discourse analysis allows the ideology and values to be teased out. To do this, I closely read the entire VHEMT website and made notes about any words or statements that reflect values and beliefs of the group.

The VHEMT website presents information in a question and answer format, addressing questions about the movement's perspective and position on a variety of topics. These questions and answers are organized into eleven categories: About the Movement; Biology and Breeding; Death; Demography; Ecology; Economics; Politics; Philosophy and Religion; Science Fiction and Fantasy; Failure; and Success. The website is translated into over 30 languages and presents links to outside sources with additional information about the topics they address. Mixed into messages arguing for the extinction of humankind, whimsical illustrations and comics add humor to the situation at hand (see Appendix).

## Analysis

### VHEMT's Values

In this section, I will be analyzing the values of VHEMT as expressed on the movement's website. However, it is important to remember that VHEMT does not claim to have an official position. The website states, "Voluntary human extinction is simply a concept to be added to existing belief systems, not a complex code of behavior to live by. No committee of Movement shakers decides what position everyone else should take" (VHEMT, "About the Movement"). However, the VHEMT website does express clear values and perspectives. Whether these values are held by the majority of volunteers or only by the founder, Les U. Knight, is unclear, and possibly unimportant as well.

First, VHEMT is a profoundly anti-anthropocentric movement. Simply reading the movement's name makes this apparent. VHEMT values an earth-centered or biocentric perspective and firmly rejects assertions that humans are somehow more important or valuable than other species. The movement also values biodiversity and seeks to protect it, which is a core value of deep ecology and ecofeminism as well. Opposing anthropocentrism is one of the most radical aspects of VHEMT, as the presumed importance, specialness, and sacredness of humankind and human life has been ingrained in most of us since childhood. To truly place humans on the same level as all other nonhumans sets VHEMT apart from the mainstream environmental movement. Much of the VHEMT website is spent addressing anthropocentrism. In response to the question "what good is a healthy biosphere if there are no humans around to enjoy it?" the website states:

The same good it was before we furless beach apes came along. A human-centered world view only values other species by what they can do for us, or for 'our children's children.' We're collectively so centered on our own species that nothing matters except in relation to ourselves.

It's like our ancient view of the universe with Earth at the center: it took a long time for people to accept that our planet is just one of many orbiting a star, which is also just one of many in a galaxy, which is also just one of many in the universe. An Earth-centered worldview sees Homo sapiens as one of tens of millions of species in Earth's biosphere. We are exceptional in many ways, and so are the other life forms we share this rare and wonderful place with. By envisioning Earth's entire biosphere, acknowledging the intrinsic value of every life form, our voluntary extinction begins to make sense (VHEMT, "Philosophy and Religion").

By focusing on the wellbeing of all other forms of life and the biosphere as a whole, VHEMT removes humankind from the center of importance and advocates for our extinction for the sake of the whole.

VHEMT's values align with several characteristics of deep ecologist thought. Most importantly, they share a biocentric view and reject anthropocentrism. An anthropocentric view allows the efforts of conservation or sustainability to be led by concerns about having enough available natural resources for human use. Both deep ecology and VHEMT reject this motivation.

Second, VHEMT values choice, freedom, and voluntary action. The VHEMT website clearly articulates the importance of individual's ability to make their own choices and hold individual beliefs. VHEMT welcomes individuals from any religion, spiritual belief, or philosophy, stating, "Volunteers are so diverse in religious, political, and philosophical views that it would be divisive to begin formulating official Movement positions. Beware of dogmas. We speak with our own voices" (VHEMT, "About the Movement"). The value of choice, freedom, and voluntary action influences all of the solutions and actions that VHEMT supports, such as its support of women's right to abortions and access to their choice of contraception. VHEMT opposes China's one-child policy rule because it is non-voluntary, in addition to the movement's belief that even one child per couple is too many (VHEMT, "Politics"). Under the website's section on politics, it states, "Those of us who love freedom, and who realize that none are free as long as anyone is oppressed, will continue to promote universal reproductive freedom and responsibility" (VHEMT, "Politics"). While this value is not clearly expressed in deep ecology, I believe that it is in line with ecofeminist thought, which of course also stresses the importance choice and freedom for women.

Third, VHEMT values unity, not only by welcoming volunteers with any religious, spiritual, or philosophical view, but also by avoiding a "them or us" attitude (VHEMT, "About the Movement"). The movement does not seek to label human enemies and avoids a mindset of othering. Additionally, the movement seeks to find middle ground or common beliefs with those who do not agree with its goal, arguing, "we can agree on something if we try" (VHEMT, "Unity"). The website lists several examples where the movement sees an opportunity for unity. One example provided argues that pro-choice and anti-abortion groups should agree that access to contraception would reduce unwanted pregnancies and therefore reduce the need for abortions (VHEMT, "Unity"). Another example argues that environmental protection and animal rights groups should acknowledge that they ultimately have the same big picture goal of "preserving all life on Earth" (VHEMT, "Unity"). While the explanation and examples provided in this section of the website may seem a bit too simplistic to some, it is clear that VHEMT values unity and strives to encourage it.

Fourth, one of the core values of VHEMT is responsibility. This value is apparent throughout the messaging on the movement's website. VHEMT argues that not having children is the most responsible option for those who are concerned about the state of the earth and the biosphere as a whole to make. The movement states, "The true origins of The Movement can be found in the natural abundance of

love and logic within each one of us. Our in-born sense of justice guides us to make the responsible choice” (VHEMT, “About the Movement”). The movement also stresses the importance of responsibility when it encourages volunteers to find alternatives to having their own children. Adoption and fostering are just a couple of the more responsible options that the movement encourages individuals to consider. “Plenty of young people could benefit from some responsible parenting. Those of us who are so inclined may rightly be proud of accepting the challenge and responsibility of parenting an existing child” (VHEMT, “Ecology”). While ultimately VHEMT’s focus is to encourage individuals not to reproduce, the movement’s value of responsibility also extends to the other ways we relate to the environment as well.

Lastly, a core value of the VHEMT is hope. While at first it is hard to picture hope being part of movement focused on the extinction of humanity, VHEMT sees their actions as a reason to be hopeful about the future of the planet. It argues, “Each time another one of us decides to not add another one of us to the burgeoning billions already squatting on this ravaged planet, another ray of hope shines through the gloom” (VHEMT, “About the Movement”). VHEMT volunteers do not understand human extinction to be negative, but rather focus on the positive. For example, the website states, “Returning Earth to its natural splendor and ending needless suffering of humanity are happy thoughts—no sense moping around in gloom and doom” (VHEMT, “About the Movement”). Their biocentric perspective, rather than an anthropocentric one, allows VHEMT volunteers to see hope and positivity in imaging a future without humans, rather than sadness or fear. The website explains the hope to found in rejecting anthropocentrism:

No, human extinction alone won’t stop destruction of Earth’s biosphere. Our collective consciousness must evolve from anthropocentric to ecocentric: to where Earth has first priority. Then, finally, our efforts will shift from desperate, often futile, damage control to a hopeful restoration of natural balance in Earth’s ecosystems (VHEMT, “Success”).

While the destruction and exploitation of the earth is something to be worried about and mourned, VHEMT invites individuals to find hope in a world where we are confronted by the harsh realities of mass extinction and climate change. This value of hope sets VHEMT apart from other environmental movements.

## **VHEMT’s Beliefs and Positions**

In this section, I will be analyzing the beliefs and positions that VHEMT’s takes on specific issues, according to the movement’s website. Again, while VHEMT does not claim to speak for all its volunteers, the website takes a clear stance on a variety of issues. I will be discussing the issues that I believe are the most important and relevant.

First, in accordance with their value of choice, freedom, and voluntary action, VHEMT is opposed to any involuntary measures used to control reproduction as well as force reproduction. As stated earlier, VHEMT does not support China’s one-child policy due its involuntary nature, as well as the fact that the movement does want any more children born. The movement argues that outlawing abortion is coercing procreation, which is just as much a violation of rights as is coercing the reduction of procreation (VHEMT, “Politics”). The website argues, “A combination of reproductive freedom and responsibility is needed: freedom to avoid procreation, and responsibility to use that freedom” (VHEMT, “Politics”). As is to be expected, VHEMT encourages the use of contraception, as well as procedures such as vasectomies, tubal ligations, and hysterectomies, in order to avoid bringing more humans into

the world. The movement's insistence on the need for women to have reproductive rights and freedoms opposes patriarchal views and aligns with feminist ideals.

Second, VHEMT supports a variety of other ways for individuals to nurture and for others instead of having their own children. The movement states, "Both men and women can feel a need to nurture, and nurturing Earth's other 'children' can be a viable alternative" (VHEMT, "Biology and Breeding"). As options to care for other "children," VHEMT suggests adopting a companion animal, "wildlife rehabilitation and protection, habitat preservation, reforestation, Adopt-A-Stream, and gardening" (VHEMT, "Biology and Breeding"). These suggestions reflect VHEMT's biocentric value by understanding that nonhuman others are also in need of care and nurturing at times and that this kind of care is also a valuable contribution. Of course, it is understood that these suggestions may not fill the longing for children that some individuals experience. VHEMT also supports adoption and fostering children, as well as recommending big brother or big sister programs and careers that involve children, such as teaching. Additionally, VHEMT reminds its volunteers that there are many adults who also need nurturing and care, stating, "helping the elderly, handicapped, sick, or other disadvantaged folks could also satisfy altruistic needs" (VHEMT, "Biology and Breeding"). By understanding that the giving and receiving of care is important in more contexts than just parenthood, VHEMT encourages reflection on traditional values and social pressures to have children.

Third, VHEMT does not support "selective breeding" efforts, such as trying to have children until a son is conceived or having children out of fear of being outnumbered by another racial group. The website states:

Carrying on the family name has long been an unquestioned justification for reproduction, and when a couple says they want to 'have one of our own,' they mean 'make one that has our genes.' The mindset behind this bloodline mentality is deep and strong: more of 'Us' and less of 'Them.' Smell like racism to you? When couples try to conceive a specific gender, sexism is also in the wind (VHEMT, "Biology and Breeding").

Additionally, in this section of the website, VHEMT also addresses other motivations for reproducing that the movement also opposes, which includes eugenics and having children for religious or ideological reasons (by this they mean having children in the hopes that the children will grow up to have the same ideology or political views as the parent). The VHEMT website lists several organizations, that promote reproduction with these kinds of motivations, which VHEMT specifically opposes. These "selective breeding advocate" organizations include Future Generations, which promotes eugenics; American Renaissance, which has racist motivations for reproducing; and Quiver Full, which encourages Christian families to have extremely large families. VHEMT also opposes the idea of "liberal baby dust," which is meant to encourage liberals to have children so that they are not outnumbered by conservatives, who are believed to have more children (VHEMT, "Biology and Breeding"). The movement argues, "there's no guarantee that offspring will follow the traditions of their parents" (VHEMT, "Biology and Breeding"). By opposing these ideas of selective breeding, VHEMT upholds its own value of unity, as well as the ecofeminist values of anti-sexism and anti-racism.

Lastly, VHEMT does not support or advocate for increased death rates or suicide. The movement is very clear that it wants human extinction to happen only by voluntarily deciding not to reproduce. The website argues:

Resource shortages are dealt with by resorting to mass murder and calling it war, but the results are only temporary. Besides being impractical, killing people is immoral. It should never be considered as a way to improve life on Earth. The massive die-off of humanity, predicted by so many as a result of our overshoot of Earth's carrying capacity, is what the Voluntary Human Extinction Movement hopes to avoid (VHEMT, "Death").

The movement does not see its goal of human extinction as the result of a negative, gloomy decision and it is not pro-death. VHEMT is not a suicide cult. The movement argues, "Reproductive freedom, economic opportunity, and education are far more effective methods of improving the ratio of people-to-wildlife than promoting death could ever be" (VHEMT, "Death"). Our anthropocentric perspective may lead us to believe that any group promoting human extinction must be misanthropic, but VHEMT is not misanthropic, simply biocentric.

## Discussion

In this section, I will be discussing my analysis of the VHEMT website and determining whether this movement aligns with ecocritical values found in deep ecology and ecofeminism.

First, are the values and beliefs expressed by VHEMT ecocritical? I argue, yes. VHEMT's dedication to an anti-anthropocentric worldview demonstrates its ecological-minded, biocentrism that is, by definition, ecocritical in nature. The movement's insistence of the inherent value of nonhuman life and humanity's obligation to act responsibly towards nonhuman life align with Buell's (2013) four traits of an ecocritical text. VHEMT volunteers have come to the conclusion that the most responsible action they take in the face of the threats facing nonhuman life is to commit themselves to never bringing another human into the world. While radical, this commitment, I argue, demonstrates the sincerity of their desire to value nonhuman others equally with humankind. The movement's goal also shows that the severity of the environmental crisis facing the planet is understood. VHEMT's volunteers are not looking for a lazy person's guide; they are advocating for extreme measures to be taken.

Second, does VHEMT adhere to ecofeminist values? I argue that the movement's insistence that all women need to have reproductive freedom and actually be encouraged to make their own choices about whether or not to have children shows the movement's feminist values. VHEMT's website also discusses the social pressures that women face around motherhood and the coercion they often face (VHEMT, "Biology and Breeding"). Reproductive freedom and women's rights are concerns that the movement shares with ecofeminists.

Ecofeminism and VHEMT also share a biocentric perspective that acknowledges the intrinsic value of nonhuman life in ways that our anthropocentric society does not. Baard argues, "Intrinsic values are not often discussed in climate change, but they could arguably add another dimension to the all-too-often economic sustainability discourse, which is based on anthropocentric values" (2015, p. 33). The shared values of ecofeminism and VHEMT are relevant to the current conversation surrounding the issues of climate change and human population.

Third, does VHEMT adhere to the values and beliefs of deep ecology? I argue that VHEMT actually aligns closer with deep ecology than it does ecofeminism, due to deep ecology's core belief that the growing human population poses a problem for the rest of the life on Earth. The fourth point of the deep ecology platform argues that in order for nonhuman life to flourish, the human population must decrease (Nelson, 2008, p. 210). VHEMT simply takes this point to a more extreme conclusion by

advocating for human extinction. Although VHEMT acknowledges that the actual extinction of the human species is an almost impossible goal, volunteers still commit to not adding to the population. The website states:

It has been suggested that there are only two chances of everyone volunteering to stop breeding: slim and none. The odds may be against preserving life on Earth, but the decision to stop reproducing is still the morally correct one... Even if our chances of succeeding were only one in a hundred, we would have to try. Giving up and allowing humanity to take its course is unconscionable. There is far too much at stake (VHEMT, “About the Movement”).

I see this resolution has a commitment to adhere to deep ecology’s ideals at the individual level. The values of deep ecology, such as the importance of diversity and biocentrism, are reflected in the positions that VHEMT takes.

## Conclusion

In this paper, I have analyzed The Voluntary Human Extinction Movement’s website in order to uncover its values and beliefs and assess how they fit within ecocriticism, deep ecology, and ecofeminism. I conclude that VHEMT does reflect the ecological values of these theories and takes the values to a radical conclusion.

Ultimately, I do not think VHEMT will ever reach its goal. I do not think that the movement’s ideas will be accepted into the mainstream environmental movement. And I believe that VHEMT volunteers know and accept this. However, I argue that this movement represents a kind of sincere and passionate response to climate change that is desperately needed. This movement offers a fresh, albeit challenging, perspective on what the actions of humanity should be in the face of climate change.

While studying VHEMT, I was confronted by the last thing I expected to find—hope. Shockingly, VHEMT’s call for the extinction of humans was not made out of an attitude of despair, but rather one of hope. The sincerity of the biocentrism of the movement allows the volunteers to see positivity and hope in the vision of a human-free planet. Our species does not have to continue down the path of hopeless destruction and exploitation of Mother Earth, but instead can offer our nonhuman others a glimmer of hope of a more balanced, flourishing future without us. For those of us who feel despair and sadness in the face of climate change and mass extinction, VHEMT offers us a way for us as individuals to take part in a mission of hope by simply not bringing another human into the world.

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# Appendix



Image 1



Image 2