

It has been 15 billion years since the Big Bang. 15 billion years that have shaped our universe.

In this process we have been, and still are, stardust before becoming the dust of life...

For it is the stars that have spawned all matter in the expansion of the universe, creating via the interplay of universal forces, galaxy clusters, galaxies, the solar system, Earth, life...

This is the raw material that we share with every life form in the universe. As for life, it must have emerged elsewhere, everywhere in the universe, no doubt respecting all the same laws and the same principles of interaction that are known to us on Earth.

A life that has emerged over time, giving birth to consciousness, intelligence, emotions, according to the manner and scale befitting each of its realms. From the first single-cell and then multi-cellular bacteria of the mineral, then vegetable, and animal world, from fish or reptiles to mammals, we are all the expression of a complex creative interdependent process, which unfolds its infinite potential in front of our amazed eyes.

An explosive creativity which generates a multitude of identities, all different... but all connected at levels that often escape us. For everything is linked. Everything is connected. We only definitely exist through these links which are found at every level of life, within and without, from the crudest forms to those at the top of the hierarchy.

The perspective of the interdependence of phenomena is truly mind-blowing. For this interdependence is to be seen at all levels of organisation, at all levels of life, from the visible to the invisible.

It transforms both the way we view ourselves and others. It opens up far broader horizons about who we are and our place in the universe.

In recreating the links which make us interdependent, the dualist vision that we have of ourselves and the world dissipates, and along with that the egoism that often leads us astray. It replaces humans within the evolutionary process which gave birth to us and invites us to respect the essentials: cooperation and solidarity. It fundamentally changes our behaviour.

The aim of the film is to lead to a better understanding of the interdependence of all that exists. It is anchored in the European values of cooperation, solidarity and mutual support within a globalised world. It will contribute to a better grasp of today's challenges - events which will have decisive consequences not only for the future of Humanity but also for the Planet: international summits which are going to address our influence on the climate, of the climate on the Earth, of the Earth on the economy, of the economy on inequality, of inequality on security, of security on stability and stability on the conflicts and crises which prevent all available resources to be dedicated to the priority of the survival of the Planet and the human species on it.

The conference on interdependence, and the documentary film which will follow suit, are intended, above all, to be educational tools contributing to a change in consciousness and mentality at this pivotal era in the future of the world.

### 1<sup>st</sup> Panel – Interdependence as a Motor of Evolution

The living world is a laboratory where everything is possible. All known matter is born from the stars. All forms of life therefore are structured, organised, diversified, respecting common rules. Intelligence, consciousness, emotions, communication, all are present at levels that we do not always suspect. Our differences are rather in terms of degree of expression than in terms of separation and divergence. Evolution in terms of interdependence and solidarity, rather than in terms of competition...

This first section aims to surprise, to amuse, to amaze, but also to challenge us. Travelling from the sea, the source of life, to the vegetable world in a continuing dialogue, then to the cetaceans, the modern study of whom shows remarkable levels of consciousness, intelligence and social life, it will then finish by reflecting on pleasure, emotions, indeed happiness. A happiness that all sentient beings search for and which is not the prerogative of humans.

A recurring theme in this panel - language and communication - in all its realms, from the microscopic to the vegetable to animals, fosters the interplay of interdependence.

### 2<sup>nd</sup> Panel – Interdependence and Solidarity

The Darwinist message, misinterpreted and generalised by those who want to build a world of separation and competition, is being outweighed by new scientific advances. In the matter of evolution, it has been turned on its head and with that, also one of its tools, that of competition, on which our modern society is founded.

Collaboration, solidarity, indeed compassion, are the true bedrocks on which all organisation in the living world is based, from the smallest cell to a living being, a society, an ecosystem. Competition is but an occasional tool.

Numerous examples illustrate the wayward directions and pitfalls which humans and our societies encounter when they diverge from this rule. The agro-food industry, factory farming and the disappearance of bees over the last few years are but some of the illustrations.

As a balance numerous initiatives are coming to light concerning our relationships with the living world and its habitats. Initiatives which show concrete ways in which humans can live in harmony again with animals and their environment, and inspire us in to build a more sustainable world as is shown by biomimicry.

### 3<sup>rd</sup> Panel

Independence and the Choice of Society

Even if these examples show us the way, even if our consciousness expands, there are several blocks which break, delay, even prevent these indispensable motors for change from being put into place.

To mention just 3: the legal system in its current form legitimises the supremacy of humans on the planet; the economic system serves the interests of individual egos, and the political landscape looks with inconsistent approaches always at the short-term.

The fundamental point in our eyes is that in order to re-establish a harmonious world, respectful of the Other in whatever form, it is necessary to assign it an 'identity'. So long as animals have object status or are just 'things' subject to the whim of human desires, nothing will change. It is absolutely essential that in the 21<sup>st</sup> century humans open up their consciousness to the universal dimension of life and that we extend our benevolence to all of the living world.

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