

## Vinyl 2010 Essay Competition Submission Template

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### Summary: Going Back to the Natural Law

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In the face of environmental degradation, social divisiveness and inequity, the natural tendency of organisms is to go back to the basic principles of nature. We need to empower and recognize the interdependence of the capitals that built our societies. Symbiosis over competition in attaining stability. The state of social well-being is the state of equilibrium, and equilibrium is stability. Unless we recognize that we are all equal, like whales recognizing the *bacteria* in their stomach that helps them with digestion, we will never attain well-being.

### Essay:

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#### Going Back to the Natural Law

Humans are the ones who are in the top of the food chain, before succumbing to the power of the enzymes being secreted by the natural recyclers such as *bacteria*. We are the most competitive species that had withstood the changes over time and space, over natural and socio-cultural selections because of our ability to think. Ironically, the same knowledge and capacity has led us to our own extinction.

We started developing what we have, but unfortunately, we were not able to sustain it. We built our economies, and later on, the economies built us. And along the way we have forgotten that we are in a system.

Our society is mainly built from three capitals: the economy, social and human, and the environment. According to the UN world Food program, food shortage has been a silent tsunami which knows no borders sweeping the world. Millions of people are now suffering from hunger, malnutrition and misery. Prices of commodities are very high, as dictated by the shortage and the increasing prices of fuel. Unemployment and illiteracy have been flooding because of social inequity. Many theories suggest that we are in the advent of human extinction. Living now in a world where there is food and energy crisis, how then our society can improve its well being?

When we deforest a part of land, we create wound to the environment, but we do not let it heal, instead we further dig it. When we see corruption in our society, we do not fix it; on the other hand we cause further division. The process of healing the wound of society is not a random assemblage of solutions, but should be an organized one. It's like transferring water from a bottle to another through their mouth. The direction of the water is random and will never find its organized direction unless you exert an effort to swirl and let it flow in the same way. That is what we need to do; we need to exert energy to restore, rehabilitate and further conserve what we have; we need to redirect our efforts in the same direction. We need to re-align our objectives in strengthening the capitals that built our society and attain sustainability.

Sustainability can be referred to as the state of equilibrium. This means that we need to give back to the environment the same amount of what we get. Environmental degradation causes land infertility, stock depletion, infestation and other phenomena that decreases food yield. In this aspect, research and development plays a major role. Information, in the form of scientific researches for example, allow us to predict when to catch and harvest so as not to decrease the spawning and brooding generations of fish, ensuring the next generation of food supply. And this is an advantage of our species, because we can complexly think and we have education systems. However, for example in the Philippines, there has been decreasing number of interested youth taking up courses in agriculture or fisheries that could help the said sectors. Such decrease in interested younger generation, aside from the inefficient educational system, can be attributed to the fact that the yield and possibility of high production also decreases because of environmental degradation driven by economic need. Information should also be accompanied by suitable environmental policies and supported with efficient implementation as with the status quo, we abound in laws, but we lack the will to implement them. And in the process, we also need to recognize that we, humans, are not actually the drivers of deterioration, but on the other hand, it is our natural instinct of survival. Because of this, we need to change from our tendency to maximize to optimization. This means that we need to recognize when enough is enough. We need to invest in the environment, because we could get extinct but the earth would stand still. As Meadows put it: *The first commandment of earth is: enough. Just so much and no more.* This is where the economy plays its major role. We need to invest in the industries and in the people: with this, we are promoting national industrialization especially to the undeveloped and developing countries. National industrialization empowers the society specially those belonging to the base of the social hierarchy. This is not an issue of top-down or bottom-up control, but rather the efficient transfer of energy and resources in between levels of the hierarchy reaching equilibrium. National industrialization can be likened to a highly diverse ecosystem in which efficiency is determined by the number of varying species that interact and inhabit the same territory but with different niches, rather than being determined just by dominance. Also, in this scenario, the state will uplift the morale of the people by giving importance to every industry and sector. By investing in the people, it increases their well-being and leads to productivity. Increased productivity will leverage economic performance and will allow them to increase their purchasing capacity resolving the issue of food access and driving again the economy and promoting social equity. The capitals are not isolated, and are always interacting and interdependent. With this simple framework in hand, we can again withstand changes for the next thousand years because we will be able to sustain our growth.

We need to be as efficient as the ecosystems in the open ocean that are effective in equally transferring energy. We need to recognize that in order to survive, it is not always competition, but sometimes symbiosis. There is a need for cooperation, which crosses all borders and colors, given that we have the same instinct of survival as species and not as individuals. The state of social well-being is the state of equilibrium, and equilibrium is stability. Unless we recognize that we are all equal, like how great whales recognize the existence of *bacteria* in their stomach that helps them with digestion, we will never attain well-being.