

Philosopher Koert van Mensvoort writes Letter to Humanity

22 April is the annual International Earth Day. A day in which attention is paid to the fact that despite considerable differences between people around the world, we all share the same planet. Koert van Mensvoort is an artist, philosopher and founder of the Next Nature Network, a foundation that is investigating and visualising to what extent our being surrounded by technology is turning it into our “next nature”. For the Day of the Earth he wrote a Letter to Humanity which can be read from the 22 April onwards at www.lettertohumanity.org.

Central themes in this letter are the changing relationship between humanity, nature and technology. From this perspective, not only sustainability, biodiversity, overpopulation and climate change are discussed, but also humanity’s expansion into space. Two possible paths towards the future are worked out; a nightmare and a dream. In the nightmare, technology maintains a parasitic relationship with humanity, and we end as a species that has organised its own downfall. In the dream, technology is used as a tool to expand humanity, wherein human beings perform the role of hinges between the biosphere and the technosphere. Finally, tangible suggestions are given regarding what anybody, as an individual human being, can do to ensure that this dream becomes a reality.

ALREADY TRANSLATED INTO 25 LANGUAGES

The letter has been translated into 25 languages, spread over all continents. On the website, readers are asked to translate the letter, share it, or use and share inspirational quotes from it.

ABOUT NEXT NATURE NETWORK

Virtual worlds, printed food, living cities and wild robots. We are surrounded by technology to such an extent that it is becoming our “next nature”. This sounds abstract, but it is actually very close to our current situation: cars can already drive on their own and heart valves are being printed. Next Nature Network (NNN) is a 21st century nature organisation that has the ambition to move forward with nature, rather than back to nature. In addition to the Letter to Humanity, the Next Nature Network has set up many more stimulating projects, such as an ECO coin that rewards positive, sustainable actions, a fictitious sneaker company that has unleashed a discussion regarding biotechnology, a VR installation about the future of our living environment and an investigation into the impact of in vitro meat. Anyone can support these projects by becoming a member. At present, we already have members in twenty countries. It is our ambition to become the number-one international network for everyone who wants to talk about the balance between biology and technology. www.nextnature.nl

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For more information, visual material and interview requests for Koert van Mensvoort, you can contact Fran van den Bogaert via fran@nextnature.net or via +31611330962.

“Mankind today is not an evolutionary end point; we will continue to change. But, as long as there is humanity, there will be humans.”