

Definitions

An adequate understanding of today's dynamic and rapidly changing world involves a search for appropriate words to convey meaning to challenges unprecedented in history. The limits of language developed at an earlier time often impedes clear and accurate communications. One response to this problem has been to modify existing language, and create new words (not yet in dictionaries) in a way which will better provide new meaning in communicating new concepts and new ideas. Recorded below are a few of the words used in this edition of *Proceedings* and their generally accepted meaning as contained in recently published literature.

anthropocentrism (noun), **anthropocentric** (adjective)

1. is the practice, conscious or otherwise, of regarding the universe and/or concerns of humans as the central fact of the universe. This is similar, but not identical, to the practice of relating all that happens in the universe to the human experience. To clarify, the first portion concludes that the fact of human existence is the point of universal existence; the latter merely compares all activity to that of humanity, without making any teleological conclusions.
2. is the idea that human beings are the central element of the universe, and that all things should be judged in their relationship to human experience and livelihood.

ecological footprint

1. is the amount of land and water area a human population would need to provide the resources required to sustainably support itself and to absorb its wastes, given prevailing technology. The term was first coined in 1996 by Canadian ecologist William Rees and a graduate student of Rees, Mathis Wackernagel.
2. ecological footprint analysis approximates the amount of ecological productive land and sea area it takes to sustain a population, manufacture a product, or undertake certain activities by accounting the use of energy, food, water, building material and other consumables.

ecocentrism (noun), **ecocentric** (adjective)

1. is a philosophy that recognizes that the ecosphere, rather than any individual organism, is the source and support of all life and as such advises a holistic and ecocentric approach to government, industry, and the individual.
2. ecocentrism puts the ecosphere first. It recognizes the importance of the environment and the web of life and realizes that no organism is more important than another. Ecocentrism does not even distinguish between animate life and inanimate life or process.

homocentrism (noun), **homocentric** (adjective)

synonyms of anthropocentrism and anthropocentric

overshoot

1. the situation where human demand exceeds nature's supply at the local, national, or global scale
2. growth beyond an area's carrying capacity, leading to crash.
3. refer also to "What is Overshoot?" on page 4 of this issue of *Proceedings* for definitions of overshoot provided by William R. Catton, the author of *Overshoot, The Ecological Basis of Revolutionary Change*.