



January 2026 Newsletter

Empowering Sustainable Communities

NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS FOR A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

As we enter a new year, many of us set personal goals — exercise more, eat healthier, and save money. But what if we expanded our resolutions to include commitments that met our current needs without negatively impacting future generations? Use our resources responsibly to protect the environment, support social well-being, and maintain an economic balance? In 2026, let's embrace sustainability through three key pillars: **recycling**, **efficiency**, and **responsibility**.

Recycling is more than separating plastic and glass bottles into a bin — it's about creating a circular economy where materials are reused rather than wasted. SEEDS serves a 4-county area, each with websites providing local guidance on recycling in each of their coverage areas. Different regions have different rules, so click on the links below to find out what is available and where to take your recyclables. I would encourage you to check out each of these sites though as they all provide some great educational materials on how and what can be recycled.

- Wayne County: [Recycling | Wayne County, PA](#)

- Pike County: [Pike County, PA](#)
- Monroe County: [The Waste Authority](#)
- Lackawanna County: [Welcome to Lackawanna County, PA](#)

Efficiency isn't just for businesses — it's a lifestyle choice that saves resources and money. By making small changes, you can significantly reduce waste and lower costs. A simple switch to LED bulbs, unplugging devices when they're not in use, and installing smart thermostats to minimize energy waste can save money on your energy bills, which is crucial as we all see our energy costs rising. Water conservation is also important — install low-flow fixtures and repair leaks promptly, as these simple steps can save thousands of gallons of water annually. Finally, embrace minimalism in consumption. Before making a purchase, ask yourself, "Do I really need this?" Reducing unnecessary buying not only cuts down on waste but also helps shrink your carbon footprint and again, saves you money.

Responsibility means recognizing that our choices have ripple effects. Educate yourself and others by sharing knowledge about sustainable practices with friends and family. Share those stories with SEEDS! Support ethical brands by choosing companies that prioritize sustainability and fair labor practices. Advocate for change by participating in community initiatives or supporting policies that promote environmental stewardship.

Sustainability isn't a trend — **it's a necessity**. Let's make 2026 the year we turn intentions into impactful habits. SEEDS wants to hear your stories of success this year on ways you've been able to shift to a more sustainable life. Send your stories to info@seedsgroup.net.



Image by [Freepik](#).

3 Days in a Desert Earthship: Lessons in Sustainable Design



By Adam Freedgood

SEEDS Volunteer & Board Member

Recently, I spent three nights in an "Earthship" in Taos, New Mexico. These radically sustainable homes, built from recycled tires and bottles, might look alien compared to our traditional Pennsylvania dwellings, but my stay revealed three design lessons that are relatable to life here in NEPA.

1. The Power of Passive Solar. Despite freezing desert temperatures at night, the Earthship maintained a comfortable 70°F without a furnace. It does this simply by facing the sun. In Northeast PA, where heating bills are a major burden, we can apply this by maximizing south-facing windows to capture free winter heat and using thermal mass—like stone flooring or brick—to store that warmth long after the sun sets.

2. Water is a Cycle, Not a Product. Earthships catch rain and reuse every drop up to four times. While we don't face desert scarcity, we do face stormwater runoff issues that affect our local Delaware and Lackawanna watersheds. Simple steps like installing rain barrels or designing rain gardens allow us to slow down water, feeding our soil rather than flooding our streets.

3. Resilience is Comfort. Living off-grid in the Earthship felt secure, not primitive. With our region seeing more frequent storms and power outages, thinking like an Earthship architect—prioritizing heavy insulation and battery backups—can turn a home into a sanctuary that keeps our families safe, no matter the weather.

We don't need to build with tires to build a better future. With inspiration from these passive design principles, we can make our existing homes warmer, smarter, and more sustainable.

[Read the full article >](#)



Photo by Adam Freedgood

United Nations Sustainable Development Goals 15 & 16: Life on Land & Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions



By Mark Moore

Thank you for following along and learning about the 17 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals in our educational series! This newsletter aims

to provide information on Goals 15 & 16: Life on Land & Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions.



Source: [THE 17 GOALS | Sustainable Development](#)

Goal 15: Life on Land

Nature is more than just a backdrop; it is our global life-support system. Goal 15 is a call to action to protect and restore our terrestrial ecosystems — from sustainably managing forests to halting the spread of desertification.

The stakes couldn't be higher. Earth's ecosystems contribute to over half of the world's GDP and hold immeasurable cultural and spiritual values. Yet, we are currently facing a "triple crisis" of climate change, pollution, and loss of biodiversity. By reversing land degradation and stopping species loss, we aren't just saving nature, we are securing our own future.

Recent environmental data underscores the critical link between land health and economic stability. Forest degradation continues to jeopardize rural economies while accelerating climate change through increased emissions. Central to this concern is the "fragility" of our ecosystems; as species go extinct, the natural world loses its resilience to external shocks. This trend is particularly evident in freshwater habitats, where a quarter of all species now face extinction due to infrastructure development, pollution, and unsustainable

harvesting.

Our relationship with nature must be built on respect. To prevent disturbing the very wildlife we admire, it is essential to choose ecotourism partners who prioritize ethical and responsible practices. The benefits go both ways: well-managed protected areas foster healthy ecosystems, which are the foundation of human health. However, these areas cannot thrive in a vacuum. To be truly successful, we must ensure local communities are at the heart of conservation, leading the development and management of the lands they call home.

SDG 15 Targets:

- **Conserve and restore terrestrial and freshwater ecosystems**
- **End deforestation and restore degraded forests**
- **End desertification and restore degraded land**
- **Ensure conservation of mountain ecosystems**
- **Protect biodiversity and natural habitats**
- **Promote access to genetic resources and fair sharing of the benefits**
- **Eliminate poaching and trafficking of protected species**
- **Prevent invasive alien species on land and in water ecosystems**
- **Integrate ecosystem and biodiversity in governmental planning**
- **Increase financial resources to conserve and sustainably use ecosystem and biodiversity**
- **Finance and incentivize sustainable forest management**
- **Combat global poaching and trafficking**

Source: [Goal 15: Life on Land - United Nations Sustainable Development](#)

What can you do to help?

1. Reduce, reuse, and recycle!
 2. Write to your congressperson to promote clean and environmentally sound policies.
 3. Eat locally sourced foods and buy local products.
 4. Enroll property in a preservation or conservation program.
 5. Join a non-profit and become part of the solution to a cause you value.
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Goal 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions

Goal 16 is a commitment to a world where everyone — regardless of ethnicity, faith, or sexual orientation — can live free from fear. It's about more than just the absence of conflict; it's about building inclusive societies and accountable institutions that provide justice for every citizen.

When armed violence and insecurity take root, development stalls. To counter this, we must protect the most vulnerable by strengthening the rule of law and upholding human rights. By working together — governments, civil society, and local communities — we can combat corruption, reduce the flow of illicit arms, and ensure that every voice is heard in the search for lasting peace.

Development cannot flourish in the shadow of fear. When armed violence and insecurity take hold, they don't just threaten safety, they dismantle a country's future. In areas where the rule of law is absent, exploitation and crime become pervasive, leaving the most vulnerable at risk. Breaking this cycle requires a collective effort. By uniting governments, civil society, and local communities, we can build lasting stability. This starts with upholding human rights, tackling corruption, and ensuring that every person has a seat at the table.

SDG 16 Targets:

- **Reduce violence everywhere**
- **Protect children from abuse, exploitation, trafficking and violence**
- **Promote the rule of law and ensure equal access to justice**
- **Combat organized crime and illicit financial and arms flows**
- **Substantially reduce corruption and bribery**
- **Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions**
- **Ensure responsive, inclusive and representative decision-making**
- **Strengthen the participation in global governance**
- **Provide universal legal identity**
- **Ensure public access to information and protect fundamental freedoms**
- **Strengthen national institutions to prevent violence and combat terrorism and crime**
- **Promote and enforce non-discriminatory laws and policies**

Source: [Goal 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions - United Nations Sustainable Development](#)

What can you do to help?

1. Support a struggling land/nation/population that would benefit from your help.
2. Donate to a charity or organization you have vetted.
3. Run for office to help change policy.

4. Raise awareness and even start your own organization to support your values.

SEEDS Has Moved! Come Visit Us at Our New Location!



Image

by [Vecteezy](#).

The SEEDS office can now be found at:

Stourbridge Tech Hub
646 Park Street
Suite 2010-C
Honesdale, PA 18431

The physical mailing address of SEEDS remains:

SEEDS - Sustainable Energy Education and Development Support
PO Box 765
Honesdale, PA 18431

Stop in — we'd love to see you!

Message Board Info:

Subscribe to the SEEDS new online message board to ask questions, share expertise, and get alerts on upcoming learning opportunities!

Have a specific question about solar, energy efficiency, or clean tech?

Want to promote an upcoming event or resource?

SEEDS is building an online forum to serve as a center of knowledge on all things clean energy!

Visit <https://groups.io/g/NEPA-solar-and-energy-efficiency> or send an email to NEPA-solar-and-energy-efficiency+subscribe@groups.io to subscribe!

Calling for Contributors!!

Do you have a topic on renewable energy or sustainability that you would like to write an article about or an event you would like to promote to our readers?

Please send it to info@seedsgroup.net

The SEEDS review board will consider your submission for publication in a future newsletter depending on the topic and date submitted.



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