

The ecological claim of *Moana*:
Humans can save themselves from ecological disaster only
by repairing their relationship with nature



The broken relationship between humans and nature

In the past:

Maui steals the life-giving heart of the goddess Te Fiti

Darkness spreads



In the present:

Her father's fear of the ocean

Ecological disaster strikes when fish and plants begin to die

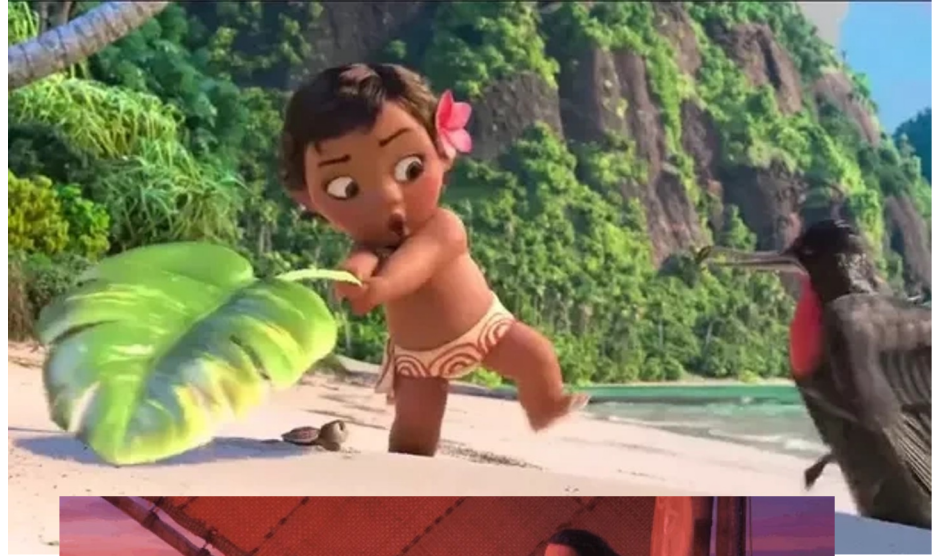


The ocean is an active character in the story

Moana begins to heal the relationship between humans and the ocean

She has a personal relationship with the ocean, not free of conflict but grounded in love and understanding

In contrast to *Frozen*, also an ecological disaster story, where the environment is merely a reflection of human emotions





Moana's deeply personal relationship with the ocean

The ocean has feelings and needs; it expects reciprocity from humans

“The ocean doesn't help you. You help yourself” - Maui

The ocean helps her when she needs it, but also trusts her to act on her own





Disney
PRINCESS

A scene from the Disney movie Moana. Moana is in the foreground, seen from the back, holding a glowing green magic stone aloft. In the background, a large, fiery, lava-like figure stands on a rocky outcrop against a dark, stormy sky.

Moana rejects the language of warfare and destruction



The rising ocean will extinguish more than land. It will kill entire languages

***Rising Seas Could Menace
Millions Beyond Shorelines, Study
Finds***

04 MAY 2022 | STORY | CLIMATE ACTION

**10 ways you can help fight
the climate crisis**

Moana saves her people through love and understanding,
reconciliation instead of fighting



Humans can save themselves from ecological disaster only by repairing their relationship with nature

“What I did was... wrong. I have no excuse. I’m sorry.” - Maui



Thinking back to Point Lobos

Learning how to thank the land

Treating the land, the sea, the plants and animals with respect and cultivating reciprocal relationships

e.g. talking or singing to the land

e.g. cultural burning, practice of taking only what you need



Sources

Clements, R., Musker, J., Williams, C., & Hall, D. (2016). *Moana*. Walt Disney Studios Motion Pictures.

Buck, C., & Lee, J. (2013). *Frozen*. Walt Disney Studios Motion Pictures.

<https://www.unep.org/news-and-stories/story/10-ways-you-can-help-fight-climate-crisis>

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2023/jun/28/indigenous-languages-climate-crisis-threat-pacific-islands>

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/30/climate/sea-level-inland-floods.html>

Photo taken by Alyssa Lee at Point Lobos State Park, CA

Chanel Keller lecture, Point Lobos State Park, CA