

ENVIRONMENT AND ETHICS

Dr.B.S.N.Raju¹,Smt.B.Sudha²

¹Head of the Department, Maharajahs School of Management Studies,
Phool Baugh, Vizianagaram, AP,(India)

²Assitant Professor, Department of Chemistry, Maharajahs College (Autonomous),
Vizianagaram, AP, (India)

ABSTRACT

The most beautiful object I have ever seen in a photograph in all my life is the planet Earth seen from the distance of the moon, hanging in space, obviously alive. Although it seems at first glance to be made up of innumerable separate species of living things, on closer examination every one of its things, working parts, including us, is interdependently connected to all the other working parts. It is, to put it one way, the only truly closed ecosystem any of us know about. When we try to pick out anything by itself, we find it hitched to everything else in the Universe. Man's attempt to develop a mutually re-enforcing relationship with nature is longstanding, however if this creative relationship would not have been established, life on the planet Earth would have disappeared long ago. It is our fundamental duty to make this planet earth a decent livable place. This leads to the rise of concept of environmental ethics. Environmental ethics relates to our obligations and responsibilities towards nature. Environmental ethics is the guiding force that should make every human care of their surroundings. Things like the Internet, a more globalized economy, and widespread changes in climate draw our attention to events happening around the world, and with this new awareness comes some ethical questions regarding the responsibilities humans have with respect to the care of the planet. Environment and Ethics make for challenging philosophical debates about man's interaction with the environment. Water and air pollution, the depletion of natural resources, loss of biodiversity, destruction of ecosystems, and global climate change are all part of the environmental ethics debate. And we see that within the discipline of environmental ethics there are tough ethical decisions humans must consider. Here the authors have made an attempt to discuss the issues in environment and ethics and also focus on solutions for environmental problems that our world faces.

¹ Dr.B.S.N.Raju, Head of the Department, Maharajahs School of Management Studies, Phool Baugh, Vizianagaram, AP,India, E-mail:hod.management2012@gmail.com

² Smt. B.Sudha, Assitant Professor, Department of Chemistry, Maharajahs College (Autonomous), Vizianagaram, AP, India.

Key Words: Environment, Ethics of consumption, Going Green, Personal choices, Environment degradation, sustainable development, ethical commitment, ecological foot print, going green, environmental crisis.

I.INTRODUCTION

Man's attempt to develop a mutually re-enforcing relationship with nature is longstanding, however if this creative relationship would not have been established, life on the planet Earth would have disappeared long ago. It is our fundamental duty to make this planet earth a decent livable place. This leads to the rise of concept of environmental ethics. Environmental ethics relates to our obligations and responsibilities towards nature. Environmental ethics is the guiding force that should make every human care of their surroundings. Things like the Internet, a more globalized economy, and widespread changes in climate draw our attention to events happening around the world, and with this new awareness comes some ethical questions regarding the responsibilities humans have with respect to the care of the planet. Environment and Ethics make for challenging philosophical debates about man's interaction with the environment. Water and air pollution, the depletion of natural resources, loss of biodiversity, destruction of ecosystems, and global climate change are all part of the environmental ethics debate. And we see that within the discipline of environmental ethics there are tough ethical decisions humans must consider.

Even when people have strong personal ethical commitments, they might find that some of their commitments conflict. For example, a mayor might have an ethical commitment to preserving the land around a city but at the same time have an ethical commitment to bringing in the jobs associated with the construction of a new factory on the outskirts of town. There are often difficult balances to be struck between multiple ethical values. As you can see, ethics can be very complicated. Ethical issues dealing with the environment are especially complex because sometimes it appears that what is good for people conflicts with what is good for the environment. While recognizing that there are some real conflicts involved, it is also important to see that it is not necessarily the case that when the environment wins people lose. In a surprising number of cases it turns out that what is good for the environment is also good for people. For example, even when forest protection reduces logging jobs, a healthier forest might lead to new jobs in recreation, fisheries, and tourism. Searching for genuine "win-win" situations has become a priority in environmental decision making.

II.REVIEW OF LITERATURE

There are many studies have been conducted all around the world on environmental philosophical perspectives. Bjerke, T and Kaltenborn, B.P., (1999) had been conducted a study entitled "The relationship of ecocentric and anthropocentric motives to attitudes toward large carnivores" in Norway. The results showed positive associations between anthropocentrism and negative attitudes toward carnivores, and between ecocentrism and positive attitudes toward carnivores for all three groups. Farmers, relative to the other groups, scored lowest on

the concentric and highest on the anthropocentric subscales. Kortenkamp., K.V. and Moore., C.F., (2001), had conducted a study entitled "Ecocentrism and anthropocentrism: moral reasoning about ecological common dilemmas" to examine some issues in how people extend ethics to the natural environment. The result showed that the presence of information about the impact of ecological damage on the environment, especially a more "wild" environment, elicited more ecocentric reasoning, while the presence of a social commitment elicited more non environmental moral reasoning. Another study related with environmental philosophical perspective was a study conducted by Casey., P.J. and Scott., K., (2006), entitled "Environmental concern and behaviour in an Australian sample within an ecocentric-anthropocentric framework". The result of this study showed that female gender, better education, and being older were associated with higher levels of ecocentric concern for the environment and reporting more ecological behaviours.

1. STUDY OBJECTIVES:

- a) To know the Environment crisis demand and Ethics to be followed
- b) To make an evaluation on how an individual follows ethics in their own lives
- c) To make an examination on ethics of consumption
- d) To know how do we 'going green' and what is to be done in safeguarding the future generations
- e) To make a analysis on economic development and environmental degradation

2. **STUDY ANALYSIS:** The following are the study analysis and findings on various issues like:

a) Environment crisis demand and Ethics:

Given the complexity of the issues, environmental philosophers have developed a number of theoretical approaches to help us see more clearly our ethical responsibilities concerning the environment. In these environmentally conscious times, most people agree that we need to be environmentally responsible. Toxic waste contaminates groundwater, oil spills destroy shorelines, and fossil fuels produce carbon dioxide, thus adding to global warming. The goal of environmental ethics, then, is not simply to convince us that we should be concerned about the environment- many already are. Instead, environmental ethics focuses on the moral foundation of environmental responsibility and how far this responsibility extends. There are three primary theories of moral responsibility regarding the environment. Although each can support environmental responsibility, their approaches are different.

The daily tasks of industry, such as procuring raw materials, manufacturing and marketing products, and disposing of wastes, cause large amounts of pollution. This is not because any industry or company has adopted pollution as a corporate policy. It is simply a fact that industries consume energy and resources to make their products and that they must sell those products profitably to exist. When raw materials are processed, some waste is usually inevitable. It is often hard to completely control all the by-products of a manufacturing process. Some of the waste material may simply be useless. For example, the food-service industry uses energy to prepare meals. Much of the energy is lost as waste heat. Smoke and odors are released into the atmosphere and spoiled food items must be discarded. Heat, smoke, and food wastes appear to be part of the cost of doing

business in the food industry. The cost of controlling this waste can be very important in determining a company's profit margin. The cheaper it is to produce an item, the greater the possible profit. Ethics are clearly involved when a corporation cuts corners in production quality or waste disposal to maximize profit without regard for public or environmental well-being. Often it is cheaper in the short run to dump wastes into a river than to install a wastewater treatment facility, and it is cheaper to release wastes into the air than it is to trap them in filters. Actions such as these are known as external costs, since the public or the environment, rather than the corporation, pays these costs. Many people consider such pollution unethical and immoral, but on a corporate balance sheet it can look like just another of the factors that determine profitability. Because stockholders expect a return on an investment, corporations are often drawn toward making decisions based on short-term profitability rather than long-term benefit to the environment or society.

b) how an individual follows ethics in their own lives:

Anthropocentrism is the view that all environmental responsibility is derived from human interests alone. Human beings are morally significant and have direct moral standing. Since the environment is crucial to human well-being and human survival, we have an indirect duty toward the environment, that is, a duty derived from human interests. We must ensure that the Earth remains environmentally hospitable for supporting human life and even that it remains a pleasant place for humans to live. Nevertheless, according to this view, the value of the environment lies in its instrumental worth for humans. Nature is fundamentally an instrument for human manipulation. Some anthropocentrists have argued that our environmental duties are derived both from the immediate benefit that people receive from the environment and from the benefit that future generations of people will receive. But critics have maintained that since future generations of people do not yet exist, then, strictly speaking, they cannot have rights any more than a dead person can have rights. Nevertheless, both parties to this dispute acknowledge that environmental concern derives solely from human interests.

We believe that we have a greater responsibility to protect animal species than plant species and a greater responsibility to protect mammals than invertebrates. Another group of biocentrists, known as "biocentric egalitarians," take the view that all living organisms have an exactly equal right to exist. Since the act of survival inevitably involves some killing (for food and shelter) it is hard to know where biocentric egalitarians can draw the lines and still be ethically consistent. It maintains that the environment deserves direct moral consideration and not consideration that is merely derived from human or animal interests. In ecocentrism it is suggested that the environment itself, not just the living organisms that inhabit it, has moral worth. Some ecocentrists talk in terms of the systemic value that a particular ecosystem possesses as the matrix that makes biological life possible. Others, go beyond particular ecosystems and suggest that the biological system on Earth as a whole has an integrity to it that gives it moral standing. Another version goes even further and ascribes personhood to the planet, suggesting that Mother Earth or "Gaia" should have the same right to life as any mother.

c) Ethics of consumption:

When delegates from around the world gathered in Cairo for the International Conference on Population and Development, representatives from developing countries protested that a baby born in the United States will consume during its lifetime at least 20 times as much of the world's resources as an African or Indian baby. The problem for the world's environment, they argued, is over consumption in the Northern Hemisphere, not just overpopulation in the Southern Hemisphere, China, or India. North Americans, only 5 percent of the world's population, consume one-fourth of the world's oil. They use more water and own more cars than anybody else. They waste more food than most people in sub-Saharan Africa eat. It has been estimated that if the rest of the world consumed at the rate at which people in the United States consume, we would need five more Planet Earths to supply the resources. Two centuries ago, Thomas Malthus declared that worldwide famine was inevitable as human population growth outpaced food production. Fertilizers, pesticides, and high-yield crops have more than doubled world food production in the past 40 years. The reason 850 million people go hungry today and 6 million children under the age of 5 die each year from hunger-related causes is not that there is not enough food in the world but that social, economic, and political conditions make it impossible for those who need the food to get it. This tragedy is made more troubling by the fact that in 2000 the world reached the historic landmark of there being the same number of overweight people as those that were malnourished. Adding to the uncertainty about future food production are factors that include decreasing soil fertility caused by repeated chemical applications, desertification and erosion caused by poor farming techniques, and the loss of available cropland as a result of urbanization. The increasing evidence of rapid global climate change also makes extrapolations from past harvests increasingly unreliable indicators of the future. With global population set to peak at around 9 billion people in the middle of the twenty-first century, it remains unclear whether there will be enough food to go around. Even if it turns out that enough food can be produced for the world in the twenty-first century, whether everybody will get a fair share is much less certain. If everybody on Earth consumed as much oil as the average American, the world's known reserves would be gone in about 40 years. Even at current rates of consumption, known reserves will not last through the current century. Technological optimists, however, tell us not to worry. New technologies, they say, will avert a global energy crisis. Already oil companies have developed cheaper and more efficient ways to find oil and extract it from the ground, possibly extending the supply into the twenty-second century. In many regions of the world, natural gas is replacing oil as the primary source of domestic and industrial power. New coal gasification technologies also hold promise for cleaner and extended fossil fuel power. However, it is impossible to ignore the fact that there is a finite amount of fossil fuel on the planet. These fuels cannot be the world's primary power source forever. Even before fossil fuels run out, concerns about global warming may compel the world to stop burning them. Furthermore, since fossil fuels are found in abundance only in particular parts of the world, geopolitical events can suddenly cause fuel prices to spike in ways that can be disastrous for national economies. Natural disasters such as Hurricane Katrina can also destroy infrastructure and add to the uncertainty surrounding fossil fuel supply. The more foresighted energy companies are already looking ahead by investing in the technologies that will replace fossil

fuels. In some countries, the winds of political change have brought nuclear power back onto the table. In others, solar, wind, wave, and biomass technologies are already meeting increasing proportions of national energy needs. A great deal of optimism is placed on the development of fuel cell technologies. A fuel cell is essentially a refillable, hydrogen-powered battery that produces zero pollution. Since hydrogen is the most abundant element in the universe, there is no shortage of supply. The problem is that most of this hydrogen exists in unusable forms, already combined with other elements in more stable molecules. Separating the usable hydrogen is not technically difficult, but the process takes energy itself, raising questions about whether it might take more energy to make the hydrogen available than the fuel cell will end up producing. With accelerating global demand, it remains unclear whether there will be enough clean energy supply to meet the world's needs in the years ahead. The world of the future may not need oil, but without water, humanity could not last more than a few days. Right now, humans use about half the planet's accessible supply of renewable freshwater—the supply regenerated each year and available for human use. A simple doubling of agricultural production with no efficiency improvements would push that fraction to about 85 percent. Unlike fossil fuels, which could eventually be replaced by other energy sources, there is no substitute for water. Given its fundamental role for all human survival and the antiquity of our cultural reflection on its importance, one might have expected humans to have developed a broad consensus of thought or a measure of cumulative wisdom about water usage in the ecosystem. But what we might call a water ethic—a set of common understandings, shared values, and widely accepted norms governing how humans ought to behave with reference to water—does not appear to be widely thought of in contemporary human affairs. Water itself is far from uniformly appreciated. Some cultures extol its value as priceless, while others behave as if it were worthless. We live on what has been called the “water planet,” yet over 99 percent of Earth's water is either saline or frozen. Humankind depends upon the remaining 1 percent for its survival. Competition for that 1 percent has already become intense in many parts of the world, and even those who live in water-abundant regions are becoming conscious of water as a precious asset. Beyond valuing water sources, however, we are only just beginning to become aware of the downstream impact that our water habits are having upon whole communities of life-forms that inhabit lake, river, estuary, and marine environments, some of which may prove vital for our own survival.

d) Going Green:

The desire to consume is nothing new. It has been around for millennia. People need to consume to survive. However, consumption has evolved as people have found new ways to help make their lives simpler and/or to use their resources more efficiently. We consume a variety of resources and products today as we move beyond meeting basic needs to include luxury items and technological innovations to improve efficiency. Such consumption beyond minimal and basic needs is not necessarily a bad thing in and of itself—throughout history we have always sought to find ways to make our lives a bit easier to live. However, increasing, there are important issues around consumerism that need to be understood. For example: how are the products and resources we consume actually produced, what are the impacts of that process of production on the environment, on society, and on individuals, what are the impacts of certain forms of consumption on the

environment, on society, and on individuals. We can likely think of numerous other questions as well. We can, additionally, see that consumerism and consumption are at the core of many, if not most, societies. The impacts of consumerism-positive and negative-are very significant in all aspects of our lives, as well as on our planet.

e) Economic development and environmental degradation

Sustainable development, a term first used in 1987 in a report, is often defined as “meeting the needs of current generations without compromising the ability of future generations to meet theirs.” Like conservationism, sustainable development is a middle ground that seeks to promote appropriate development in order to alleviate poverty while still preserving the ecological health of the landscape. Sustainable development does not focus solely on environmental issues. The United Nations 2015 World Summit Document and France Summit 2017 refer to the “interdependent and mutually reinforcing pillars” of sustainable development as economic development, social development, and environmental protection. Indigenous peoples have argued that there are four pillars of sustainable development-the fourth being cultural. Green development is generally differentiated from sustainable development in that green development prioritizes what its proponents consider to be environmental sustainability over economic and cultural considerations. Proponents of sustainable development argue that it provides a context in which to improve overall sustainability where green development is unattainable. For example, a cutting-edge wastewater treatment plant with extremely high maintenance costs may not be sustainable in regions of the world with fewer financial resources. An environmentally ideal plant that is shut down due to bankruptcy is obviously less sustainable than one that is maintainable by the community, even if it is somewhat less effective from an environmental standpoint. Still other researchers view environmental and social challenges as opportunities for development action. This is particularly true in the concept of sustainable enterprise that frames these global needs as opportunities for private enterprise to provide innovative and entrepreneurial solutions. This view is now being taught at many business schools. Many observers of the 2017 conference questioned why there had been such a lack of international progress in alleviating poverty differs in their opinions on how to strike the right balance between the development and preservation aspects of sustainable development and protecting the environment.

III.CONCLUSION

People of different cultures view their place in the world from different perspectives. Among the things that shape their views are religious understandings, economic pressures, geographic location, and fundamental knowledge of nature. Because of this diversity of backgrounds, different cultures put different values on the natural world and the individual organisms that compose it. Environmental ethics investigates the justifications for these different positions. Three common attitudes toward nature are the development approach, which assumes that nature is for people to use for their own purposes; the preservationist approach, which assumes that nature has value in itself and should be preserved intact; and the conservationist approach, which recognizes that we must use nature to meet human needs but encourages us to do so in a sustainable manner. The

conservationist approach is generally known today as “sustainable development.” Ethical obligations to the environment are usually closely connected

to ethical obligations toward people, particularly poor people and minority groups. Environmental justice is about ensuring that no group is made to bear a disproportionate burden of environmental harm. Environmental justice is also about ensuring that governments develop and enforce environmental regulations fairly across different segments of society. The environmental justice movement has forced environmentalists to recognize that you cannot think about protecting nature without also thinking about people. Recognition that there is an ethical obligation to protect the environment can be made by corporations, by individuals, by nations, and by international bodies. Corporate environmental ethics are complicated by the existence of a corporate obligation to its shareholders to make a profit. Corporations often wield tremendous economic power that can be used to influence public opinion and political will. Many corporations are now being driven to include environmental ethics in their business practices by their shareholders. Natural capitalism and industrial ecology are ideas that promote ways of doing profitable business while also protecting the environment. Corporations are composed of individuals. An increasing sensitivity of individual citizens to environmental concerns can change the political and economic climate for the whole of society. Individuals must demonstrate strong commitments to environmental ethics in their personal choices and behaviors. The concept of an ecological footprint has been developed to help individuals gauge their personal environmental impact.

REFERENCES

- [1.] Costanza, R. *Sustainability or Collapse: An Integrated History and Future of People on Earth* Edit. MIT and Dahlem University Press, 2017
- [2.] *Goel, P.K. Water Pollution New Age International Publication: New Delhi 2015.*
- [3.] Goodland, R. *the Urgency of Environmental Sustainability; Where Next:Reflection on the Human Future* edit. Poore, D. Paris UNESCO, 2000.
- [4.] Guddie, A. *The Human Impact on Natural Environment (5th Edition)* Oxford,Black well, 2010.
- [5.] Gunn, A. ‘Can Environmental Ethics Save the World?’ in Frederick Ferre andPeter Hartel, edit, *Ethics and Environmental Policy: Theory Meets Practice Athens:University of Georgia Press, 1994.*
- [6.] *Manivasakam, N. Environmental Pollution National Book Trust: New Delhi, 2004.*
- [7.] Nawab Parvez, *India: A test for Global Sustainability, A Seminar organized byUniversity of California, Irvine 2015.*
- [8.] *Passmore, J. Man’s Responsibility for Nature (2nd ed) Duckworth, London 1980.*
- [9.] *Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution, Chemicals in Products London,RCEP, 2013.*
- [10.] Sen Amartya, *Environment and Sustainability: An interactive session with themembers of Nature Environment and Wildlife Society in Calcutta on 2015.*

[11.] World Commission for Environment and Development: Our Common Future Oxford and New York, Oxford University Press, 2017.