



THEME: HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES HUMANITY OF GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL ETHICS

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ABSTRACT

Environmental ethics is the part of environmental philosophy which considers extending the traditional boundaries of ethics from solely including humans to including the non-human world. It exerts influence on a large range of disciplines including law, sociology, theology, economics, ecology and geography. There are many ethical decisions that human things make with respect to the environment. Environmental concerns are global issues. The field of environmental ethics concerns human being's ethical relationship to the natural environment. Environmental ethics concerns itself with these global concerns; humanity's relationship to the environment, its understanding of and responsibility to nature, and its obligations to leave some of nature's resources to posterity, Pollution Population Control, Resource use, Food Production and distribution, Energy Production and Consumption, the Preservation of the wildners, and of species diversity, all fall under its purview. It asks comprehensive, global questions, develops metaphysical theories, and applies its principles to the daily lives of men and women everywhere on Earth. Moral responsibility normally implies knowledge, capacity, choice, and value significance. That is to say, if a person is morally responsible to do something, then he (a) knows of this requirement, (b) is capable of performing it, (c) can freely choose whether or not to do it, and (d) the performance thereof affects the welfare and/or liberty of other beings. Because one's response to these requirements reflects upon his value as a moral person, a peculiarly distinctive trait of humanity, we say that this response has moral significance.

The study focus its attention on the humanity of global environmental ethics and its impact, Relation between Nature and Man ,The Present status of Environment and Man, factors contributing for environmental pollution and finding remedies to rectify it.

Key words: Environment, Man, Nature, Global Environmental Ethics.

INTRODUCTION

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ENVIRONMENTAL ETHICS

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ETHICS

Philosophers tend to divide the academic approach to ethics into two domains : Theoretical ethics and Practical or Applied Ethics .Environmental ethics is a Practical / Applied ethics; it is a system for determining correct action with regard to the natural world, either in specific situations or in terms of a general approach to the environment.

DEFINITION OF ETHICS

Ethics is defined by the traditional ethical philosophers as the study of what is right or good in human conduct and a general theory of conduct concerned with the rightness or wrongness of human actions.

DEFINITION OF THE ENVIRONMENT

Environment is the sum total of all surroundings of a living organism, including natural forces and other living things. The *Environment (Protection) Act, 1986* defines the environment as follows: "Environment includes water air and land and the inter-relationship which exists among and between water, air and land and human beings, other living creatures, plants, micro organisms and property".

ENVIRONMENTAL ETHICAL ISSUES WITH THE MORAL RESPONSIBILITY

Environmental ethics is concerned with the issue of responsible personal conduct with respect to natural landscapes, resources, species and non-human organisms. Conduct by persons is the direct concern of moral philosophy.

Moral responsibility normally implies knowledge, capacity, choice, and value significance. That is to say, if a person is morally responsible to do something, then he (a) knows of this requirement, (b) is capable of performing it, (c) can freely choose whether or not to do it, and (d)



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GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL ETHICS

Environmental ethics concerned with Human moral obligations towards beings and things of non-human world. In a nutshell, the two fundamental questions that environmental ethics must address are; what duties do human have with respect to the environment , and why? The latter question usually needs to be need considered prior to the former. In the order to tackle just what our obligations are, it is usually thought necessary to consider first why we have them. For example, do we have environmental obligations for the sake of human beings living in the world today .For humans living in future, or for the sake of entities within the environment itself, irrespective of any human benefits? Different philosophers have given quite different answers to these fundamental questions which as we shall see, has led to the emergence of environmental ethics.

Over the past decade scholars have began to develop the discipline of global environmental ethics. In doing so, they have encountered two obstacles. The first much environmentalism cloaks itself in the discourse of prudence and security, and thus, ethical concerns are difficult to identity. Second, when scholars do recognize ethical issues, they explain them in terms of how people treat the nonhuman world and advance a biocentrism or exocentric moral sensibility. This is a problem to the degree that it neglects countless instances of environmental injustice that involve the way humans treat each other, using nature as medium. This proposal illuminates the non prudential dimensions of global environmental affairs and affairs and explains how a focus on the way humans mistreat each other can serve as central ethical focus for understanding and advancing an anthropocentric sensibility toward global environmental ethical concern.

In particular, there are a number of principles and sub-principles in the *Earth Charter* that directly bear upon human rights, sustainable development and, specifically, the rights and ethical treatment of Indigenous peoples. These are embedded in the Charter's four key principles under the broad heading of 'Respect and Care for the Community of Life':

1. Respect Earth and life in all its diversity: (a) recognise that all human beings are interdependent and every form of life has value regardless of its worth to human beings; (b) affirm faith in the inherent dignity of all human beings and in the intellectual, artistic, ethical, and spiritual potential of humanity.



2. Care for the community of life with understanding, compassion and love: (a) accept that with the right to own, manage, and use natural resources comes the duty to prevent environmental harm and to protect the rights of people; (b) affirm that with increased freedom, knowledge, and power comes increased responsibility to promote the common good.

3. Build democratic societies that are just, participatory, sustainable and peaceful: (a) ensure that communities at all levels guarantee human rights and fundamental freedoms and provide everyone with an opportunity to realise his or her full potential; (b) promote social and economic justice, enabling all to achieve a secure and meaningful livelihood that is ecologically responsible.

4. Secure Earth's bounty and beauty for present and future generations:

(a) recognize that the freedom of action of each generation is qualified by the needs of future generations;

(b) transmit to future generation's values, traditions, and institutions that support the long-term flourishing of Earth's human and ecological communities.

THE GLOBAL CRISIS

The twenty-first century is becoming a century of problems. The world is facing with almost every kind of crisis. The century is the reward for man for his deeds in the Past centuries. The most serious threat is related with environment.

As Fritjof Capra says that "the survivals of humanity and of the planet are at stake, concern about environment is no longer one of single issues, and it is the context of everything else, of our lives, our business, our politics.

The problems related with environment are going to affect every sphere of human activity starting from cradle to tomb is destined to bear the curse of nature. One may ask whose fault is this. Simply because a selected group controls all modes of production and distribution and such elite group is entitled to use tools of destruction at his own will does not authorize them to destroy whole planet. A tiny minority, which is at the helm of power, is exploiting the wealth of nature. By analyzing all the ecological movements, one can very well reach to the conclusion that all these ecological movements were success in a limited in the sense that we could not use such movements were success in a limited manner, limited in the sense that we could not use such movements to a unifies one. It was confined to one particular country pr area. there may be exceptions as well, but still it is not projected in detail. But that does not solve the problem. The problem lies in tact, unaffected and untouched by the cries of science and te4chnology in particular and humanity in general.

A UNESCO Publication on environment rightly states that imperfect understanding of natural system and mechanisms which make possible the maintenance of life on earth, disregard of the unintentional effects of technology in particular, the various terms of pollution, poor management of the soil, forests and water, unbridled consumption of forest fuels, uncontrolled urbanization, the relegation of rural population to a marginal position; and the most frequent



disadvantages of the change that is taking place in relation between man and his environment. While analyzing the present day problems in relation with environment. While analyzing the present day problems in relation with environment, one can broadly reach to the point that if the present growth trend in world population, industrialization, pollution production and depletions of natural sources continues, the net result will be a sudden extinction of species, which bares the brunt of human atrocities as is happening now and the destruction of whole earth as unfit place to live. But it is not as dark as it appears, it is possible to alter such negative growth trends and rearrange ecological stability in tunes with sustainable ecology for future. There are both positive and negative results.

The positive outlook is that there is already advancement in creating environmental awareness. Thousands of activists across the world are toiling for educating the masses. There is not only one path; there are hundreds of ways of doing it. There are hundreds of movements that are engaged in different parts of the world for recreating a better world and making citizens aware about their role in such movements. There is no complete failure or complete success like situation. Each battle is a well fought one and no victory is small one

The negative news is that isolated protests and ecological movements are not going to help of nature greatly. Targeted, result oriented action is needs and co-ordination of all movements is crucial one.

There is no need to teach the world that there is environmental crisis. Merely lamenting about the crisis is not the end of the problem. The problem does not start suddenly in a day. The services provided by ecological systems to humanity cannot be measured with any scale. These services are important for human welfare. Neglecting such services is a crime. Such negation is characterized as 'philosophy of exemptionalism' by Edward.O. Wilson. The Philosophy of exemptionalism argues that there is no point in agonizing about past, humanity is a new order and progress cannot be blocked in the name of spices, scientific and technological genius will find another way. Edwards O.Wilson reminds us that.

Why is the environment so important?

Our life support system's health is maintained by all the species that make up the biosphere - from the smallest to the largest (our biodiversity) the survival of all these species is interconnected and dependent on each other. Bacteria and insects break down organic material to produce soil and nutrients for the plants to grow. Plants provide oxygen and food for animals and many other benefits. Bees, other insects, and animals pollinate the plants facilitating their reproduction and keep the cycle going. They also maintain the health of plants and spread their seeds. The actual processes that take place between species and the environment are extremely complex and vulnerable. If humanity causes the extinction of one species _ it's really the extinction of many species and the decline of our life support system not only for ourselves but also for our future generations. God's gift must not be taken for granted – it must be cared for. If not, humanity will face the grim consequences of its actions.

Humanity has neglected this factor into the economic equation -and the tremendous health benefits nature provides. Because the environment is our life support system, it's impossible to truly estimate its value (it's priceless).However, economists and environmental scientists have



estimated in dollars what it would cost us to accomplish the services nature provides. Using multiple databases, they estimate that nature provides \$33 trillion dollar worth of services every year - that's nearly twice the annual Gross National Product or GNP of all local and global rainfall ; temper climatic fluctuations , and promote watersheds and biodiversity .By retaining the proper moisture content within their foliage and soil .healthy forests prevent local fires from becoming widespread. Unfortunately, this moisture content is declining from over harvesting and fragmentation. Consequently , large scale fires are becoming increasingly, prevalent throughout the world .Other ecosystems like mangroves , wetlands , grasslands , shrubs deserts oceans, coral reefs, tundra arctic regions, and so on provide similar and unique benefits.

Biodiversity provides problem solving raw materials for shelter and useful products, creates medicines, and allows us to pollinate and maintain healthy crops from being infested with harmful insects and diseases (with out the need or hazards of chemicals or genetic engineering, which kill beneficial insects, additional wild life, and plants). Although tropical forests contain some of the highest concentration of biodiversity on the planet, we year (that's approximately the size of a foot ball field every 4 seconds and efforts to promote sustainable forestry are not attended. Scientists agree that the best way to protect biodiversity is to protect and maintain habitat large enough to accommodate a healthy ecosystem.

Approximately 40% of all prescriptions in the globe are either based on or synthesized from natural compounds found in microorganisms, plants, and animals. In addition to the nature's gift providing us with penicillin, aspirin, morphine, and steroids, the medicine taxol, which fights breast and ovarian cancer, comes from the bark of the pacific yew tree; the foxglove plant provides the drug digitalis which boosts the pumping action of weak hearts; and the rosy periwinkle plant is used to fight Hodgkin's disease and childhood leukemia. Other candidates providing, promising medicines include deep sea sponges, tropical cone snails, dogfish sharks, the bark of the holarrhena tree(found in Asia and Africa), and the plant chonemorpha macrophylla (located in the foothills of the Himalayas) A microbe found in the hot springs of yellow stone National Park Provided an enzyme for mass producing DNA. Physician and biochemist Michael Falloff," there's so much we don't know about the natural world... and we're destroying large Our nation today presents a general picture of ethical and spiritual malnutrition. Vast sections of men and women have all but lost touch with the strengthening and purifying spiritual radiation of our own hoary culture. This is sad enough. But what is sadder still is that we have also largely failed to get ethically nourished and strengthened by our experience of socio political action as a free people these two decades. These ethical opportunities have failed to develop in an adequate measure citizenship responsibilities and civic virtues and grace in our people young and old, in spite of our advantage of the close association with the western nations.

India is the most dense country in terms of population and is currently having more than a billion in its account Population increase followed illiteracy and selfish thinking have a great say in environmental degradation **year** a period of time tough literacy and enrollments have risen morbidity and mortality have declined the gender gap has also declined and poverty rates



have fallen steadily however, it's still has a large number of poor the growth rate of population declined from 2.25% per annum in the 1970s to 1.69 % in the late 1990s. Currently India is the largest contributor (21%) to world population growth, adding about 17 million people every year to an already huge population of over one billion. Although more than two –third s of India's population still lives in the rural areas, it has experienced rapid urbanization over the last two decades India has attained food sufficiency in spite of its growing population. It has also created large base skilled scientific and technical human resources with a diversified industrial base. However, the benefits of his impressive growth have been substantially offset by environmental degradation. Even though India has a rich tradition of environment conservation, large scale environment degradation has resulted from population pressures, industrialization and the indiscriminate use of forest areas for fuel, power generation and irrigation purposes. The spread of input intensive green technology has given India a certain measure of food security, but it has been at the cost of falling water tables, degrading soils, poor management of irrigation systems and the harmful side effects of increasing pesticide and fertilizer use. Industrial growth and uncontrolled urbanization pollute water, air and land. Similarly, rapid economic growth led to changing lifestyle such as increasing stress on resources and the environment. All these circumstances raise the issue of how to achieve environmentally sustainable economic development. In this context, it is fundamental that policy-makers and the public understand how society and the economy have changed, and how they cause environment degradation parts of it before we even appreciate our ignorance.

The National Geographic society writes the fragile balance of plants and animals plants and animals that share the Earth took millions of years to develop. Some life- forms have persisted in nearly their original state, surviving episodes of mass extinction. Some, like ourselves, are relatively newcomers. The ones that have perished will not return .relatively newcomers. the ones that have perished will not return Neither will the thousands of species that are disappearing each year due in large part to such human influences as habitat destruction introduction introduction of invasive species and overharvesting If we continue reducing earth's reducing Earth's biodiversity at this rate, the consequences, will be profound. The web of life connects the smallest bacterium to the giant redwood and the whale, when we put that web in peril, we become agents of calamity. Furthermore, religions around the world have long understood that the beauty, diversity, and wonder of nature is humanity's physical ink with our creator, The destruction of this link and our life support system should enrage all of humanity – especially religious groups - stewards of God's creation.

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CONCLUSION

Each man has to order his life on normal principles, exercise self-control in the enjoyment of the senses, discharge his duties in his various social roles, and conduct himself with wisdom and self-awareness in all activities. It is only when each man adopts a simple moderate lifestyle that mankind as a whole will stop polluting the environment.