CHAPTER – 5

VIOLENCE AGAINST ENVIRONMENT

The word Environment means ‘environment is the sum of all external influences and conditions affecting the life and development of organisms or ecological community, or in other words ‘the natural surroundings of an organisms, which includes everything, living and non-living, that affects the organisms’. Likewise, the term environment is broadly defined ‘to include the physical conditions that will be affected by a proposed action, including land, air, water, minerals, flora, fauna, noise, resource of agriculture, archaeology, historic or aesthetic’. Further according to Encyclopaedia of sustainable development,

“The environment is our life support system. It includes everything that we rely on during our life time such as air, water, metals, soil, rocks and other living organisms. It is important to remember that the state our environment is influenced by our behaviour and that we have the opportunity to either nurture or mistreat it’(Encyclopaedia of sustainable development, http://www.ace.mmu.ac.uk/eds/principles John de Wall and et al, The Bill of Rights Handbook.2001.)

The dictionary meaning of the word ‘environment’ is a surrounding external conditions influencing development or growth of people, animals or plants, living or working conditions etc. Environment refers to seem the total of conditions which surround man at a given point in space and time. Generally speaking the environment is equated with nature wherein physical components of the planet earth; viz land, air, water etc. support and affect life in the biosphere.
In this way, we can say that the environment is a complex and is made up of different factors, any substance or external force which influences the life. Environment is the investigation of total relations of the animals, plants, human life and nature. Both to its inorganic and organic environment, including above with which it comes directly or indirectly into content. All the components interact with each other and this interaction has been become a topic of study which is called Ecology. Ecology can be described as the study of the interactions and interdependence of plants, animals and their environment. Thus there is close relationship between environment and ecology because change in one environmental factor concurrently affect the dynamic state of an entire ecosystem. The word ‘ecology’ is derived from Greek words oikos, meaning household and logos, meaning study. Literally, then, ecology is the study of ‘life at home’. The essence of ecology lies in the study of the togetherness of everything – plants, animals, micro-organisms and their environment— because, in nature, everything is connected. There are intricate connections between the various components of nature. For instance, green plants take nutrients and water from soil. Their leaves, fruits and other parts may then be eaten by a bird or a deer. When these die, a part of their dead remains are eaten up by bacteria, fungi, etc., while the remainder is broken down into smaller molecules like nitrogen, carbon, sulphur, etc. (decomposition), and goes back to the soil, thus connecting them all. A large number of such connections exist in nature, and hence the essence of ecology lies in a holistic approach to the subject.

An increasing number of environmental activists regard the word “environment” with some suspicion, generally preferring the term “ecological.” The reasoning behind the change in emphasis is because
using the word “environment” posits the idea that nature is something that surrounds humans, but at the same time, something that we are fundamentally outside of, and separate from. The separation of nature from humans is the ideological position underlying capitalist orthodoxy; namely that the biosphere is a subset of the economy, rather than the other way around. Capitalists can freely take “natural resources” from outside of the economy as inputs, and dump waste from the production process back into the environment as outputs. Mainstream economic theory then pronounces that the ramifications of such an outlook will have only limited impact on the planet as a whole, and, thereby, economic accumulation and growth can continue indefinitely.

“Ecological,” on the other hand, embeds humans back within the external world as a natural component of it, the same as any other organism. The use of tools such as microscopes, or Magnetic Resonance Imaging devices, can then be seen not simply as humans investigating nature in order to understand it, but that we are concurrently investigating ourselves, because tools are merely mechanical extensions of our bodily senses. No doubt, Marx would very much approve of such an attention to the hidden social meaning of words, particularly with regard, in this example, to his very important concept of “metabolic rift”: the devastating and unnatural split or break between humans and nature, forced on us by capitalist social relations.

Given these issues, and the importance of words to explain and communicate thought, how should those of us engaged in a struggle against capitalist environmental violence, conceive of that fight? If we are to argue that the social, economic and political system known as capitalism is the root cause of environmental violence, what are we arguing it is responsible for?
Interestingly enough, but, perhaps unsurprisingly given the prevalence of overt violence in our world, the dictionary gives almost 50 related words for “violence”. These begin with words such as “coercion”, “compulsion”, “constraint”, go on to “barbarity”, “brutality”, “damage” and continue with “onslaught”, “tumult” and “upheaval.”

Putting these words into a human context and joining them up with the word “environment” now starts to make significant sense. It is no longer possible to restrict violence to an act that is immediate and causes direct and obvious harm, whether that is in the most commonly thought of cases of warfare, police brutality, or state-sponsored torture such as water boarding, or racist, sexist or homophobic language and bigotry.

On the nature and causes of environmental violence climate andcapitalism.com › 2013 › December › 08 accessed on 4 February 2016.

One cannot be a social justice activist without equally being an ecological justice activist; and link arms with all those fighting racist environmental violence the world over. Ultimately, all of this can only be solved by the self-emancipation of humanity and putting in place a system that prioritizes long-term human and planetary health; real, bottom-up democracy based on cooperation; and production for human needs at its centre. We need a system of cooperative and meaningful production, whereby the goal of society is social equity and ecological sustainability, and where environmental violence, in all its manifestations, is a thing of the past.

To bring this about will require a social and ecological revolution. While we organize and fight for that future, we must simultaneously work to bring about the small victories, necessary to make people's immediate
lives better and less polluted under capitalism, organize, and gain confidence for the larger, longer-term, and more profound and revolutionary battles to come. But even there are some forms of violence that cannot be adequately understood without paying attention to a broad conjunction of reasons for action and shared attitudes that comfort, nourish, tolerate or permit the production of harms. This is especially clear when we think about terrorism or xenophobia. The existence and durability of both phenomena is connected to the presence of an attitudinal context that we could call situations of “environmental violence.” The root of environmental violence is those contexts in which attitudes, emotions, and beliefs that a group of persons shares determines the group’s negative perception of other persons or groups. Environmental violence results when these shared attitudes end up destroying one’s capacity to put oneself in another’s place or, even, to see others as people – this result is the fruit of the collective dynamic and its power of attitudinal transformation. In these areas of social interaction, highly emotional language together with the formation of stereotypes, patterns of conduct and impersonal images end up generating a climate conducive to the production of harm. Environmental violence is a complex phenomenon, and it is very important to understand because it produces and reinforces certain harms. Its ethical relevance is undeniable, given its relationship to morally reprehensible and legally prosecutable actions. One could even argue that success in the project of eradicating evils like terrorism or xenophobia is closely related to the capacity we have to face these situations of environmental violence. Nevertheless, despite its transcendence, environmental violence seems to escape the control of ordinary justice in the framework of a liberal scheme that only allows interference with liberty when a harm results. We are facing a
phenomenon centred around, rather than concrete actions, an accumulation of shared attitudes and inclinations, such that it is difficult to establish legal and moral causal relationships with the harms we observe. Thus, although environmental violence before, contemporaneous with, or after the harmful actions is an indispensable factor in creating those actions, there is no obvious way to stop it without abandoning the liberal framework of legitimate interference with personal liberty. Here, preventative effectiveness may require placing greater limits on freedom of opinion, expression, or association, endowing failures to act with greater moral relevance, keeping in mind the cumulative effect of the acts, relaxing the demands proving liability, or causing the punitive intervention of the state in the face of a harmful result, or, even, when a legal right is endangered. These methods are hard to justify from a model of liberal justice that has its epicentre in the principle of harm to third parties and in the primacy of freedom of expression. For this reason, many would prefer to accept the cost of being unable to respond to the social demands that are beginning to be channelled through the logic of security if the price of response is to abandon or undermine these standards.

[PDF]environmental violence, liberalism, and responsibility – Yale. digitalcommons.law.yale.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1019...yls... accessed on 4 feb.2016.

So environment protection is one of the major issues that attract the attention of everyone in the contemporary world. The very reason that attracts the attention of the world towards environment is the awareness of the world towards environment related issues as damages in the environment results damages on the livelihood, health and well being of
human beings. Global warming, depletion of ozone layer, Trans boundary movement of hazardous waste/chemicals, and desertification are some of misuse, mismanagement, or improper utilization of natural resources or the environment at large.

**Values in and duties to the natural world:**

Environmental ethics stretches classical ethics to a breaking point. All ethics seeks an appropriate respect for life. But we do not just need a humanist ethic applied to the environment, analogously to the ways we have needed one for business, law, medicine, technology, international development, or nuclear disarmament. Respect for life demands an ethic concerned about human welfare, like the others and now concerning the environment. But environmental ethics in a deeper sense stands on a frontier, as radically theoretical as it is applied. Alone, it asks whether there can be nonhuman objects of duty.

Broadly speaking, there have been two approaches to justify our moral responsibility to the environment. These are egocentric and Cosmo-centric approaches. The egocentric is further divided into (1) anthropocentric, (2) animal-centric and (3) bio-centric. All these approaches are species-centred approaches. The trouble with any of these approaches is that the boundary separating the members of the species from the rest becomes too hazy. These approaches look at the environment in terms of dichotomies. These approaches view the environment as consisting of both living and nonliving things, conscious and non-conscious beings. Extending moral concern to all living things and excluding the nonliving world from moral concern will make sense only if a clear line can be drawn separating the living from nonliving, but there are compelling reasons to think that no such sharp line be drawn
between the living and nonliving, conscious and non-conscious beings. Gandhi is of the view that morality should be grounded on religion. For him religion is a commitment to a metaphysical Cosmo-centric world view, a commitment to social action which holds that nature is divine. He states that religion is not belief in a personal God and accompanying rituals and practices; it consists in developing a sense of respect for the whole of creation based on realization that man is an integral part of nature (Patnaik, 107).

Neither theory nor practice elsewhere needs values outside of human subjects, but environmental ethics must be more biologically objective – non-anthropocentric. It challenges the separation of science and ethics, trying to reform a science that finds nature value free and an ethics that assumes that only humans count morally. Environmental ethics seeks to escape relativism in ethics, to discover a way past culturally based ethics. However much more world views, ethics included, are embedded in our cultural heritage, and thereby theory-laden and value-laden, all of us know that a natural world exists apart from human culture. Humans interact with nature. Environmental ethics is the only ethics that breaks out of culture. It has to evaluate nature, both the nature that mixes with culture and wild nature, to judge duty thereby.

**Moderate View:**

As we explain many arguments either for or against the use and exploitation of nature. The arguments for such use and exploitation advocate the total subordination of nature to humans and the free use and exploitation of nature for whatever reasons humans deem acceptable. On the other hand, the arguments against these suggest that the nature must be considered on an equal footing with humans, and should never be used
as a means to human ends. A more moderate position exists between these two extremes, however, in which nature is generally regarded as important and significant, but not necessarily on the same footing with humans, and in which it may be used for human means, with some care so as to seriously endanger or destroy it. This position generally agrees with the wholistic position, seeing nature and human beings as intimately related and requiring that humans treat nature with respect; however, it is not against using nature for the good of humans, but insists that this be done carefully, allowing for preservation and protection of the environment and animals in the process and being careful not to overuse either of these (Thiroux, 400). These positions as dealing with humans and their relationship to nature have been already discussed in previous chapters.

In this chapter researcher is trying to discuss all the issues related to Environment degradation and so doing violence against environment that are briefly explained by Peter Singer in his book *Practical Ethics* in Chapter ‘The Environment’. Singer has explained it through examples such as building a dam which tempers and blocks the natural flow of water. The benefits listed for favouring dam’s construction enlist mainly economic growth and energy use of unutilized water resource for more economic growth in terms of directly providing employment for three to five years for thousands of people, longer term employment for twenty to thirty years etc.

But the cost of the anticipated economic growth is more than it has anticipated. The natural flow of the river itself attracts the more daring white rafters. Deep in the sheltered valleys, there is a home of rare species and vegetation, it is the home of many endangered species that
has seldom been found outside the valley, there may be other plants and animals as well but no one knows, foe scientist are yet to investigate the region fully. Here Peter Singer questions the building of the dam at thecost of nature. In general we can say that who favour building the dam are valuing employment and a higher captia income for the state above the preservation of wilderness of plants and animals (both common ones and members of an endangered species), and of opportunities for outdoor recreational activities. But before scrutinising the values of those who would have the dam build and those who would not, we should investigate the origins of modern attitudes towards the natural world, says Peter Singer.

**Environment and the Western Tradition:**

Peter Singer explains environment degradation through western conception of the natural world that grew out of a blend of Hebrew and Greek traditions, especially that of Aristotle (*Pratical Ethics*, 265). These traditions gave religious sanction to the human-centred morality, and considered humans alone as morally significant beings of the world. The biblical theory of creation, the Genesis, establishes the Hebrew perspective of the special place given to humans in the divine plan. The Genesis says:

> And God said, let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the earth, and over every creeping thing that crept upon the earth (Bible, ch-1, verse 26).

> So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.
And God blessed them, and God said upon them, be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.

The Christian community believes that the grant of man’s ‘dominion’ over nature is a God-given decree. The Greek influence of Christian religion was reflected in the writings of the medieval scholastic philosopher St. Thomas Aquinas, who blended the Christian theology with the philosophical ideas of Aristotle. Aristotle conceived the objects of nature in a hierarchical order, in which the objects with less reasoning capacity exists for the sake of those objects with more reasoning capacity, and placed humans at the highest position in the order. Peter Singer has quoted the following passage from ‘Summa Theologica’ of St Aquinas in which the ideas of Aristotle are reflected:

Plants exists for the sake of animals, and brute beasts for the sake of man – domestic animals for his use and food, wild ones (or at any rate most of them) for food and other accessories of life, such as clothing and various tools.

Since nature makes nothing purposeless or in vain, it is undeniably true that she has made all animals for the sake of man (Practical Ethics, 267).

In short the views of Aristotle and St.Thomas Aquinas can be summed up in the following points

- God gave humans dominion over the natural world, and God does not interfere how humans treat it.
- Natural world exists for the needs, and benefits of human beings.
• The destruction of plants, animals, and inanimate objects is not sinful, unless this destruction leads to harm humans.

• Nature by itself has no intrinsic value. Natural world derives its value only in so far as it is good for the sake of well being of humans.

• Humans are only morally significant beings of natural world.

• Humans are unique, and fundamentally separate from the rest of nature as superior to, and in-charge of the rest of the creation.

Though the western tradition has been very harsh but is still concern for the preservation of nature, as long as that concern can be related to human welfare. The western tradition is concern for pollution, destruction of forest, the green house effect, and the rising level of sea etc. So Peter Singer says that the preservation of our environment is a value of the greatest possible importance even within a human centred moral frame work. But when we take a long term view even within a human-centred ethic the preservation of wilderness becomes very important.

**Impact of Environmental Degradation on Future Generations:**

Peter Singer is of the view that violence against environment is not only a loss for us at present but also for many future generations to come. He mainly focuses on three main issues of concern for the present as well as for the future. Singer by citing an example of virgin forest explains how there is disruption in the natural life of plants and animals, if a virgin forest is cut down. No doubt some gains can be made from cutting the forest e.g., employment, profits for business, export earnings, and cheaper cardboard and paper for packing but all these gains are short-term benefits. Even if we convert this forest into a dam to create electricity, it
is a long term benefit that will last only for a generation or two: after that new technology will render such methods of generating power obsolete. So then there will be no link with the past once the forest is cut down or drowned, and the cost of it will be borne by every generation that succeeds. It is also the reason that the wilderness as the ‘world heritage’ will soon be extinct. And this heritage of wilderness is something that we have inherited from our ancestors, which we must preserve for our descendants, if they are to have it all. Contrarily Singer takes an example of tradition-oriented human societies, politicians, and economist that always work for immediate present and immediate profit but it will not work with the natural environment especially from the standpoint of the priceless and timeless values of wilderness. There are some things that, once lost, no amount of money can regain. Thus to justify the destruction of forest on the ground that it will give both short term and long term benefits is unsound, even if we increase its value year to year; it could never buy back the link with forest. Hence, Singer says that there are many justifications that against cutting forest but these justifications must also take account of the value of the forest to the generations to come in more remote future, as well as in the more immediate future.

Another argument given by Peter Singer is that- it is a mistake that we should preserve wilderness on the basis of its beauty. It is absolutely wrong that wilderness is important because it has aesthetic value. By comparing the aesthetic value of wilderness with the aesthetic value of paintings in famous museum, Singer says, there is no doubt that these paintings are up to the mark of appreciation, have economic gain, fame etc. but on the other side if we compare it with aesthetic natural setting, and experience the view of rocky peak, forested valley, stream tumbling
over moss-covered boulders set among tall tree-ferns, growing in the shade of the forest canopy in reality. This experience would be the greatest feelings of aesthetic appreciation in comparison of those paintings. And this feeling is not for one but for many and many people. The wilderness of the natural environment gives beautiful view to our aesthetic senses, not only this, it refresh individuals mind, purifies body by fresh and clean air, opens up mind and most importantly raises spiritual intensity. Apart from all these factors, one more important thing to be notice is that ‘if we preserve intact the amount of wilderness that exist now, future generations will at least have the choice of getting up from their computer games and going to see a world that has not been created by human beings. If we destroy the wilderness, that choice is gone forever (272). Altogether with this, the species like dodo, Steller’s sea cow, the Tasmanian marsupial ‘tiger’ which became extinct just because of the thoughtless actions of members of past generations. We must take care not to inflict equally irreparable losses on the generations to follow us, cautions Peter Singer.

Further, Peter Singer by giving the reference of Bill Mckibben’s book- ‘The End of Nature’ says that greenhouse effect deserves the highest priority. It is argued that by depleting the ozone layer and increasing the amount of carbon dioxide in atmosphere we have already brought drastic changes. Bill Mckibben quoted it as:

By changing the weather, we make every spot on earth man-made and artificial. We have deprived nature of its independence, and that is fatal to its meaning. Nature’s independence is its meaning; without it there is nothing but us (The End of Nature, 58).

Thus, it is clear that the term ‘Nature’ is going to be finished soon.
We have passed a watershed in the history of our planet but still we should not give up our efforts to reverse the trends, as the climate of our planet is under our influence, so we must value it and it may still be possible to save what is left. Hence a human-centred ethic can be the basis of powerful arguments for what we may call ‘environmental values’. Peter Singer emphasis that such an ethic does not imply that economic growth is more important than the preservation of wilderness; on the contrary, it is quite compatible with a human-centred ethic to see economic growth based on the exploitation of irreplaceable resources as something that bring gains to the present generation, and possibly the next generation, but at a price that will be paid by every generation to come. So we now need to consider more fundamental challenges to this traditional western approach to environmental issues.

**Value beyond Human Beings:**

According to Peter Singer, in this nature whether sentient or non-sentient/ biotic or abiotic things have its own value. But when we take the issue of environment violence such as the loss of habitat of different species, soil erosion, land degradation, destruction of wilderness, increase of green house effect etc., much of the importance is given to the intrinsic value of human beings and maybe it is because of the misconception that human beings have dominion over all the other creatures in the world. Now, here question arises if we find value in human experiences, we cannot deny that there is value in at least some experiences of non-human beings. Then, how far does intrinsic value extend? To all, but only, sentient beings? Or beyond the boundary of sentience? To make it clearer it will be helpful to understand the notion of intrinsic value. Something is of intrinsic value if it is good or desirable *in itself*; the contrast is with ‘instrumental value’ that is, value as a means to some other end or
purpose. For example, ‘money’ and ‘happiness’, here money is of instrumental value (means) to get happiness which has intrinsic value. Keeping this in mind if we again go back to the above issue of damming the river and made the decision on the basis of human interests alone. No doubt, we would balance the economic benefits of the dam for the citizens but the loss of the wild river is of much greater cost. On the other side if we made our decision beyond the interest of human beings and go to the interests of all non-human animals who live in the area that will be flooded. Thus, most of the animals living in the flooded area will die: either they will be drowned, or they will starve. So, by analysing both the cases, researcher feels that if more value is given to human beings then to other sentient beings, not only a part of environment but the whole ecosystem get disturbed and will lead to chaos.

**Need for Reverence for life:**

Many ancient cultures understood both the cosmos and life in it as sacred, special, and exquisite. This assumption is much more palatable to human reason than the assumption that the world is a senseless mechanistic aggregate of physical bits of matter. From the idea of the sacredness of world follows reverence of life as the main ethical imperative. If the world is sacred, the reverence for all that is there is an inevitable. To explain the reverence for life, Peter Singer takes the references of different philosophers to explain the reverence for life. Albert Schweitzer can be regarded as the most prominent philosophical influence for thinkers who grant moral standing to all individual living things quoted is as:

Ethics thus consists in this, that I experience the necessity of practicing the same reverence for life toward all will-to-live, as toward my own. Therein i have the needed fundamental principle of morality. It
is good to maintain and cherish life; it is *evil* to destroy and to check life... A man is really ethical only when he obeys the constraint laid on him to help all life which he is able to succour, and when he goes out of his way to avoid injuring anything living. He does not ask how far this or that life deserves sympathy as valuable in itself, nor how far it is capable of feeling. To him life as such is sacred. He shatters no ice crystal that sparkles in the sun, tears no leaf from its tree, breaks off no flower, and is careful not to crush any insect as he walks. If he works by lamplight on a summer evening he prefers to keep the window shut and to breathe stifling air, rather than to see insect after insect fall on his table with singed and sinking wings (*The Ethics of Reverence for life*, 33).

From the reverence of life naturally follows responsibility. The responsibility for one’s own life, for the well being of nature, for future generations and for everything that is there. Responsibility is reverence in action. One cannot be truly reverential unless one exercises one’s responsibility for everything there is in it. This sense of responsibility is empowering. It gives us wings and an enormous mandate for the future. It reminds us that we are there as the custodians, responsible guardians for all the heritage of life.

A similar view has been defended recently by the contemporary American Philosopher Paul Taylor. In his book *Respect for Nature*, Taylor argues that every living thing is ‘pursuing its own good in its own unique way’. Once we see this, we can see all living things ‘as we see ourselves’ and therefore ‘we are ready to place the same value on their existence as we do on our own’ (45).

Aldo Leopold is undoubtedly the main influence on those who propose “holistic” ethics. Aldo Leopold’s “land ethic” demands that we
stop treating the land as a mere object or resource. For Leopold, land is not merely soil. Instead, land is a fountain of energy, flowing through a circuit of soils, plants and animals. While food chains conduct the energy upwards from the soil, death and decay returns the energy back to the soil. Thus, the flow of energy relies on a complex structure of relations between living things. While evolution gradually changes these relations, Leopold argues that man’s interventions have been much more violent and destructive. In order to preserve the relations within the land, Leopold claims that we must move towards a “land ethic”, thereby granting moral standing to the land community itself, not just its individual members. This culminates in Leopold’s famous ethical injunction: “A thing is right when it tends to preserve the integrity, stability, and beauty of the biotic community. It is wrong when it tends otherwise” (*A Sand County Almanac*, 224-225).

Several philosophers, however, have questioned Leopold’s justification of the land ethic. For one thing, it seems that Leopold jumps too quickly from a descriptive account of how the land is, to a prescriptive account of what we ought to do. In other words, even if Leopold’s accounts of the land and its energy flows are correct, why should we preserve it? What precisely is it about the biotic community that makes it deserving of moral standing? Unfortunately, Leopold seems to offer no answers to these important questions, and thus no reason to build our environmental obligations around his land ethic. However, J. Baird Callicott has argued that such criticisms of Leopold are unfair and misplaced. According to Callicott, Leopold lies outside of mainstream moral theory. Rather than assign moral standing on the identification of some particular characteristic, such as consciousness or a biological good
of one’s own, Leopold is claimed to accord moral standing on the basis of moral sentiment and affection. Thus, the question is not, what quality does the land possess that makes it worthy of moral standing? But rather, how do we feel about the land (The Conceptual Foundations of the Land Ethic, 119-20)? In this light, the land ethic can be seen as an injunction to broaden our moral sentiments beyond self-interest, and beyond humanity to include the whole biotic community. This, so the argument goes, bridges the gap between the descriptive and the prescriptive in Leopold’s thought.

Of course, some have questioned whether sentiment and feelings are suitable foundations for an environmental ethic. After all, there seem to be plenty of people out there who have no affection for the biotic community whatsoever. If Leopold’s injunction is ignored by such people, must we simply give up hope of formulating any environmental obligations? In the search for more concrete foundations, Lawrence E. Johnson has built an alternative case for according moral standing to holistic entities (A Morally Deep World: An Essay on Moral Significance and Environmental, 126) Johnson claims that once we recognize that interests are not always tied to conscious experience, the door is opened to the possibility of nonconscious entities having interests and thus moral standing. So, just as breathing oxygen is in the interests of a child, even though the child has neither a conscious desire for oxygen, nor any understanding of what oxygen is, so do species have an interest in fulfilling their nature. This is because both have a good of their own, based on the integrated functioning of their life processes (142). Children can flourish as living things, and so too can species and ecosystems; so, according to Johnson, both have interests that must be taken into account in our ethical deliberations.
But even if we accept that moral standing should be extended to holistic entities on this basis, we still need to consider how we are then to flesh out our moral obligations concerning the environment. For some, this is where holistic ethics fail to convince. In particular, it has been claimed that holistic ethics condone sacrificing individuals for the sake of the whole. Now while many holistic philosophers do explicitly condone sacrificing individuals in some situations, for example by shooting rabbits to preserve plant species, they are reluctant to sacrifice human interests in similar situations. But isn’t the most abundant species destroying biotic communities Homo sapiens? And if human individuals are just another element within the larger and more important biotic community, is it not necessary under holistic ethics to kill some of these “human pests” for the sake of the larger whole? Such considerations have led Tom Regan to label the implications of holistic ethics as “environmental fascism” (*The Case for Animal Rights*, 362). In response, proponents of such ethics have claimed that acknowledging moral standing in holistic entities does not mean that one must deny the interests and rights of human beings. They claim that granting moral standing to “wholes” is not the same thing as taking it away from individuals. While this is obviously true, that still leaves the question of what to do when the interests of wholes clash with the interests of individuals. If humans cannot be sacrificed for the good of the whole, why can rabbits?

The answer that has been put forward by Callicott claims that while the biotic community matters morally, it is not the only community that matters. Rather, we are part of various “nested” communities all of which have claims upon us. Thus, our obligations to the biotic community may require the culling of rabbits, but may not require the culling of humans.
This is because we are part of a tight-knit human community, but only a very loose human-rabbit community. In this way, we can adjudicate clashes of interest, based on our community commitments. This communitarian proposal certainly seems a way out of the dilemma. Unfortunately, it faces two key problems: first, just who decides the content and strength of our various community commitments; and second, if human relationships are the closest, does all this lead back to anthropocentrism? As for the first point, if deciding on our community attachments is left up to individuals themselves, this will lead to quite diverse and even repugnant moral obligations. For example, if an individual believes that he has a much stronger attachment to white males than to black women, does this mean that he can legitimately favor the interests of the former over the latter? If not, and an objective standard is to be imposed, we are left with the enormous problem of discovering this standard and reaching consensus on it. Secondly, if our moral commitments to the biotic community are trumped by our obligations to the human community, doesn’t this lead us back down the path to anthropocentrism – the very thing the holist wants to avoid?

Without doubt, extending moral standing to the degree of holistic ethics requires some extremely careful argumentation when it comes to working out the precise content of our environmental obligations (Animal Liberation: A Triangular Affair, Environmental Ethics 2, 311-312).

**Deep Ecology:**

As we know, ecology refers to the science of the interrelationships among organisms, and their environment. The term ‘Deep Ecology’ is coined by Arne Naess, a Norwegian philosopher. Deep ecology goes beyond a limited piecemeal shallow approach to environmental problems,
and attempts to articulate a comprehensive religious, and philosophical worldview. Deep ecology is perhaps most easily understood when considered in opposition to its “shallow” counterpart. According to deep ecologists, shallow ecology is anthropocentric and concerned with pollution and resource depletion. Shallow ecology might thus be regarded as very much the mainstream wing of environmentalism. Deep ecology, in contrast, rejects anthropocentrism and takes a “total-field” perspective. In other words, deep ecologists are not aiming to formulate moral principles concerning the environment to supplement our existing ethical framework. Instead, they demand an entirely new worldview and philosophical perspective. According to Arne Naess, the Norwegian philosopher who first outlined this shallow-deep split in environmentalism, deep ecologists advocate the development of a new eco-philosophy or “ecosophy” to replace the destructive philosophy of modern industrial society (*The Shallow and the Deep*, 96-97). While the various eco-philosophies that have developed within deep ecology are diverse, Naess and George Sessions have compiled a list of eight principles or statements that are basic to deep ecology:

1. The well-being and flourishing of human and non-human life on Earth have value in themselves (synonyms: intrinsic value, inherent worth). These values are independent of the usefulness of the non-human world for human purposes.

2. Richness and diversity of life forms contribute to the realization of these values and are also values in themselves.

3. Humans have no right to reduce this richness and diversity except to satisfy vital needs.
4. The flourishing of human life and cultures is compatible with a substantially smaller population. The flourishing of non-human life requires a smaller human population.

5. Present human interference with the non-human world is excessive, and the situation is rapidly worsening.

6. Policies must therefore be changed. These policies affect basic economic, technological and ideological structures. The resulting state of affairs will be deeply different from the present.

7. The ideological change will be mainly that of appreciating life quality (dwelling in situations of inherent value) rather than adhering to an increasingly higher standard of living. There will be a profound awareness of the difference between bigness and greatness.

8. Those who subscribe to the foregoing points have an obligation directly or indirectly to try to implement the necessary changes (The Deep Ecological Movement Some Philosophical Aspects, 1-2).

 But while Naess regards those who subscribe to these statements as supporters of deep ecology, he does not believe it to follow that all such supporters will have the same worldview or “ecosophy”. In other words deep ecologists do not offer one unified ultimate perspective, but possess various and divergent philosophical and religious allegiances.

 Naess’s own ecosophy involves just one fundamental ethical norm: “Self-realization!” For Naess, this norm involves giving up a narrow egoistic conception of the self in favor of a wider more comprehensive Self (hence the deliberate capital “S”). Moving to this wider Self involves recognizing that as human beings we are not removed from nature, but are interconnected with it. Recognizing our wider Self thus involves
identifying ourselves with all other life forms on the planet. The Australian philosopher Warwick Fox has taken up this theme of self-realization in his own eco-philosophy, “transpersonal ecology”. Fox does not regard environmental ethics to be predominantly about formulating our moral obligations concerning the environment, but instead views it as about the realization of an “ecological consciousness”. For Fox, as with Naess, this consciousness involves our widest possible identification with the non-human world. The usual ethical concern of formulating principles and obligations thus becomes unnecessary, according to Fox, for once the appropriate consciousness is established, one will naturally protect the environment and allow it to flourish, for that will be part and parcel of the protection and flourishing of oneself (Towards a Transpersonal Ecology: Developing New Foundations for Environmentalism, 123).

Critics of deep ecology argue that it is just too vague to address real environmental concerns. For one thing, in its refusal to reject so many worldviews and philosophical perspectives, many have claimed that it is difficult to uncover just what deep ecology advocates. For example, on the one hand, Naess offers us eight principles that deep ecologists should accept, and on the other he claims that deep ecology is not about drawing up codes of conduct, but adopting a global comprehensive attitude. Now, if establishing principles is important, as so many ethicists believe, perhaps deep ecology requires more precision than can be found in Naess and Sessions’s platform. In particular, just how are we to deal with clashes of interests? According to the third principle, for example, humans have no right to reduce the richness and diversity of the natural world unless to meet vital needs. But does that mean we are under an obligation to protect the richness and diversity of the natural world? If so,
perhaps we could cull non-native species such as rabbits when they damage ecosystems. But then, the first principle states that non-human beings such as rabbits have inherent value, and the fifth principle states that human interference in nature is already excessive. So just what should we do? Clearly, the principles as stated by Naess and Sessions are too vague to offer any real guide for action.

However, perhaps principles are not important, as both Naess and Fox have claimed. Instead, they claim that we must rely on the fostering of the appropriate states of consciousness. Unfortunately, two problems remain. First of all, it is not at all clear that all conflicts of interest will be resolved by the adoption of the appropriate state of consciousness. For even if I identify myself with all living things, some of those things, such as bacteria and viruses, may still threaten me as a discrete living organism. And if conflicts of interest remain, don’t we need principles to resolve them? Secondly, and as we saw with Leopold’s land ethic, just what are we to do about those who remain unconvinced about adopting this new state of consciousness? If there aren’t any rational arguments, principles or obligations to point to, what chance is there of persuading such people to take the environmental crisis seriously?

At this point deep ecologists would object that such criticisms remain rooted in the ideology that has caused so much of the crisis we now face. For example, take the point about persuading others. Deep ecologists claim that argument and debate are not the only means we must use to help people realize their ecological consciousness; we must also use such things as poetry, music and art. This relates back to the point I made at the beginning of the section: deep ecologists do not call for supplementary moral principles concerning the environment, but an
entirely new worldview. Whether such a radical shift in the way we think about ourselves and the environment is possible, remains to be seen.

Environmental Ethics | Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy
www.iep.utm.edu/envi-eth/ accessed on 24-4-16.

Developing an environmental ethic:

Environmental ethics warns us about the risk, or danger involved in contamination of natural environment, and the senseless exploitation and devastation of natural world. Although every living organism affects the environment to a limited extent, the humans possess the power to upset drastically the stability and integrity of natural world.

So, in order to cope with the environmental crises there is a need to develop environment ethic. Such an ethics would regard every action that is harmful to the environmental as ethically dubious and those that are unnecessarily harmful as plainly wrong. An environmental ethic would find virtue in saving and recycling resources, and vice in extravagance and unnecessary consumption. Peter Singer here illustrates an example from the perspective of an environmental ethic. Our choice of recreation is not ethically neutral. At present we see the choice between motor car racing and cycling, between water skiing or wind surfing as merely a matter of taste yet there is an essential difference; Motor car racing and water skiing requires the consumption of fossil fuels and the discharge of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere. Cycling and wind surfing do not. Once we take the need to preserve our environment seriously, motor car racing and water skiing will no more be acceptable form of entertainment than bear baiting is today (Practical Ethics, 285).

Singer also says a truly environmental ethics fosters consideration for the interest of all sentient creatures, including subsequent generation,
stretching in to the far future. It is accompanied by an aesthetic of appreciation for wild places and unspoiled nature. An environmental ethic rejects the ideals of a materialistic society in which success is gauged by the numbers of consumer goods one can accumulate. Instead it judges success in terms of the development of one’s abilities and the achievement of real fulfilment and satisfaction. It promotes frugality, in so far as it is necessary for minimizing pollution and ensuring that everything that can be reused is reused. Carelessly to throw out material that can be recycled is a form of vandalism or the theft of our common property in the resources of the world. Thus the various green consumer guides books, about things we can do to save our planet, recycling what we use and buying the most environment friendly products available are part of new ethic that is required. Thus we see that new environmental ethic will promote frugality and simple life.

**Environmentalism in Indian Philosophy:**

The Indian philosophical thinkers see the nature as root of all the existence. Nature is considered as an entity from which everything has evolved. So human beings are a part of nature. Nature is not considered merely a physical world which is separate from humans. Humans are also not considered as essentially spiritual and alien to Nature.

According to Samkhya Darshan, *Prakriti* is material cause of everything. It is the vital source of every being. Human beings as conscious beings are conditioned by the natural world. The interaction between physical world and human beings are logical necessity. *Prakriti* is necessary for manifestation of consciousness. The *mool prakriti* is constituted of three *gunas*, the *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas* and is source of entire process of evolution. These *gunas* pervade the whole beings. They
evolve into this creation full of diversities because of the reflection of cosmic consciousness the \((\text{purusa})\) unity thus evolves into diversity. Like rest of the creation the human beings are one of the evolutes. So the creation full of diversities is contained in \(\text{mool Prakriti}\). Everything or being is constituted of three \textit{gunas}. The only difference between the objects can be of degrees of \textit{gunas}.

Vedas, the oldest text of Ancient India are a source of rich heritage of ancient Indian philosophers on environmental ethics. The philosophical speculations found in Vedas and in the Upanishads, the concluding part of the Vedas have reached their culmination in the philosophy of Vedanta. There are many hymns of Rig-Veda which consist of the praises of the different personified powers of nature at deities or \textit{devas}, such as \textit{Agni}, \textit{Marut}, \textit{Varun}, \textit{Indra}, \textit{Savita}, \textit{Upas} and even plants, and sacrifices were offered to all these \textit{Devas}. In Rig-Veda, it has been prayed that medicinal plants may prosper with many leaves, flowers and fruits for the benefit of the sick (Rig-Veda 1,17, 3-5). Devas were regarded as the realities underlying and governing the different departments of nature. The 16\textsuperscript{th} Chapter of Yajurveda (\textit{Neel Sukta}) is devoted to a number of \textit{Rudras}, each responsible for prosperity of particular class of creation such as cattle, trees, herbs, water resources, land, hills and mountains and also natural calamities.

Though the nature was peopled with different deities, it was thought that it was subject to some basic law, which governed the whole world of objects, living and non-living. This basic law is called \textit{Rta}. It denotes the order of the world. Regularity of movements of sun, moon, stars, the alterations of day and of the seasons. They all follow the path of \textit{Rta}, the right path. They never overstep the regions. The whole universe is found on \textit{Rta} and moves in it.
The conception of God is one who gives to man. God is God because he gives the whole world. The learned man who imparts knowledge is also a God. The sun, moon and the sky are God they give light to all creations. Father, mother and spiritual guides are also Gods.

The conception of gods in the Vedas shows the process of development, firstly there is polytheism i.e. belief of many gods. Secondly, there is henotheism (a term coined by Maxmullar) which extols for the time being one of the Gods as supreme God. Thirdly, monotheism which is belief in one God or ultimate reality. Thus Vedic thought developed from polytheism to monotheism. According to Dr. Radhakrishnan, in “Indian Philosophy” the concept of deities evolved from naturalism. He says, “We may begin with the identification of the Vedic gods in some of their aspects with certain forces of nature and point out how they were gradually raised to moral super human beings. The Earliest seers of Vedic hymns delighted in sights of nature in their own simple unconscious way being essentially of poetic temperaments, they saw the things of nature with such intensity of feeling and force of imagination that the things suffused with souls. They knew what it was to love the nature, and be lost in the wonders of dawn and sunrise, those mysterious processes which affect the meeting of soul and nature. To them nature was a living presence with which they could hold communication.............The moon, the stars, the sea and sky, the dawn and the night fall were regarded as divine, the worship of nature as such is the earliest form of Vedic religion” (Indian Philosophy, 73). But even these hymns which refer to many Gods, make it clearly stated that all these Gods are the various manifestations of the one supreme deity. Not only the Vedas refer to the many Gods as being the various
manifestations of the one and the same supreme God., they also clearly point out that the whole universe is the manifestation of this supreme God.

Advaita Vedanta recognizes Brahman as the ultimate reality, pure cosmic consciousness. Everything in the world has evolved from Brahman by operation of law of duality; Brahman expresses itself in the form of manifold particular “Akohaman bahu bhavishayamah”. He is not creator of many, but has become many. The whole world is pervaded with Brahman. The first verse of 40th chapter of Yajurveda i.e. Ishavasyopanisad says, the entire creation is pervaded with God, regardless of visible or invisible, even a trace of creation ‘Sarvam Khalu idam Brahman’. There is essential unity of all existence. Diversity is only phenomenal, unity is real. As divine is all pervasive. So every being in universe should get equal respect and we should not have a feeling of mastery over other species of universe. It precludes the idea that other things and beings only have instrumental value for human beings. The only plausible inference in the light of above outlook is that man is a part of nature and governed by basic laws of nature. Even Bhagwadgita is a text of pragmatic ethics. It preaches the art of living in this world happily, peacefully and free of tension.

To conclude, the Indian scriptures teach the innate relation and the attitude of human race with nature and its forces. Among the customs of all ancient people were nature rites whose purpose was to acknowledge man’s dependence on the natural forces and bounty of his environment. In ancient time, people adored and worshipped the natural powers due to a feeling of allegation; they felt kinship without being akin to nature. It is no coincidence that utilitarian attitude prevailing in the modern age has
spawned a civilization out of touch with the beneficence of nature. The God given role of guardianship of the earth did not confer on man absolute sovereignty. His wanton domination is destructive for the very conditions necessary for his existence. The only way in the present circumstances is to thrive on our old sentimental legacy, increase our awareness and broaden the frontiers of empathy. This is possible only by increasing rationality, so that human mind may be trained to feel more identified with the rest of the creation. Love and be loved should be the very creed of humanity.

Thus, we can say human beings having temptations and emotions apart from rationality cannot follow the path of divinity i.e. goodness for the goodness sake. At the same time he cannot be categorized to be following the path of demon absolutely for he has feelings of care and concern for natural entities as we feel for badly hurt people and bird, we feel emptiness in the absence of tree and vegetation which has been in our habit to be with them. Of course human beings are the creature in between Deity and Demon and for pragmatic strategies for the sustainable development he should be thinking about his needs and interests and decide judicially up to what extend the interference, use and modification of the nature is required to meet the need but not greed of any particular person. At the same time, for rest of natural entities and environment should be following the divine care and concern. This will ensure the objective of sustainable development in a pragmatic way for taking care of the needs, resources, environmental protection though in name of the taking care of the future generation. And this is what has been reflected in the following words; “What is needed is creating environmental awareness or consciousness and inculcation of the spirit of responsibility
and accountability in our relation with nature. A sustainable development leading to more and more perfection stands in need of the environmental stewardship implies a sense of mutual care to be spearheaded by the human beings only. If we care for nature and nature will care for us (Applied Philosophy and Professional Ethics, 19).

Environment is a totality of human life such as a source of food, health and livelihood. Endangering the environment means endangering the fundamental rights of human beings. That is to mean that, the right life, health and any other fundamental rights are highly dependent on the favourability of the general environment. Therefore, the application of sustainable environment is not a luxury rather a necessity.

However, the application of sustainable environment, using the environment properly for the need of the current generation without damage the interest of the future generation, facing different challenges as some of them are, the issue of justice ability, burden of proof, lack of cooperation among states and greater imbalances of sharing the border. Therefore the following points are recommended:

- Environment protection is not a task left to a single country or specific institution. In order to achieve the goal of sustainable environment, there has to be integrated effort of every country, organization and individuals.
- The fact that the issue representation and locus-standi is one of the challenges in the protection of global environment, an independent institution like that of a public prosecutor has to be established. By doing so, it can protect the environment, the harm inflicted on environment or damage on environment.
• The burden of sharing the protection of the environment has to be fair, just and equitable.

• Since, an industrialized country harms the environment greatly, but shares the same burden of that of developing countries. The industrialized countries have to support the effort in developing countries to achieve sustainable environment.
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