

- Environmental ethics is a discipline in philosophy that studies the moral relationship of human beings to, and also the value and moral status of, the Environment and its non human-contents.
- Environmental ethics believe that humans are a part of society as well as other living creatures, which includes plants and animals. These items are a very important part of the world and are considered to be a functional part of human life.

- **Ethics are the moral principles which lets us distinguish b/w right and wrong or good and bad.**
- Environmental Ethics has been described as having a conscience or moral that reflects one's commitment and responsibility toward the environment as well as present and future generations of people.
- It also refers to human societies living in harmony with the natural world on which they depend for survival and well-being.
- **Environmental Ethics is the subset of Philosophy which reflects on the 'Ethical Relationship between Human Beings and Natural Environment'.**
- The basic resource of Food and Shelter have been provided to us by nature.
- Mineral, raw material, elements of nature and every other by product of nature has helped humans to progress and build a civilized and developing society. Thus, it is important for humans to learn to live in harmony with the nature.

- The over exploitation of resources due to the increasing Human population has distorted the natural balance.
- **The Environment, due to the process of development and economic growth, has undergone many changes that ultimately lead to ecological problems.**
- The economic growth had been achieved at an enormous cost to the nature which can be seen by the growing pollution, loss of biodiversity and critical shortage of basic resources.
- Thus, it would help to assess the effects and consequences of various developmental activities like deforestation, draining a wetland etc.

Why need to study Environmental Ethics?

- To overcome the following questions.
- 1. What are the environment damage produce by the present generation?
- 2. What acts must be give up to slow such damage?

- Environmental Damage
- 1) Pollution:
 - Air pollution
 - Water
 - Land pollution
- 2) Resource depletion:
 - Depletion of Species & Habits
 - Depletion of Fossil fuels etc.

- There is a need to preserve our environment, there are many ethical decisions that humans need to make in relevance to the environment.
 - **For Ex:** Should one continue to cut forests? **or** For how long will we consume fuels which pollute our environment? **or** Do we have the right to indulge in activities which lead to extinction of other species? **or** What are our obligations towards environment for the future generation?
 - It exerts influence on a large range of disciplines including Law, Sociology, Theology, Economics, Ecology and Geography.
 - It forces to think and get answer to the important issues which focus around the following questions:
 - ✓ **Are Humans more important than Wildlife?**
 - ✓ **Do Animals enjoy any rights?**
 - ✓ **What is the responsibility of humans towards animals and the environment?**
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Environmental Ethics

Principles

- We should have profound respect for nature.
- We must maintain a harmonious relation with other species.
- Everyone should take responsibility for this impact on nature.
- Local & indigenous environmental knowledge should be respected.
- We must plan for the long term.

The Ethical Values for Pollution Control

- We should recognize our moral duty to protect the welfare not only human beings, but also of other non-human parts of this system.
- Usefulness of non-human world for human purposes.
- Humans have no rights to reduce this richness & diversity except to satisfy vital needs.
- The ideological changes is mainly that of appreciating life quality, rather than to increase higher standard of living.

Ethical Values for Conserving depletable resources

- Proper utilisation of resources i.e. the people should maintain Ecological balance.
- We should adopt voluntary measures to conserve the resources.
- If we are to preserve enough scarce resources, so that future generation can maintain their quality of life at a satisfactory level

Ethical Perspective

- 1. Anthropocentric
- 2. Stewardship
- 3. Biocentric
- 4. Animal Rights
- 5. Ecocentric
- 6. Ecofeminism

Following are the three approaches to the Environmental Ethics:

- **Anthropocentric:** This approach is of view that humans are the dominant and most important species on the Planet Earth. This gives Humans the power to manipulate and use nature for their own benefit. This approach is "Human centered".
- **Life Centric or Biocentric:** According to this viewpoint, Humans have an ethical responsibility towards future generation. Humans are the 'Steward or Caring Managers' who must leave earth in a good condition for the future generation. It is the environmental wisdom that talks of total dependence of humans on nature and that nature is for all species. The critics of Anthropocentric viewpoint talks of human ignorance.

Anthropocentric

- Humans are placed in domination of nature and have the right to use resources and abuse nature as we choose.

Stewardship

- Humans have the responsibility to manage and care for nature. Humans and non-human forces must act together in order to sustain life.
- Humans are part of nature rather than masters.

Biocentrism

- All living organisms have intrinsic values and rights regardless whether they are useful or not.

- **Eco-centric:** This view is the extension of above view points and seek respect for all life and demand reverence towards the environment in complete sense. This is a non-anthropocentric approach that talks of ethical responsibility towards other species and even ecosystems. As per this view, it is crucial to save the Planet. Humans cannot erode the planet completely, this planet can destroy us entirely. To ensure our survival, it's our necessity to protect the environment and prevent ourselves from perishing. This approach believes that everything in nature and natural systems have intrinsic value. If mankind has to survive, Environment needs to be protected.

Ecocentric

- Based on the view that oneself should do everything what support's one's own interest and profit
- The whole is more important than its individual parts
- Only oneself has an intrinsic value
- Other human and nature have instrumental value
- Any action is based on one's personal wealth

- **Interdisciplinary :** With overlapping concerns and areas, different fields of environmental ethics, environmental politics, environmental economics, environmental sciences and environmental literature, the distinctive perspectives and methodologies of these disciplines provide important inspiration for environmental ethics. It offers value foundations for these disciplines. Moreover, they reinforce, influence and support each other.
- **Plural :** Environmental ethics has been an area in which different ideas and perspectives compete with each other. While anthropocentrism, animal rights theory, biocentrism and ecocentrism all provide unique and, in some sense, reasonable ethical justifications for environmental protection, their approaches are different, but their goals are more or less the same. The basic ideas of environmental ethics also find support from, and are embodied in, various well-established cultural traditions. The pluralism of theories and multicultural perspectives is critical for environmental ethics to retain its importance.

- **Extended :** Traditional ethics mainly concerns with intra community duties among contemporaries. However, environmental ethics extends the scope of ethical concerns beyond one's community to include not only all people everywhere but also animals and the whole of nature to take care of the present and the imminent future to include future generations.
- **Global Issue :** As environmental pollution and other environmental issues are increasing, the importance of environmental ethics has started to take precedence making it a global issue. As these issues do not respect national boundaries, no country is sufficiently equipped to tackle it alone. To cope with the global environmental crisis, human beings must reach some value consensus and cooperate with each other at the personal, national, regional, multinational and global levels. It, thus, depends on global governance. It is, therefore, typically a global ethics with a global perspective.

- **Revolutionary** : Environmental ethics challenges dominant and deep-rooted anthropocentrism of modern mainstream ethics and extends the object of our duty to future generations and non-human beings. Also-environmental ethics forcefully critiques the materialism, hedonism and consumerism accompanying modern capitalism. It searches for an economic arrangement that is sensitive to Earth's limits and t concerns for quality of life. It calls on us to think and act locally as well as globally.



- Ethics is necessary in business.
- One of the important lesson learnt during the past century is that business and environment are dependent on each other.
- One of the basic social responsibilities of the corporate world is a "Clean Environment".
- The industry produces a large amount of waste products.
- The disposal of waste and lowering of pollution levels has a cost.
- The cost of controlling waste determines a company's profit margins. This is why it is cheaper to dump wastes into river than to install a wastewater treatment facility; it is cheaper to release waste in the air than to trap them in filters.
- Such pollution is unethical and immoral, but the corporate world may adopt such practices to cut costs and make profits.
- Such decisions are based on short term profitability rather than long term benefit to society.
- Industrial Waste including Solid waste and Liquid Waste is usually dumped indiscriminately into the surrounding land and water bodies.

towards environmental ethics. Industrial houses are now becoming interested in efficient, green and clean technology.

- One of the best example of this is the use of solar cars and technology with low carbon footprints.
- In some of the metropolitan cities, corporate houses have taken charge of developing and maintaining green patches and "gardens" to act as the "lungs" of the city.
- Corporate houses are trying to establish themselves as the pioneer for Environment Conservation.
- These establishments sponsor prizes for competitions of school going children and college going youth on themes and topics of environment.
- Moreover, EIA has enforced the environmentally ethical operations of all new business projects.

Sustainable Development

Meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

