

Impact of Environmental Ethics on Sustainable Development: A Study

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Abstract- Sustainable development represents a commitment to advancing human well-being, with the added constraint that this development needs to take place within the ecological limits of the biosphere. Progress in both these dimensions of sustainable development can be assessed. We use the UN Human Development Index (HDI) as an indicator of development and the Ecological Footprint as an indicator of human demand on the biosphere. Sustainable development has broad appeal and little specificity, but some combination of development and environment as well as equity is found in many attempts to describe it. Despite the persistent definitional ambiguities associated with sustainable development, much work (over 500 efforts) has been devoted to developing quantitative indicators of sustainable development. The emphasis on sustainability indicators has multiple motivations that include decision making and management, advocacy, participation and consensus building, and research and analysis. We select a dozen prominent examples and use this review to highlight their similarities and differences in definition of sustainable development, motivation, process, and technical methods.

Keywords: Environment, Sustainable, Development, Ethics, Maintenance, biosphere.

INTRODUCTION

Sustainable Development means 'meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs'. It is a very complex and broad-based concept that incorporates following principles, which are directly or indirectly applicable to developmental activities: (a) economic sustainability, (b) ecological sustainability, (c) social sustainability and (d) cultural sustainability. The sustainable development has both intra-generational and inter-generational equities and several approaches. It has some important measures too that will be Sustainable Development means 'meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs'. It is a very complex and broad-based concept that incorporates

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The continuous maintenance of quality environment for many years is called "Sustainable Development". The environment and its resources are not allowed to degrade. The natural resources must be used in a limited way. It produces an ideal balanced ecosystem. All the components are available for the future generations. Sustainable Development recognizes that all development decisions must simultaneously consider aspects of 3 E's i.e. Economy, Environment, and Equity. If future generations are to enjoy a high quality of life, then this generation's plans must guarantee the integrity of our natural resources. Sustainability implies that adjustment of a system, to a foreseeable change in land use can be made without necessitating expensive construction, or that provisions are made for accommodating potential changes. Proper maintenance is one key condition to preserve utility of a system.

To fail to develop ethically sound solutions to the population problem and our relationship with the biosphere is a mistake we cannot afford to make. Perhaps the most important factor in obtaining

sustainable environmental systems is that the local people must take the responsibility for their environmental system, as they have been doing in many parts of the world. Environmental ethics, distinct from concern for animals or animal rights, outlines the development of a long-term, objective opinion about how we as humans ought to be dealing with our non-human environment to ensure its wellbeing. The emphasis of environmental ethics, and the effect of human behavior, comments on how detrimental behaviours ought to be changed as to benefit the entire biosphere.

ENVIRONMENTAL ETHICS

Environmental ethics is a form of philosophy which deals with the study of relation of human beings and the environment. It includes a moral consideration of human approach to natural resources and believes that human as well as other living creatures as parts of society. Morality refers to the concept of human ethics related with 'right or wrong', used in three contexts namely individual conscience, principles and judgments. These three collectively constitute the moral values. Moral principles that try to define one's responsibility towards the environment are called 'environmental ethics' or 'environmental philosophy' which considers the ethical relationship between human beings and the natural environment. The environmental ethics therefore study the relation of human beings and the environment and how ethics play a role in this. Environmental ethics believe that humans are a part of society as well as other living creatures, which includes plants and animals. The need of environmental ethics has aroused as a result of the (1) new effects on nature, (2) new knowledge about nature and (3) expanding moral concerns.

UNSUSTAINABLE TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Unsustainable development occurs when present progress is at the expense of future generations. Irresponsible planning and environmental degradation through exploitation of resources, generation of wastes and pollutants are the some reasons. Such practices are not sustainable in the long term. Global warming, destruction of the ozone shield, acidification of land and water, desertification and soil loss, deforestation and forest decline, diminishing productivity of land and water and extinction of species and populations,

demonstrate that human's demand is exceeding the environmental support capacities. The indicators of unsustainable development are the degradation of the environment, bad planning and the indiscriminate exploitation of resources. Excess amounts of wastes and pollutants have deteriorating effects on ecosystem that in turn damage the biodiversity.

In fact, sustainable development is not a new concept. It simply means living in harmony with the nature in full recognition of the needs of all other species. This is not just 'survival of the fittest', humans must help even the weakest of the species to survive because each species has a role to play that is ultimately beneficial to the earth and all its human population. The needs of the people in different parts of the globe may vary but dependence on the nature is similar. The most important thing to remember is that there is only one earth and if we destroy it by our actions, our children will not have a place to live. Therefore, harmonious coexistence of all living creatures with the environment in a balanced manner is an indispensable need of today.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To understand the present conditions of Environment in India.
- To analyze the various Environmental challenges.
- To frame the ethics to protect the Environment.

IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

The World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) was initiated by General Assembly of the United Nation in 1982, and its report, 'Our Common Future', was published in 1987. It was chaired by the Prime minister of Norway, Gro Harlem Brundtland (thus earning the name "Brundtland Commission"). One of the most formidable definitions of sustainable development has been given by him. "Meets the need of present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs". Therefore, sustainability is an attempt to provide the human and natural environment both now and into the indefinite future. Savinder Singh (2003) defined the sustainable development "as an overall socio-economic growth of the society through rational exploitation and optimum utilization of resources by adopting eco-friendly technologies, environmental

education and maintenance of better organization leading to sustainable economy and maintenance of environmental quality and ecological balance so that continuous yield of resources is insured to the present and future generations”.

PRINCIPLES TO ACHIEVE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

1. Dealing transparently and systematically with risk, uncertainty and irreversibility.
2. Ensuring appropriate evaluation, appreciation and restoration of nature.
3. Integration of Environmental, Social, human and economic goals in policies and activities.
4. Equal opportunity and community participation/ sustainable community.

METHODS OF ENVIRONMENTAL ETHICS

- Equitable utilization of natural resources.
- Equity among the people of rural and urban areas.
- Equity for males and females.
- Conservation of resources for future generations.
- Environmental rights of animals.
- Environmental education.
- Conservation of traditional value systems.
- Prevention of sacrifice of animals in religious rituals.
- Prevention of eco-terrorism.
- Use of eco-friendly items.

CONCLUSION

The concept of sustainable development is much more than environmental protection because it needs joint effort of economists and ecologists by parallel care and respect for the ecosystem and for the people that live in. ‘Checking land degradation, Water management, Control of population explosion, Pollution control, Waste management, Management of urban and industrial areas, Conservation of bio diversity, Use of alternative energy sources, awareness creation among people and Global partnership are the efforts that have been taken to make a sustainable environment. Role of environmental experts involves providing intellectual with philosophical and ethical perspectives on the current and controversial issues being considered in the field of environmental ethics

and to enable them to think through complex environmental problems involving scientific, economic, political and ethical aspects within a framework that gives due weight to the disciplinary approaches, yet also aims for integrated and rigorous understanding and entertains possible solutions. To ensure a rich and harmonious existence of man in nature, time has come for man to keep harmonious interactions with nature, which forms the basis for better environmental management. So every citizen must take an oath to protect our beautiful environment.

In order to achieve the sustainable development, humans should (a) obey the effective environmental ethics, (b) minimize the harmful anthropogenic activities, (c) eradicate poverty and hunger, (d) provide water, sanitation, sustainable energy and healthy life to all, (e) promote inclusive education and development, (f) care for earth, environment and biodiversity and (g) facilitate the collaboration between different social stakeholders to create an environment of peace and harmony with equity between genders and ages, races and classes, countries and continents across the globe.

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