

**DEEP ECOLOGY: LAND ETHICS****Pran Kumar Rajak**

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Email Id – [prajak1974@gmail.com](mailto:prajak1974@gmail.com)**Abstract**

Ecology is the interdependent-relationship among various organisms in the environment. There is a close interdependence between life forms out there in a forest foothill – trees, shrubs, animals, birds, etc. There also exists the relationship of food-eater between different animals, the relationship of shelter and the sheltered, between animals and birds; the relationship of the food-eater among foliage, fruits and livestock; livestock is again associated with afforestation, seeds or roots are carried elsewhere by animals or birds and enlarge forests. Hence everything in the environment has an interdependent relationship with another. Conservation of the ecosystem is, therefore, considered a reasonable work in the practical ethics considered as an improper action.

The main topic of discussion in ecology-centric ethics is the interaction of man with his place or land. The habitat or land on which people live should be taken as a whole – territorial boundaries, soil, water, air, sunlight, plants and animals, etc. are all included in ecology-centric ethics. In practical/applied ethics, this doctrine is called land ethics.

**Keywords**

Food-eater, Deep-shallow, Biosphere, Nature's community, Environmental ethics

**Introduction**

All our moral worlds are built around people. But in modern times the moral world is not limited to human beings. In modern moral philosophy we realize that nature may have a moral relationship with man. So the whole world, including the human world and the animal-bird-plant world, has been included in the scope of the moral philosophy. Today's world has changed many times in the past. Many countries and continents have been wiped out by various natural disasters, the land has been turned into water, while the mountains have suddenly risen. It is for this natural reason that the dinosaur, along with many other species, became extinct on Earth many years ago. Despite knowing so much, we humans are still constantly polluting nature and the environment. As a result, air pollution, water pollution has increased, various kinds of diseases are appearing in the animal body and even in the human body. So it is our duty to keep nature free from pollution.

**Objectives**

Living and non-living things in the environment are bound to have an inseparable moral relationship as a whole and on account of it, this is to show that non-living things are also as

precious as living things. This is also to highlight the interrelationship between man and his place or land and the flora and fauna developed there.

### **Methodology**

Some books have been used to create this article and in many cases have to rely on the surrounding conditions.

### **Discussion**

*“Ecology is the scientific study of the relationships between organisms and their environment. These relationships are complex, varied and hierarchical”*<sup>1</sup> There is a close interdependence between every object out there in a forest foothill – trees, shrubs, animals, birds, etc. of different animals. There also exists the relationship of the food-eater between different animals, the relationship of shelter and the sheltered, between animals and birds; the relationship of food-eater among foliage, fruits and livestock; livestock is again associated with afforestation, seeds or roots are carried elsewhere by animals or birds and enlarge forests. Hence, everything in the environment has an interdependent relationship with another. When one of the species in the environment is harmed, others species also suffer. Decrease in deer or pig species lead to the malnutrition of tigers. Harm done to the species of insects, frogs, etc. leads to shortage of food for the weaker carnivorous animals and birds. When trees and plants are damaged, herbivores are malnourished and wild animals are displaced. Conservation of the ecosystem is, therefore, considered a reasonable work in the practical ethics and damage to the eco-system is considered an improper action.

Land Ethics - The flora and fauna is developed in ecology-centric ethics where the main topic of discussion is the interaction of man with his place or land. The habitat or land on which people live should be taken as a whole; territorial boundaries, soil, water, air, sunlight, plants and animals/flora & fauna, etc. are all included in the new ethics (ecology-centric ethics). In practical/applied ethics, this doctrine is called land ethics. *“A land ethic is a philosophy or theoretical framework about how, ethically, humans should regard the land”*<sup>2</sup>

Nature’s Community -The word ‘land’ can be taken in the general sense, not in the sense of soil, but in the special sense. We can use this in the sense of ‘water-air-temperature unified with soil where plants, insects, animals and people roam about. That is to say that land is a large group or family consisting of water, air, sunlight, plants, animals, human beings and soil, and everything that has come into existence in that nature’s community for millions of years in course of evolution are all the descendants of the earth and they all are valuable in their own right as nature herself. Man cannot claim individual or additional dignity as a member of the land family. As the member of the same family it will be moral injustice for human beings to harm other members, say of, harm done in the form(s) of deforestation and killing animals.

Shallow Ecology - Two types of ecological-cum-moral discussions can be mentioned in this regard. They are ‘deep’ and ‘shallow’ senses. The Norwegian philosopher Arne Naess wrote, *“Shallow ecological thinking was limited to the traditional moral framework; those who thought in this way were anxious to avoid pollution to our water supply so that we could have safe water to drink, and they sought to preserve wilderness so that people could continue to enjoy walking through it. Deep ecologists, on the other hand, wanted to preserve the integrity of the biosphere for its own sake, irrespective of the possible benefits to humans that might*

*flow from so doing. Subsequently several other writers have attempted to develop some form of 'deep' environmental theory.*"<sup>3</sup>Those who look upon ecology in a shallow sense follow the stereo-typed moral judgement and consider morality as anthropocentric. *"Plants exist 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."*<sup>4</sup>They are well aware of the welfare of human beings and say that it will be moral injustice to pollute the breathing air, the thirst-quenching water and destroy forest while travelling with a view to gratifying their happiness and pleasure.

Deep Ecology (Biosphere) - Those who look upon ecology in a deep sense, think of the biosphere. That is to say that they not only consider the welfare of human beings as a standard of moral judgement but also judge the merits and demerits or morality as a non-anthropocentric. *"Deep ecology is an environmental philosophy which promotes the inherent worth of all living beings regardless of their instrumental utility to human needs, plus the restructuring of modern human societies in accordance with such ideas."*<sup>5</sup>According to them, Ecology itself is valuable. It is fair to reserve the interrelationship of self-valuable things. And it is so unfair to impede their balance.

Deep Ecology (Holistic Ecology) - The basic foundations of deep ecology are self-realization and bio centric equality. Bio centric equality is formed when man considers himself to be one of the most important elements of this nature and environment. Owing to the formation of such equality, man considers himself to be related to other parts or elements of nature. And as a result, man undergoes self-realization. Hence there is no self-interest in deep ecology. There exists only the concern for the well-being of nature. This is why deep ecology is also considered Holistic Ecology. *"The intuition of bio centric equality is that all things in the biosphere have an equal right to live and blossom and to reach their own individual forms of unfolding and self-realization within the larger self-realization. This basic intuition is that all organisms and entities in the ecosphere, as parts of the interrelated whole, are equal in intrinsic worth."*<sup>6</sup>

Deep Ecology (Eco Philosophy) - Modern science does not observe man as an independent and distinct entity detached from nature. Man is a special entity particularly related to nature. To consider it isolated is not only irrelevant but also immoral. Thus it can be said that the crisis in the field of ecology can be solved only through a fundamental change in the philosophical outlook of man. Such a philosophical perspective change is not a new one. It is only the revival of the ancient philosophical ideology. Because, the world has been taken as a unit in ancient philosophical ideology. This old subject is recognised as the new form of deep ecology which can also be regarded as eco philosophy. *"Ecosophy or Eco philosophy (a portmanteau of ecological philosophy) is a philosophy of ecological harmony or equilibrium."*<sup>7</sup>

Deep Ecological Ethics (Principles) - Arne Naess, the patron of deep ecological ethics and George Sessions, an American philosopher, have outlined a number of principles in one of their articles for pursuing such ethics. As for example:

*“1. The well-being and flourishing of human and non-human life on Earth have value in themselves (synonyms: intrinsic value, inherent value). 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 realisation 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.”<sup>8</sup>*

Environmental Ethics - In the same article Naess and Sessions have included river, hill-mountain, i.e. everything related to environment under the discussion of deep ecological ethics. Since the whole environment is the topic of a kind of moral discussion, it can be called Environmental Ethics. *“An environmental ethic would find virtue in saving and recycling resources, and vice in extravagance and unnecessary consumption.”<sup>9</sup>*

Land Ethics (Summary) - The American Ecologist Aldo Leopold summarises his land ethics as follows: What helps to protect the integrity, sustainability and beauty of biosphere is good, which is appropriate, and what is contrary to it, is evil, that is inappropriate.

## **Conclusion**

To conclude, it can be said that the essence of deep ecological ethics is that everyone in the biosphere has an equal right to survive and thrive, and so on. And that is how they can satisfy each other for themselves. It is a moral act in practical ethics to keep the relationship intact between the living and non-living entity.

## **References**

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