



Ecosystem and Biodiversity: A Philosophical Approach

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Abstract: Everything shall have the right to live in a healthy environment and enjoy natural and cultural surroundings and shall be obliged to care harmony Times New Roman between body and mind and nature many philosophers explain the significance of nature. The relationship between Human beings and nature is inseparable and indispensable. Human beings are an integral part of the Ecosystem. The health and prosperity of humanity are directly concerned with the state of our environment. In Every facet of society is dependent on the biosphere and its ecosystems. Earth is the only place we live in. Instead of utilizing it wisely, nurturing, and protecting it, we have been exploiting it seamlessly; this has resulted in consequential chaos on the planet. A human being is the only species on this earth who can utilize his rationality to think of the future of the sustenance of the earth as well as the wellbeing of humanity. It is the only reason for which man has preferred to give up the freedom of the state of nature and form society and state. He undertakes different planning for smooth, disciplined, and civilized life.

Index Terms: Ecosophy, harmony, earth, Biodiversity, and Ecosystem

Introduction: Ecology has been taken as 'the biology of ecosystems', a branch of biology that studies living organisms and their interrelations. The central principle of ecology is that each living organism has an ongoing relationship with every other element that makes up its environment. This is how it refers to the ecosystem. Here I am in agreement with Sadangi who writes: "For Naess ecological science cannot answer ethical questions about how we should live and allow others to live. For this, there is the necessity of ecological wisdom or ecosophy. Wisdom not only speaks of the theories or principles rather guides us how to live with the theories. The ecosophy is to explore a diversity of perspective on human-nature contexts and interrelationships."¹ It may be stated here that the primary consideration of ecosophy to obtain that wisdom which bases on the consideration: all life forms are entitled to have an equal right to live and blossom and the Earth 'does not belong to humans.

The relationship between Human being and nature is inseparable and indispensable. Human beings are an integral part of the Ecosystem. The health and prosperity of humanity are directly concerned with the state of our environment. In fact, every facet of humanity is depended on the biosphere and its ecosystems. Earth is the only place we live in. Instead of utilizing it wisely, nurturing and protecting it, we have been exploiting it seamlessly; this has resulted in consequential chaos on the planet. In ecological crises our earth planet needs exigent measures. Technology gives us panacea. And it cannot save the earth planet there are so much measures have been taken by international and nation Government such international and national environmental agreements exist but still exploitation of our earth planet continues. So we should all awake to protect our mother planet earth. So practice of Philosophical approach is necessary. We need sacredness, intimacy and harmony with nature .The intellectuals should take up the responsibility of live in harmonious manner. When any being is deserved to share, by knowledge and age, he should get the opportunity to serve in a proper way. If one person realize the importance of conserving the nature it will run among all the population in the world with positive impact. Realising the source of the universe will make human beings attaining the valuable power of nature, which definitely responsible for environmental utilisation as well as harmonious approach to nature where all livings are survive. It will lead to a sustainable development of world as well as with a perfect harmony green planet.

¹ Sadangi, Kalyani., Ecosophy The Panacea for Environmental Crisis. *International Research Journal of Management Sociology & Humanity (IRJMSH)* Page 224

Human being is the only species in this earth who can utilize his rationality to think of the future of the sustenance of the earth as well as the wellbeing of the humanity. It is the reason for which man has preferred to give up the freedom of the state of nature and formed society and state. He undertakes several planning's for smooth, disciplined and civilized life. Man has achieved enormous success in the field of technology and science. In spite of so much of achievements there is now hue and cry in every front regarding the sustenance of the global for a longer period. Again, man alone is considered to be responsible for the alarming situation witnessed in this regard. Either out of ignorance or due to negligence or due to over concern for seeking his personal comfort man has caused enormous harm to the nature. What to think of the future sustenance of the globe, a standard living is not available to man at times. Man thinks himself to be highly civilized, modernized, educated etc. But the problems before him for a smooth living are uncountable. In this perspective in this paper it is intended to bring to the focus regarding ecosophy as an awareness programme which has been thought by some philosophers as a precautionary measure.

According to the Global Assessment Report on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services published by IPBES, 2019 roughly one million species of plants and animals face extinction from anthropogenic causes. Over human population is the chief cause for the loss of Biodiversity. By 2050 the world human population is expected to reach 10 billion, this surge in population will put undue stress on limited resources available on Earth. Every Human being emerge to this world to have a wonderful presence. Yet many factors affect his harmony with nature. The main reason for this unhappy situation is that his actions in general are not in tune with his purpose of life. Ecosophy is that philosophy which examines the relationship between man and nature. It is used as a short form ecophilosophy that deals with ecological philosophy. It is a philosophy that takes into account the ecological harmony or equilibrium. The term was coined or owes its origin to the French post-structuralist philosopher and psychoanalyst Félix Guattari and the Norwegian father of deep ecology, Arne Deke Eide Naess. Ecosophy aims at ecological wisdom (*sophia*). Arne Naess's original definition of ecosophy: "By an ecosophy I mean a philosophy of ecological harmony or equilibrium. A philosophy as a kind of sofia (or) wisdom, is openly normative, it contains both norms, rules, postulates, value priority announcements and hypotheses concerning the state of affairs in our universe. Wisdom is policy wisdom, prescription, not only scientific description and prediction. The details of an ecosophy will show many variations due to significant differences concerning not only the 'facts' of pollution, resources, population, etc. but also value priorities." (A. Drengson and Y. Inoue, 1995, page 8.)² Thus, a philosophical approach to the environment which emphasizes on the importance of human action is considered as ecological wisdom. Ecosophy is supposed to be associated with environmental ethics and deep ecology. The term 'Deep Ecology' is also coined by Naess who has given a solid theoretical foundation to it with applied norms. "Deep Ecology, on the other hand, proposes a major realignment of our philosophy and world-views, cultures, life-styles consistent with the new ecological perspective. It aims at preserving the integrity of the Nature for its own sake, irrespective of its benefits to any privileged species, like humans. It is based on this conviction that the Earth 'does not belong to humans.' In Deep approach pollution is evaluated from a total biospheric point of view. Its supporters do not focus exclusively on its effects on human life and health, but rather on planetary life as a whole"³ There are eight platform principles formulated for the ecological movement out of which the following five are felt to be very much significant. The Platform Principles of the Deep Ecology Movement:

1. The well-being and flourishing of human and nonhuman Life on Earth have value in themselves (synonyms: intrinsic value, inherent value). These values are independent of the usefulness of the nonhuman world for human purposes.
2. Richness and diversity of life forms contribute to the realizations of these values and are also values in themselves.
3. Humans have no right to reduce this richness and diversity except to satisfy vital human needs.
4. The flourishing of human life and cultures is compatible with a substantial decrease of human population. The flourishing of nonhuman life requires such a decrease.
5. Present human interference with the nonhuman world is excessive, and the situation is rapidly worsening.⁴

Naess has attached emphasis both on human action as well as individual beliefs which brings a distinction between ecosophy and ecophilosophy. For him it is not a discipline in the sense of what he called a 'personal philosophy', which guides our conduct towards the environment. "He defined ecosophy as a set of beliefs about nature and other people which varies from one individual to another. Everyone, in other words, has their own ecosophy, and though our personal philosophies may share important elements, they are based on norms and assumptions that are particular to each of us. Naess proposed his own ecophilosophy as a model for individual ecosophies, emphasizing the **intrinsic value** of nature and the importance of cultural and natural diversity."⁵

Even though both Guattari and Naess are connected with the origin of ecosophy but Naess's reason of distinguishing between ecosophy and ecophilosophy becomes significant in the sense he has attempted at pragmatic approach to the issue instead of making only conceptual analysis. It is clear from his emphasis on intrinsic value of nature and the diversities of culture and nature. What is seen is that ecophilosophy makes the critical examination of the cases of the ecological imbalances basing on ecology which is basically a science.

² Alan Drengson, Ecophilosophy, Ecosophy and the Deep Ecology Movement: An Overview , Ecocentrism Home page.

³ Arne Naess, 'The Deep Ecological Movement: Some Philosophical Aspects', *Environmental Philosophy: From Animal Rights to Radical Ecology* (eds. Michael E. Zimmerman, et al) Prentice Hall, New Jersey, 1993, p. 203.

⁴ Bill Devall and George Sessions, 1985, p. 70. Note that this platform is discussed in an exchange of papers between Stan Rowe and Arne Naess, published originally in *The Trumpeter* 1996, 13, 1, and now online at <<http://www.ecospherics.net>>.

⁵ Internet- Ecosophy

Now it is important to see what is meant by the well-being of humanity? Does it constitute the comfortable and luxurious living of human beings with the feeling of supremacy as the most powerful species of the globe and the entire nature is at his disposal for his comfort and luxury? Or does it constitute the peaceful living of the humans on the earth with mutual fellow feeling with all those around us and to consider himself to be the care taker of the nature treating it to be his abode? The former leads to the crude, egoistic, and selfish anthropocentrism which has a dark and uncertain future. It can never constitute the well-being of the humanity. The second one would lead to planetary humanism appears to be a sound alternative against the first one. Let us see if there is any sanction behind the second alternative so far as our culture and tradition is concerned.

The vedic literature is very vast I would like to share the view of a very primitive Upanisad, that is *Isopanisd* in order to see how Vedic wisdom also includes the eco-wisdom. The very first verse of the said Upanisad says that ‘Whatever (small or big) is found in this world, all those are the house-hold property of *Ishvara (Ishaa)*. Instead of attempting to acquire more and more properties enjoy those which are allotted (to you).’⁶ The message is very clear that the entire nature along with the globe is God’s creation and God’s property. Man should try to protect it in order to enjoy it. If he will not be able to protect it then he cannot protect himself. Thus we can see there has been specific suggestion to protect the nature for the protection of him.

Our world is produced in our consciousness, so we can say realities are not fixed scenarios. But the ever-changing creations we ourselves ‘bring forth both individually and collectively through our beliefs and actions. In other words, a universe “more like a great thought than like a great machine” is more like a storytelling universe we make up as we go than like a stable physical reality in which we grope our way about.

Every living being is connected intimately, and from this intimacy follows the capacity of identification and as its natural consequences, practice of non-violence etc. We need to share with all life on our maltreated Earth through the deepening identification with life forms and the greater units with the ecosystems. “Ecosophy is a wisdom-spirituality of the earth. ‘The new balance’ is not so much between man and Earth, but between matter and spirit, between spatio-temporality and consciousness. Ecosophy is not simply a ‘science of the earth’ (ecology) and even ‘wisdom on earth,’ but the ‘wisdom of the earth itself’ that occurs when a man knows how to listen with love”⁷.

As conscious observers, we tell each other our realities as stories; as conscious actors, we create our realities. It takes time for the new scientific stories of a conscious living universe and Earth to percolate through society. But the time is ripe now for evolving our stories from that meaningless purposeless decaying old universe to a conscious, living universe and planet Earth. We must become active co-creators of our own reality once we realize we have the power—and the responsibility—to change it intentionally, day by day, even minute by minute.

Philosophers of science have long made it clear that science can only give us useful hypotheses, not truths.³ Even the ever-more-obsolete scientific beliefs and findings told us a story, and a very powerful story at that. It told us we lived in a one-way universe beginning with a Big Bang and running down ever since like a battery depleted in the process of powering all the random collisions that gave us galaxies and our world. Some of those collisions, we were told, brought about certain molecules that sprung rather magically to life, but life—so the (largely Darwinian) story goes—became a struggle for survival in fierce competition before the running-down tide called ‘entropy’ eventually sweeps all life away. To create a harmonious human cosmos within nature’s greater cosmos, the Greeks believed that the human mind and emotions would have to be activating in proper way to function by the principles of harmonious cosmic organization. Epic poems, ancient Greek drama, and eventually even logic and metaphysics were all teaching tools. Dramas about terrible tragedies wove together the levels of cosmos in order to teach people democracy – what difficult or horrific situations could befall people, what decisions had to be made, what consequences must be dealt with when bad decisions were made individually or collectively, how cosmic influences moved between levels. The Greeks were aware that understanding nature, including our own human nature, would help us live on Earth more intelligently and peacefully. To know one’s nature is to know how to live in harmony. Ecosophy, often called deep ecology, which usually presents itself as something brand new, a new philosophy to save human-being from their destruction.

There is a necessity to alter the rapid pace of our lives to bring in more peace, joy for betterment of Human being. Family involvement could include observing and documenting, through photographs, the number of unique birds or insects visiting a tree near the house. Alternatively, to encourage scientific curiosity in our babies in the Early Years, they could be taught to observe and document birds and insects visiting their kitchen gardens and balcony plants. That time we feel better and like to live in peace and happy by observing it. “A global endeavour beyond political short-sightedness and geographical boundaries is needed to create policies that help us joyfully learn from, and collaborate with, all forms of life to develop the Ecosophy of care. Thus, we must now look at raising the ‘quality of our lives’, rather than our ‘standard of living’. The time is ripe for us to attend to this particularly critical need of our children and their futures - learning to live in harmony with nature - much before we dedicate ourselves to ensuring their success as entrepreneurs, researchers, economists, doctors and engineers. We realized that without earth we are just impossible to survive .So it appears that in the process of arising within us, the earth has dreams for us! In a gentle defiance of the European Enlightenment vision, let us seriously consider the possibility that Rilke is right, that perhaps the Earth *does* have dreams for us, in the manner that a mother has dreams for her children. And like a mother’s dreams for her children, the earth’s hopes for us must have power, if anything infinitely more power than the dreams of a mother. There are deep material roots to the ecological crisis. Ecosophy does not ignore them. It only tries to correct the imbalance by drawing simultaneous attention to the cognitive roots of the crisis. “After all, every one of us bases our lives on a certain view of the world. It is then crucial to critically scrutinise and dissect it when it is so evidently falling apart. “Intellectual modernity owes its early lineage to three key 17th century thinkers who pre-date the European Enlightenment: The grandfather of modern science Francis Bacon spoke of ‘the conquest of nature’. He spoke of ‘binding her to our service, of making her our slave’.⁸ Eco-science (ecology) is not enough. Eco-wisdom (ecosophy) is needed: How to live on Earth enjoying and respecting the full richness and diversity of life-forms of the ecosphere. The cold

⁶ *Ishaavaasyam idamsarvam yat kim ca jagatyam jagt, Tena tyaktena bhunjithaa maa greedha kasyasvid dhanam.*

⁷ Elisabet, Sahtouris., *Ecosophy : Nature’s Guide to a Better World, Kosmos Journal for Global Transformation*

⁸ <https://openthemagazine.com/essays/a-time-for-ecosophy/>

acknowledgement of dependency upon ecosystems is not enough to motivate responsible policies. To replenish the Earth, we need the joy of interaction with life and within life. This implies deep reaction against the narrowly utilitarian outlook. We need integration of all levels: abstract and fundamental premises of a philosophy or religion, the derivation of general guideline of global action from these premises, and the conclusion of particular decisions in concrete situations in everyday life.

Scientific research says that the universe is constituted by four independent primordial entities known as energy, dark matter and antimatter Boson mater. These are the building blocks of the universe. So it is understood as equalization may be established between the cosmologies which are based on spirituality. Everything that surrounds us including biotic and abiotic should be based on wholeness of the nature aligning with its order of function. Everything shall have the right to live in healthy environment and enjoy natural and cultural surroundings and shall be obliged to care harmony between body and mind and nature many philosophers explain the significance of nature. The three functional aspects of environment are, namely, supply resources, assimilate waste and sustain life. Nature supplies enough resources for the necessary living of all enormous living beyond of this earth. Yet human being alone has the urge to live beyond the necessary option to advanced and unwanted need of living. Unfortunately for this endless demand, the nature cannot supply the resources. The demand must not exceed the carrying capacity, which is the regeneration capacity of nature. While human are greedy in resource utilization he is equally ignorant or negligent in assimilate waste. The waste which may sound useless for the human is a burden of earth. Unfortunately it is true that human waste has harmed many lives so also a threatening toward climate and ultimately earth is suffering. Thus population control is a necessity regarding to save the earth for future. When humans realised the core element of world without any hesitation then real change of the universe will be in positive vibration to bring peace and happiness in this earth. Therefore we need to understand the alignment of nature. So the story of the big house name universe will bring harmony to the planet earth. The realisation of ultimate power about origin of the universe will be the resolution to bring the environmental harmony.

As we know that Gandhi was not an environmentalist but his ways of living and ideas of the concept of Satyagraha and, Truth and Nonviolence, he shows the simple life style and reveal how sustainable development is possible. Modern industrial civilisation has had a huge impact on human kind relating to environment. It impacts to natural resources of the world .as per Gandhian concept the greatest achievements of modern civilisation may be the weapons of destruction. He says the experiment of science should be only for wellbeing of society not more than that. Modern civilisation gives an amount of violence against nature which was largely seen as man's property. The understanding of human being should be for environment protective .So we are responsible to protect our earth. Gandhi states that villages would soon disappear due to the urbanisation which is part of modern civilisation. This is also one of the reasons of the degradation of environment. It is the time to protect the environmental degradation. We should change ourselves from the core of heart and practice the spiritual norms for it. Then we can only bring green future for to become a healthy earth. So Gandhi's vision for green earth may be called as Sarvodaya. For this reason he motivated villagers and handicrafts industries which are less in use of machinery equipment and protects environment.

It is real that culture can be separated from environment. Our culture always emphasized the need to protect environment on the globe of earth. If taking care of environment is practised the environment will provide us healthy life and we can live on this earth peacefully. We are suffering due to our ignorance .As Sanatana dharma is based on pantheism, so inherently is an ecological religion. Human beings are not the victory of world and dominion over everything as it has been discussed in Sanatana Dharma. Earth is considered as Bhumi or Devi in Sanatana Dharma. Therefore holy places of the earth are worshipped by humans. Thus we must protect the green planet earth.

One of the most famous expressions that is, *lokakalyana* found in another Upanisad, the *Bhagavad Gita* which is treated as the most sacred scripture in Indian tradition. It has been suggested that human actions should be aimed at *lokakalyana* in order to be treated as higher order of actions. The meaning of the expression is: *kalyana* (betterment) of the *loka or Jagat* (world). Here it is clearly suggested that from the standpoint of morality the action must be aimed at the betterment of the world. Man must take care of the world. So concern for the betterment of the world is human responsibility. It is not for human enjoyment only. There are several instances found in the Vedas and Upanisads to offer respect to the trees, mountain, fire, water, etc. All these can very well be treated as eco-wisdom present in the Vedic wisdom.

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