

CHAPTER EIGHT

Concluding Remarks

In this thesis we have outlined the objective of environmental ethics from non-anthropocentric point of view. One thing must be kept in mind that many traditional ethicists as well as philosophers raise serious objection regarding the feasibility of non-anthropocentric approach. According to them the foundation or more specifically the moral foundation of non-anthropocentrism is question begging. We partially agree with this feeling, but at the same time we strongly believe that so long anthropocentrism in its brute sense cannot be overcome, the objective of environmental ethics would remain futile. In fact environmental ethics, we stated, appeared as a slogan against the dominant world view known as anthropocentrism. It equally distrusted the legitimacy of traditional ethics simply because of the fact that traditional ethics is man-centered and it equally encourages anthropocentrism to a great extent. In this regard it can be said that the objective of modern environmental ethics is not something that can be regarded as an addition of traditional ethics, rather it brings a new dimension in the domain of ethics which either regenerates the dimension of traditional ethics with a new outlook or it forgoes the basement of traditional ethics in the context of intrinsic values bestowed upon nature or natural communities.

The question then is: what is wrong with traditional ethics? The main problem with traditional ethics, at least in the eyes of environmentalists, is that it works under the brand of anthropocentrism. In traditional ethics it is said that human beings are the only legitimate moral agents. The reason for this is that humans do possess rationality and intelligence by means of which they can judge what is good or bad, what is right or wrong, what one ought to do and what not. Barring humans no other natural species

can do this. Such distinctive attribute of humans actually paves the way of occupying the dignity to be moral agent. There is no question of doubt that humans do possess rationality and by virtue of that humans do judge moral actions. However, from this it does not follow that humans should be regarded as the only legitimate moral agents. If this would be the case, then it can be said that *rationality alone* is the mark of considering some agent as the legitimate moral agent. But this should not be the case. Because one's distinctive attribute should not be regarded as the lone criterion of considering some agent as the legitimate moral agent. Instead of that environmental ethics considers every species of the biotic community as the legitimate moral agent. The reason for this is that like humans, every biotic community, either actively or passively, contributes something for the betterment of the natural environment. It is a biologically proven case that not a single tiny species in the globe is appendicitis, redundant. At least science confirms that every tiny species in the globe, either actively or passively, either knowingly or unknowingly, adds something for the benefit of their fellow beings. Can any modern man deny it? If it cannot be denied, then why only humans barring other species can be regarded as the legitimate moral agents? Is it not a monolithic dictation, an irrational verdict coming from the most rational agents? Environmental ethics thus tries to revisit this monolithic propensity of anthropocentrism underlying the base of traditional ethics. Many ethicists, however, would like to say that anthropocentrism, even though not in its brute sense, in the enlightened sense is a must for defending environmental ethics. Even though man would not be the only legitimate moral agents, but surely man holds the key for monitoring what is or what is not. The centrality of man cannot be ignored and anthropocentrism even in the enlightened sense cannot be ruled out. What has been said here is very much relevant, but environmental ethics goes the other way round. It tries to give a way out of environmental degradation through a second order prescription

which would end up in the deep sense of realization, a feeling which would draw a re-looking attitude of man towards nature.

The sole objective of this thesis is to examine and explore a second order way to overcome environmental degradation. It goes against scienticism, materialism, individualism, extintionalism under the brand of anthropocentrism. There is no question of doubt and without science, more specifically, without the outcome of science; the development of modern society cannot be thought about. It has been said by many enlightened group that in the domain of scientific and technological age, talking about metaphysics is pessimistic in thought. Here is a point that needs to be addressed. Science is all right, scientific development is welcome as it is inevitable to cope up with the needs of over population. Nobody can deny it. However, at the same time, it is also true to say that excessive technological practice on Earth actually degrades or deteriorates the biosphere at large and it is really alarming not only for the present generation, but more alarming for the future generation as well. Excessive scientific application within biosphere not only damages the environment, it equally barrens everything in the globe and thereby transforms the natural earth into an artificial one, a fertile earth into a barren one. Robbing naturalism in terms of artificialism or materialism is the harm done by modern science. Everybody knows it is aware of it, but unfortunately, it is the reality that everybody relishes as well. Modern man knows the future consequence of science, but there is no time for re-looking. The attitude of modern man is just like: future problem will be tackled in future, let us strive towards satisfying our present needs. This propensity is factually practical, but morally and ethically not sound. We do not know how to repay our debt, but we are indebting to a great extent which must be paid by the future generation.

So, environmental ethics looks for a way out of this danger arising out of science. It denies anthropocentrism; it starts from bio and finally reaches to the deep sense of self-realization where everyone comes to

realize what he ought to do, where everyone feels for others, cares for others, loves others and defends others as self-thy. It denies anthropocentrism, because it holds that where there is anthropocentrism, there are classes, ups and downs, dualism, materialism, and consumerism. It tries to abolish individualism, subjectivism and instead of that it proclaims universal holism. It holds that as far as natural communities are concerned, humans are in no way superior to others. One's superiority should not be measured in terms of the distinctive property or properties it possesses, but rather on the association of a distinctive whole, i.e. on the basis of a relational whole. It is the principle of morality which hinges on the moral dictum: what is ethically good for me ought to be good for other. That is why the relevance of moral universalisation comes into being. Ethical environmentalists feel that environmental degradation cannot be blocked by scientific resolution of environment. Deteriorated nature cannot be revived in its natural or original form. Artificial resolution what science actually does cannot rebuild nature when badly damaged. Environmental ethics therefore tries to change human's attitude towards nature. Science without morality, without metaphysics causes serious damage of natural environment. So we do require scientific development, but such type of development must be associated or backed up by morality, ethical foundation and metaphysics. Unfortunately, modern science completely forgoes metaphysics and as a matter of fact the outcome of science is aiming to fulfill the greedy propensity of humans in an artificial manner. The problem actually hinges on human attitude towards nature. With the advancement of science and technology, human's attitude takes a u-turn towards materialism as well as consumerism. Humans rapidly are alienated from nature, a gap has been created between man and nature and it is widening day by day. Western traditions and communities now feel, though it is too late, that excessive torture on nature is detrimental and they are now very much eco-sensitive at least theoretically. But there is a serious problem in the third-world

countries, particularly, in the developing and under-developed countries. Because they do require scientific development in order to mitigate the cry of needy people whose per capita income is excessively low. As the third world countries being developing or under-developing are the followers of the west, people of the third world countries adopt modern scientific technologies which alienates them from nature. Thus, environmental degradation stands as a global phenomenon which must be resisted globally for maintaining peace and harmony within the globe. Without proper environment no human peace as such can be sustained.

So we at the very outset deny anthropocentrism and march towards non-anthropocentrism to save our environment, a difficult task many traditional ethicists have challenged. It is indeed difficult to establish non-anthropocentrism within the area of humanism, because many ethicists are in a dilemma about the ethical foundation of non-anthropocentrism. However, we have shown step by step in what sense environmental ethics turns towards non-anthropocentrism and thereby reaches its highest peak. At the very outset environmental ethics denies that humans are the only legitimate moral agents in the moral community. If we look into the history of traditional ethics, we come to know that humans are designated as the only legitimate moral agents in the moral domain simply for their distinctive property of rationality by means of which humans can judge what is good or bad, what is right or wrong, what one ought to do and what not. Environmental ethicists feel that this distinctive property cannot be the mark of designating a species moral. If it does so, then every species has some rare distinctive property and thereby deserves some sort of moral legitimacy. A traditional ethicist would like to say that moral agent must assess the action what one does and only humans can do so by virtue of their rationality and no other species can do it. Therefore, only humans have the right of acquiring the dignity of morality. Environmental ethicists would like to say that determining something as good or wrong is relevant only to the humans; it is not

for other species. Besides humans no other species make anything wrong, they are there in the nature for the good of the nature. Humans try to reorder nature for their own interest, humans count a particular species harmful to them, but it may not be harmful to nature. Nothing in the world exists as to make harm to the nature. This is the true reality. So the moral discourse containing good or bad, right or wrong, is the discourse of humans creation particularly relevant to humans alone, but not for others. So to consider humans as the legitimate moral agents is confined to the human class alone, it by no means includes other species. Environmental ethics is not interested only in one class of the environment, rather it includes the whole biotic community as the moral community based on the contribution every species have towards nature, but not on the basis of distinctive property confined to a particular class as traditional ethicists did in the case of humans.

So, after denying anthropocentrism, environmental ethics looks for a new outlook towards nature, a plea which redirects the arrogant attitude towards nature to the caring attitude towards nature. In this direction, biocentrism is the first major step. We have shown in this thesis why all biotic species have been taken into consideration as the moral community. The biocentric approach holds that all living species, humans as well as non-humans, are members of the earth's community of life. They are integral and inevitable part of nature and are completely interdependent on each other. All organisms are teleological centres of life in the sense that each species is a unique individual flourishing its own natural life and perusing their own good. This leads us to say that no species is inherently superior to other. So to consider natural species as only possessing instrumental value is wrong. In fact all biotic species in isolation do possess intrinsic or inherent worth and therefore is good for its own. We have shown that biocentric outlook of nature anticipates natural world as a system of interdependence of all living things and therefore it completely ignores moral dualism among biotic community. This

realization is made possible only by foregoing anthropocentrism at large. We think there is a strong logic behind it. It is a reality that like humans all other living species do have the right to live for their own sake. So any attempt to extinct non-human species is a bad morality. Everything is in order and it goes or acts according to the natural order. In this process one species survives with the help of other. This is all right. Nobody can deny it, but at the same time it is wrong to say that humans are the sole decision makers and humans alone can order or reorder nature according to their own will and thereby extinct others according to their own will. This attitude is wrong, it has to be changed. Environmental ethics brings the ground for changing this ego-centric human attitude.

By establishing mutual interdependence of all biotic species, biocentric approach equally establishes the intrinsic value of all biotic species. So valuing nature is another dimension in non-anthropocentrism. In the anthropocentric domain or structure, nature or non-human natural community is valued instrumentally. Non-anthropocentrism denies it. Rather it gives equal value to all species because they contribute equally to nature. It holds that each biotic species strives to preserve its existence and realize its own good in its own unique manner. In this regard, we have examined Taylor's 'teleological centers of life' which states that all living organisms whether conscious or unconscious are in the true sense teleological centers of life as they have a good of their own. Taylor's own view of teleological centers of life actually hinges on two important properties, such as, objectivity and wholeness of vision. These two visions give rise to a complete realization both cognitively and imaginatively of what it is to be a particular individual. It therefore overcomes the barrier of anthropocentricity and thereby helps one to realize that all other members of the biotic community are same and bear equal value as humans.

Thus, it seems that biocentrism is one step forward movement towards non-anthropocentrism as besides humans it includes non-

human species as the legitimate moral agents not in the sense that they can judge what is good or bad, but in the sense that each of them contributes something for the betterment of the environment and each of them has their own life and has the equal right to preserve it not as a means to an end, but as an end in itself. After biocentrism, we have discussed the view of Land Ethics as propounded by Leopold. In fact Leopold's article of "Land Ethics" opens a new dimension in environmental ethics. It states that like biotic species, the abiotic components such as land, water, soil, etc are equally important for better environment. Leopold uses the term "land" in a broad sense. He includes everything within the domain of ethics or ethical consideration and thereby proclaims that since everything is part of nature, therefore everything should be treated equally. Everything within the globe belongs to the whole. Leopold's theory is known as environmental holistic theory. His theory is simple. A man cannot live without a tree because a tree gives him oxygen which is a must for his living and takes carbon dioxide from the environment which is detrimental for his living. A tree without soil, without water cannot live. So water and soil contribute a lot for living of the tree. Thus, everything is linked with each other and nothing is redundant in the environment. So nothing is morally superior to other. This is basic science; basic reality and nobody can deny it.

So the question, a very important one: why do we care nature? To value nature must rest on the question: why should we value nature? To say that we should be valuing nature for our own sake is a form of anthropocentrism, because this answer is very much man centric. Humans do respect nature; take care of nature for their own benefit. This is all about science. However, environmental ethics looks the other way round. Environmental ethics at the very outset looks for a different model contrary to the model of anthropocentrism and therefore tries to alter human's attitude towards nature. Environmental ethics denies the moral legitimacy of human's assessment of natural communities. Humans are just like a part of

the nature, a mutual whole where there is no scope of superiority of one species over other. Humans have voice and that is why they can cry, but natural community or biotic community have a silent voice, a silent cry. So voicing in terms of communicable language is no longer important. In fact it is anthropologically true to say that humans did not exist when nature came into existence. They made their entry into the natural world at a much later period. This confirms one thing that without the existence of humans, nature can persist. In this sense humans are created by nature and humans' role is very much secondary as per their existence is concerned. But unfortunately, the present role of humans is *colonialist* in nature. Humans with the help of the advancement of science and technology rob nature, exploit nature, use nature and most dangerously try to conquer nature, and its order. Human attempt to reorganize nature according to their will, but where the will is not to be *goodwill* in Kantian sense, where will is dominated by greedy propensity; such attempt would be detrimental to mankind in general. It is really a big mistake on the part of humans to think that nature can be conquered, reordered.

We think that non-anthropocentrism in environmental ethics may be established under three proposals, i.e. through the principle of sustainable development, self-realization where environmental holism can fully be maintained; and environmental justice. Now we shall develop these three proposals in turn and thereby re-look how far the proposal of non-anthropocentrism can be established.

We in many occasions have mentioned that scientific development in no way loses its relevance if it is applied prudently. In this regard two alternatives seem to be available, i.e. science without metaphysics and science with metaphysics or more specifically, it can be said that when scientific development is associated with morality, with metaphysics, then development of the society can be brought about without disturbing nature. But unfortunately, it is proved that after the industrial revolution most of the nations of the world were inclined towards industrial and economic development by rapaciously

exploiting the God-given natural resources of the world with little thought about the long term ill consequences affecting the environment. Until two decades ago the world considered economic status only as a measure of human progress and development. The economically developed nations like most of the European and American countries carried out development at the cost of their own natural resources and also the natural resources of the third world countries. Consequently, the rich countries became richer economically and the poorer countries became poorer. However, it has been gradually realized that the development strategies so long followed specially by the economically and industrially advanced countries were deteriorating the quality of the life of the people by adversely affecting the environment. The God given environment is the habitat of all biotic species including man, and the natural process as affect the life of all species including man, and its deterioration through unethical and unthoughtful development affects the life of all species. Hence we can say that man is digging his own grave through his harmful activities in the name of development. Development in terms of GDP or per capita income of the people is not all about. Development means all round development, a coherent and mutual way out of development through which not only humans are able to bring about their development, but at the same time other fellow species would be equally protected.

Where lies the solution to the problem of environmental degradation? Can world development be halted to improve environmental quality and the quality of life of all biotic species? The answer was given long time ago by Mahatma Gandhi who said that there are plenty of resources in natural environment in order to cope up with the necessary requirement of all human needs, but not for human greed. In fact Gandhi himself followed a lifestyle which did not bring about any harm or least harm to the environment and he wanted the mass to follow it. Here we cite an environmentally relevant portion of his discussion with Jawaharlal Nehru. One morning during the time of

pre-independence, Nehru came to meet with Gandhi. They were seriously taking about the national strategies. As Gandhi was so involved in this discussion he misused the allotted water by means of which he washed his face. Suddenly, Nehru found that Gandhi's eyes were full of tears. Nehru was surprised and asked Gandhi: what makes you cry? In replying to Nehru, Gandhi said that he made a big mistake by mis^ussing the water with which he washed his face. Nehru was astonished and asked Gandhi: Why are you thinking so much about it? We have Ganga, Jamuna and many more, so why are you thinking about? This in fact reflected the environmental sensitivity of Mahatma Gandhi. So for Gandhi realization is the key to protecting nature and restoring its natural properties. Due to lack of realization and awareness about the environment, the people of the world failed to follow him. They believed in short term economic gains and therefore planned out the growth strategies in that very manner which immensely mashed the environment. The world now suffers the consequences of environmental degradation at the cost of loss of quality of life of all biotic species. The world is unable to supply the resources used and wasted by the advanced countries of the world to satisfy their never ending demand and the needs of the teeming millions of the developing or less developed nations. Society must therefore change its unsustainable development strategy to a new form where development or growth will continue without bringing any harm to the environment. This new strategy is known as sustainable life style strategy where each individual practices a *sustainable lifestyle* based on loving, respecting, protecting and caring for the nature or natural environment.

The concept of sustainable development was first expressed in the World Commission on Environment and Development in 1987, through the Butland report entitled, "Our Common Future" which focused the shift in our thinking about the development strategy based on the belief that natural resources are exhaustible and therefore cannot be utilized in abundance for human welfare.

Sustainable development may therefore be defined as the form of development which meets the demands and needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of the future generations to meet their own needs. The strategy of development aims at improving the quality of the life of all without any harmful impact on the environment. It tries to restore the cordial relationship of interdependence between man and environment.

Under such development policy all activities related to economic growth and development should be implemented in such a manner that the environment remains safe and sound. Long term economic benefits for the mass should be kept in view instead of short term benefits for few. Before any project is launched the economic benefit of the project must be weighed against the possible environmental costs. Therefore a scientifically done *EIA* (Environment Impact Assessment) is necessary before launching any development project.

Development projects, like construction of roads, dams, industry without proper *EIA* as noted earlier destroys ecosystems that support the ecological health of the region. Global warming because of green house gas emissions, acidification of soil and water, drastic decline in the quality of soil, water and air, loss of biodiversity due to over exploitation of resources are the obvious consequences of unsustainable development. We may thus say that sustainable development is the need of the day that will ensure a healthy environment where all living species can lead a health life.

Sustainable development needs to follow certain guiding principles which cut across ecological, economic, social and cultural dimensions.

Some of them may be enlisted below:

- (h) Intergenerational equity – meeting the needs of today while preserving and conserving resources for tomorrow.
- (i) Conservation of biological diversity and ecological integrity.
- (j) Constant natural capital and sustainable income.
- (k) Anticipatory and precautionary policies approach to the resource utilization keeping in mind the effects on environment.

- (l) Resource utilization and distribution in an equal manner keeping in view the concept of social justice.
- (m) Utilization of natural resources within the capacity of the environment to supply renewable resources.
- (n) Qualitative rather than quantitative development.
- (o) Efficiency of resource use by all societies.
- (p) Strong community participation in policy and practice during the process of transition from unsustainable to sustainable society.

From the above approaches one may say that conservation of resources and sustainable development are two sides of the same coin, i.e. one cannot be achieved without the other. Satisfaction of basic needs in an equitable manner, conservation and maintenance of cultural and biological diversity and preservation of ecological integrity should be the main motive of sustainable development.

In this context, it may be said that revival of traditional and indigenous lifestyle is one way to achieve sustainable development. The traditional wisdom is mainly based on the belief or realization that man and Nature are part of the indivisible whole; they are interdependent on each other and therefore should live in cordial partnership with each other. This view of the traditional societies may be called the eco-centrism view and the revival of eco-centric will be beneficial for the society at large since it will bring about development without any adverse impact on the environment.

Traditional Indian societies have always revered mountains, rivers, trees and different species. The peepal tree, the banyan tree, and the tulsi plant, for example, bear much religious value for the Indians. Therefore, even during the days of rampant deforestation, these trees were not destroyed which ultimately led to their conservation. Patches of forests, known sacred grooves were dedicated to Hindu God and Goddesses. These areas were saved from exploitation due to long drawn local sentiments which led to the conservation of biodiversity in

these areas. Many of the animal species are still worshipped for being the 'vahan' of different Gods.

The traditional societies held that the different biotic species which were considered to be an integral part of nature were the basis of local life-support system. They were looked upon with respect, love and care which promoted protection and conservation of nature. But gradually with the development of modern science and technology the natural resources were exploited and over-utilized which adversely affected nature which in turn affected the harmonious living of all biotic species including man. We are now residing in a degraded environment which needs proper healing and such a healing can come through with the revival of traditional culture and traditional lifestyle which is actually the sustainable lifestyle.

Traditional societies therefore form an integral part of the eco-system functioning. They have their own lifestyle, their own social and cultural basis which promotes enrichment of biodiversity. In such societies ecology is directly linked to economy which in turn fosters strong linkage between biodiversity conservation and economic development.

To attain sustainable development environmental planning and management is very necessary. Planning should be directed towards (i) an overall growth of the society and (ii) removal of socio-economical disparities through proper utilization of resources. We have seen in the previous sequels that industrialization and urbanization along with improper planning and management has degraded our environment. Environmental management which is related to rational adjustment based on the principle of realization between man and nature involving judicious exploitation and utilization of natural resources without disturbing the ecological balance and ecosystem equilibrium is the need of the day. Environment management aims at improvement of man-environmental relationship by imposing a check on destructive human activities, along with conservation, protection, regulation and regeneration of nature. Such management is sure to

bring about socio-economic development on one hand and improvement of environmental quality on the other.

Environment planning and management therefore involves:

- (i) Judicious exploitation of natural resources for socio-economic growth and development.
- (ii) Maintenance of environmental quality.
- (iii) To monitor, guide and restrict the utilization and rampant exploitation of natural resources, especially the non-renewable ones,
- (iv) To control the level of environmental pollution and degradation,
- (v) To make optimum utilization of natural resources through recycling and reusing waste materials produced in one activity to another economically and environmentally viable activity.
- (vi) To assess the impact of proposed development projects on the environment.
- (vii) To carry out scientific research on technologies in order to reduce their harmful impact on the environment.
- (viii) To formulate laws and regulations for implementation with the view to preserve and protect the environment.

Regarding methodology environmental planning and management has two approaches, such as, the preservative approach and the conservative approach.

The preservative approach promotes non-interference of man with nature and total adaptation of man to nature, i.e. man must surrender completely to the whims of nature. This approach is not practicable as it would lead to the total extinction of man.

The second approach, i.e. the Conservative approach is in fact practicable as it advocates man-environmental adjustment in terms of judicious utilization of natural resources for socio-economic development and at the same time maintenance of ecological balance, ecosystem, stability and environmental quality by adoption of eco-friendly and pollution safe technologies.

Environmental planning and management needs to be based on the following ecological principles in order to attain sustainable development-

- (i) The biotic and abiotic components of the environment are interrelated which in turn are related to large scale biogeochemical cycles,
- (ii) Sustained life on earth is a characteristic of eco-system'
- (iii) Resources of the planet are mostly finite'
- (iv) Resources are created over millions of years'
- (v) All living species and the physical environment are mutually reactive.
- (vi) Energy flow in the eco-system are governed by the first and the second law of thermodynamics,
- (vii) Productivity of the eco-systems depends on the availability of solar energy and the ability of the plants to transform solar energy into chemical energy.

Environmental planning and management based on the above mentioned ecological principles will foster harmonious living of all species within an ecologically balanced environment.

Sustainability and Eco-system:

In the previous paragraphs we have discussed sustainability mainly from the view of human way of utilizing resources or human adoption of eco- friendly life-styles in order to protect the environment which at the same time fosters development and growth. The concept of sustainability was also developed during the years of Kennedy-Johnson out of an ecological understanding of both conservation and wilderness preservation. The concept of sustainability needs to reflect an understanding of the systematic connections that sustain the components of ecosystems we call our resources.

The fact that requires acceptance is that all organisms and hence all ecosystems possess good of their own. All living species are disentrophic; they absorb energy from the environment and maintain

their functionability. Organisms capable of absorbing energy and maintaining their functionability possesses intrinsic value, i.e. we may speak about the good of that entity. Therefore we may say that if any entity possesses good of their own, then certainly impairing the capacities that underlie their good means harming that entity. Harming or injuring any entity means loss of functional capacity of that organism. When trees are cut down in a forest area, the functional capacity of the forest like an ecosystem is impaired.

The term 'sustainability' when applied to human beings means sustainability of what human beings treat materials to be utilized by them for their own purpose and is therefore independent of the good or functionability of non-human entities. But Aldo Leopold argues that to ignore the good of non-human entities constituting an eco-system is similar to ignoring the good of the mistreated slave who is human. Scherer Donald says, "If, however, one is to look for duties of human beings towards eco-systems those duties must be relative to the entities ecosystems are, and thus to what the good of an eco-system, amounts to."⁸⁵

The good of non-human entities or eco-system as a whole lies in its functional capacities. Its destruction means degradation of diversity, loss of its sustenance in the biotic world. Hence it is its functional capacities which justify human respect, care and love. Respectful and loving treatment of humans towards the biotic world urges protection of self-sustaining systems. Therefore Donald Scherer rightly says that "respect for an eco-system is respect for the capacities that give it a good of its own, its structure, its resilience, its diversity."⁸⁶ Since the concept of sustainability is closely linked to development, the eco-systematic concept of sustainability falls into the discussion of growth and development. It is a well known fact that due to faculty development strategies many environments are degraded. The loss of

⁸⁵ Scherer, Donald: *The Ethics of Sustainable Resource*, Environmental Ethics: An Anthology, edited by Andrew Light and Holmes Rolston 111, Blackwell Publishing, 2003, p.344.

⁸⁶ Ibid. p. 344.

their functionability impairs development and at the same time endangers quality living of the biotic species including man.

Considering the above situation, the question which lies is how sustainable development should proceed? Restoration of environmentally degraded areas along with launching of new development projects in previously developed areas incurs large expenditure and at the same time may not be successful. Such development strategy cannot be called sustainable. In an eco-systemic sense sustainability of both eco-system and human life requires redevelopment over new. Therefore, in order to understand sustainability or carry out sustainable development in the eco-systemic sense, the good of all non-human entities in all eco-systems should be recognized along with the good of human beings. Once it is recognized conditions favouring or assuring the good of all entities should be stably maintained. Thus human actions should be directed not only towards maintenance of human well being or human good but also towards promotion of good or well being of all non-human entities constituting the eco-systems and therefore the environment. Such an endeavour would be sustainable development of the society in the true sense.

The question which now arises is whether sustainable development can be achieved in its true sense without taking environmental justice into consideration? In fact, sustainability, development and environmental justice are all interconnected or interlinked and the discussion of one by forfeiting the other makes our understanding incomplete. We all know that the environment is our habitat and we are all the constituents as well as the observers of the environment. We are therefore entitled to a healthy and protective life in harmony with nature. All biotic species indeed are entitled to acquire proper or qualitative living within a healthy environment. These entitlements involve duties or obligations on the part of international or national organization, governments of different countries with the aim to meet equitably the development and environmental needs of the present

and future generations. An environmental justice is primarily concerned about theories of distributive justice concerning on these vital points-firstly, we need to be more aware about the environment in which we live with more attention to our behaviour or attitude towards it and secondly, environmental concerns incorporate inter-relationships and interdependence of people of the same society, relationship between people of different societies, relationship between people of the present and future generation and at the same time relationship between human and non-human animals and between people and the biosphere in general.

The question of justice comes only when the desire and needs of man exceeds the means of satisfaction. Justice may usually be applied in areas of scarcity of resources. The scarce resource needs to be distributed equitably among the members residing in that area so that each get their fair share. But it is even wrong to think that justice is not required when resources are plentiful. To allow people to utilize plentiful resources according to their desire will eventually jeopardize the environment. The fact is exemplified in Garrett Hardin's "Tragedy of Commons". Let us suppose that a forest area is common for the utilization of a number of lumbermen. We all know that a forest can regenerate itself if exploited or utilized only to a certain or limited extent. Let us suppose that each lumberman utilises the wood of the said forest area to fulfill his basic needs and the forest area after fulfilling the basic needs of the lumberman is capable of regenerating itself. Now let us suppose that one lumberman starts thinking about doubling his income and so exploits double amount of wood. In doing so he may not be directly attacking, brutalizing or stealing anything from the forest. Since the forest area is a common area, other lumberman may wish to do the same thing. This would greatly increase the amount of forest exploitation and therefore cripple its power of regeneration. The harmful long term consequences which would follow are global warming, decrease in the amount of rainfall, increase in soil erosion, and increase in the dimension and frequency

of flood, loss of biodiversity, destruction and extinction of different fauna and flora and many others. This would lead to the production of an unhealthy environment where all living organisms would find it difficult to survive. So in these situations it is practical to determine each person's fair share of common good in order to avoid the tragedy of commons. Such a determination can be made only by reference to an agreed standard of justice.

Now let us think about the components of our a biotic environment, i.e. air, water, soil, etc. All people have a right to use them, yet no one actually owns them. The ozone layer, for example as we all know, protects us from the harmful ultraviolet rays of the sun which can cause skin cancer. Owing to faulty lifestyle of the people, the ozone layer is being depleted which is making the environment unhealthy and uninhabitable. Unlimited use of aerosol sprays, CFC's etc by certain groups and societies is responsible for the depletion of ozone layer, but the harmful consequences is not limited to the people using aerosol sprays or CFC's. The burden is felt by all living species throughout the world. The pollution of air, water, soil etc. knows no boundaries. It affects all species wherever it spreads. In other words, it may be said that such pollution is not limited to those people responsible for it. Now if millions of people adopt lifestyles harmful for the environment, like using aerosol sprays or CFC's, some restraint must be exercised, i.e. the use of such chemicals should be limited. But what should be the limit? Here lies the role to be played by environmental justice. Mutually agreeable principles of justice should be discovered and employed in order to determine everyone's fair share and at the same time limit the usage of harmful chemicals degrading the environment. Implementation of environmental justice is one of the best ways to preserve the environment.

Where do we stand now? We have so far outlined the proposal of environmental ethics through sustainable development and environmental justice. We have seen that we require development, which can come through science and technology, but such

development must protect the generative capacity of nature, natural environment in the true sense of the term. If any such development would be detrimental to the natural environment, degrade the so-called biosphere, transform the fertility of natural environment to barren land, such type of development must be resisted. So when we are pleading for environmental development through sustainability, we must resist the so-called modern scientific development based on consumerism, materialism, individual subjectivism where ups and downs, exploitation and subjugation, where superiority and inferiority in terms of material wealth is the sole criterion of cultural development, where development runs with empty ethical foundation, metaphysical basis. Such type of development is no longer sustainable. So sustainability is the criterion of development.

But the question then arises is sustainability a way out of non-anthropocentrism? Is it not an anthropocentric approach? There is no question of doubt that any form of development, whether sustainable or not is anthropocentric in nature. But development with or without sustainability makes lot of difference. Development as we think without sustainability is a brute kind of development through which an extreme form of anthropocentrism has been portrayed. It will hamper all round progress of the environment. However, when we talk about sustainable development, we thereby rationalize ourselves, set a rational criterion of development which is associated with morality, ethics and metaphysics and it will rationalize human's desires. So it can be said that sustainable development in one sense is very much a form of enlightened anthropocentrism or popularly known as weak anthropocentrism, but it would require a different attitude of humans which is unlikely in the domain of rigid anthropocentrism. So sustainable development is definitely a rational movement towards non-anthropocentrism

We have seen in what sense sustainable development is intimately associated with environmental justice. The term justice means what is just for all. Sustainable development can only be fulfilled when

humans come to realize that development must be an all round development whose impact must be equally distributed amongst all. In this regard, it can be said that when we are talking about justice in terms of what is just for all, we mean the concept of distributive justice, because only through this process environmental holism can be restored. It is the highlighting point of this thesis that environmentalism under the brand of non-anthropocentrism actually adheres to environmental holism- an ism where the dignity of all biotic species can equally be restored. Anthropocentrism actually encourages the division of labour on the basis of the distinctive properties, but such type of categorization based on the distinctive property cannot be morally accepted as the outcome of such process or system cannot be enjoyed by all species. Secondly, it destroys equilibrium theory, the balance system theory which is mostly required for peace and harmony. Environmental ethics in the form of non-anthropocentrism actually has tried to bring back humans attitude towards nature in a revolutionary manner. It tries to show or at least it gives opportunity to humans to re-look their own position through the realization process where they stand, what they are doing, what is wrong with them, and how they overcome the harmful actions that give rise to serious threat to the mankind in general.

We think that sustainability is not a pure form of non-anthropocentrism, but definitely it is an enlightened form of anthropocentrism by means of which environmental journey has started. There is no question of doubt that sustainability requires a drastic change of humans' attitude towards nature which is completely foreign in the domain of brute anthropocentrism. Sustainable development is intimately associated with environmental justice, because sustainable development can only be restored through the process of environmental justice. Since every species contributes significantly for the betterment of natural environment. It would seem apparently, that one species is harmful to other and equally useful to other. This is the natural system and one can tackle

this problem in a natural way. A tiger is undoubtedly detrimental to the humans because it will kill a man in the jungle. A poisonous snake is detrimental to a man, but this does not make sense to say that killing of a man or killing of a tiger is the only way out of the danger on behalf of the humans. So anthropocentrism is purely man-centric and it is man oriented ism where everything is said about man. So there is a serious problem within man as far as their realization is concerned. When we are doing environmental ethics, we cannot support consumerism, individualism, subjectivism, dualism, up and downs, rather we have to focus on the environmental holism, environmental justice that will require a drastic change, a radical change on behalf of human so that the gap between man and nature which has already been created needs to be narrowed down.

This gap between man and nature can be narrowed down through the process of self-realization and we think that non-anthropocentrism finds its shape as soon as humans feel that he is no longer superior to others. So in this thesis we have stated with the shortcomings of anthropocentrism and in this way we have criticized the so-called traditional ethics. Then we have spelled out in what sense all biotic species are equal and this theory is known as biocentrism. After establishing biocentrism, environmental ethics extends its scope to a biotic community as well. In this regard we have explained the theory of environmental holism backed up by the celebrated article of Andrew Leopold entitled as 'Land Ethics'. We have shown that before the appearance of environmental ethics, non-humans species were considered to possess instrumental value only. That barring instrumental or use value, they do not have any intrinsic value. Environmental ethics has nullified this cemented view of anthropocentrism. It equalizes the so-called intrinsic or inherent worth among all species, environmental communities irrespective of their distinctive properties.