

## **ENVIRONMENTAL ETHICS**

### Unit Structure

- 13.0 Objective
- 13.1 Environmental Ethics-meaning
- 13.2 Libertarian View
- 13.3 Ecological View
- 13.4 Conservation View.
- 13.5 Eco-spirituality.

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### **13.0 OBJECTIVE**

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After studying the Unit you will be able

To know the meaning of environmental ethics

To be acquainted with different kinds of views of environmental ethics

To understand the concept of Principle of Fair Carbon Share.

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### **13.1 ENVIRONMENTAL ETHICS- MEANING**

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Ethics is a part of philosophy and guide us to follow righteous path which is in the larger interest of the society as a whole. Environmental ethics is related to environmental philosophy and defines what is right and wrong at ecological level. It is more a moral binding than legal compulsions. Practicing environmental ethics is, therefore, left to an individual. The outcome of such practices is always par excellence since it comes from voluntarily and hence with dedication. Educating today's youths, thus, becomes more significant in order to achieve expected outcome.

Religious school of thought was the first philosophical ground to advocate environmental ethics. Every religion has strongly asked its followers to respect rivers, animals and the ecology nearby.

Modern philosophy on environmental ethics has evolved in the second half of twentieth century. Population explosion, environmental degradation, resource crisis etc problems drew the attention towards the environmental concerns. However, it also raised some challenges while deciding the environmental ethics in contemporary situation. Disparity among society, nations and region; basic right to procure the resources for daily livelihood; right to access to resources etc were the key challenges in designing environmental ethics. This has led to different views on environmental ethics. And this also led to formulation of different approaches on environmental ethics. There are primarily three views on environmental ethics:

1. Libertarian View
2. Ecological View
3. Conservation View

### 13.2 LIBERTARIAN VIEW

This view is correlated to the principle of civil liberty. As civil liberty follows the commitment to equal rights to every member of community, development of an ethics to deal with men's relationship with land animal and plant is absolutely essential. Social conscience from people to land and nature is equally inevitable. It is not right to see the natural world simply in the terms of its economic worth to human. Equal rights or liberty to all human and nonhuman members in the environment is the principle doctrine of libertarian view.

### 13.3 ECOLOGICAL VIEW

Ecological view demonstrates ecological functioning. On ethical ground, it is believed that earth has its own mechanism for functioning, growth and development. Nature has its own

purification processes and recovery systems of life even in most adverse condition. Moreover it is believed that whenever the climatic change had taken place, it took place within a very narrow range of region to enable the life to recover before it gets totally destroyed. This theory is in contrast to Darwinian idea of survival of the fittest. In support of this view, ecologists argue that there are many types of algae that are resistant to ultraviolet radiation, and life would continue and new life would evolve even if the ultraviolet radiation poses the threat to the life on the earth. This theory warns humans to change their perceptions and see them as a part of a whole system. However, later it was considered that as the global temperature rises higher and higher there are more climatic disasters, the planet may not be able to recover as it was previously thought. With a three degree rise in global temperature, the rain forest will start to die releasing vast new amounts of carbon dioxide; in the oceans the algae will fail and stop absorbing carbon. It is therefore, necessary to recognize fundamental interdependence of all biological and abiological entities.

#### 13.4 CONSERVATION ETHIC

'Conservation ethic' is an extension of instrumental value to the natural environment. It focuses only on the work of environment in the terms of its utility and usefulness to humans. Conservation is the oldest form of ethic that led to creation of national parks, wildlife sanctuaries, responsible use of non-renewable energy sources, water conservation efforts. Conservation is therefore a means to an end and purely concerned with mankind and his future generations. Most of the international treaties are outlined as consequences of this ethic.

### 13.5 ECO-SPIRITUALITY

While policy maker's negotiation and create cleaner solutions, it is important to heal the earth and its process heal us. It should be guided by spiritual principle that ensures long term sustainability. The idea that faith can be used to save ecology was first used by formation of WORLDWIDE FUND FOR NATURE. Eco-spiritualism was later extended up to five major world religion (Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islamic and Judaism). Each religion thus, provided spiritual motivation for environmental action in number of its programme. „Go Green‘ has become ritual across the world.