

Unit 7(5)

Environmental Ethics:

Ethics is concern towards moral principles. The term is derived from a Greek word ethos which means habits or code of moral values which a person carries or the integrity in personal and professional relations.

Environmental ethics is concerned with one's relation with the environment, that is the values which human beings have towards the environment. Every individual should respect the nature and the natural resources. Each one of us should have morals and empathy towards every creature on this earth. We need to protect our environment from degradation and at the same time judiciously use the natural resources for sustainable development. We should protect the biodiversity and prohibit over exploitation for our needs.

It is our moral duty to take care of the environment in which we survive. We need to recognize rights of various life forms. It is our duty to develop ecofriendly practices and build sustainable communities. We should not waste energy resources. Human beings need to practice the principles of 4 R's that is reduce, recycle, refuse and reuse resources. Lastly, we need to take care of ecological restoration of our ecosystems.

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Unit 7-Lecture 6

Role of religion in Environment conservation:

Religions play a role in environment protection and conservation by the beliefs and teachings or principles they follow. The major religions like Hinduism, Christianity, Islam, Sikhism, Judaism and Buddhism all show a relationship between man and nature. According to all human beings are the top creation of God and it is their responsibility to take care of the nature and natural resources. Nature gives glory to God and it is sacred. We should have empathy towards nature and it should be respected by all. Human activities affect nature; therefore, religions guide us not to misbehave and as we are a superior creation of God we need to be good in our actions in protecting and conserving all other creations of God that is nature and its resources. Each religion through its beliefs guide us to be concerned for nature. For eg. Buddhism believes in oneness between man and nature. If we harm the nature we harm ourselves. Peace and compassion towards everyone will ensure balance between human actions and conservation. Christianity through Bible teachings promotes environmental care through the belief of nature's divinity and our responsibility to look after nature. The Islam religion through Quran refers to nature as beautiful and sacred. Hinduism practices protection of ecosystems. Judaism through its teachings says that nature was given to us by God and we should leave it as it was given to us. It discourages destructive activities of mankind and conserve nature. A new field of study Eco theology has been given which incorporates concept of ecosystem management in religious teachings. Thus, all religions guide human beings to protect and conserve nature and its resources.

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Unit 7(7)

Human Population Growth and its impact on environment:

The increase in the number of individuals in a population is called Population growth. Demography is the study of statistics of human populations. It covers the study of size, structure and distribution of populations and their relation between natural environment, social and economic change. Population growth has been a cause of concern for both environment and economy. It is a driving force for environmental problems and a concern for human welfare. Growing population requires more and more resources for its use. Rapid growth has led to uncontrolled urbanization leading to various environmental problems. Population growth has resulted in rapid resource depletion leading to environmental concerns such as global warming, deforestation and decreasing biodiversity. More contaminants are generated due to overuse of resources such as air, water pollution and release of greenhouse gases. They also increase large quantities of waste. Unsustainable practices by man have led to decrease in groundwater levels, degradation of agricultural soil, overfishing of oceans and seas, forests cut faster than grown and depletion of oil reserves. Increased population and environmental problems are a concern to human health even. For eg. water pollution results in increased toxic elements such as arsenic, mercury, lead etc. which may cause gastrointestinal diseases. Air Pollution with contaminants such as fly ash, chromium may cause chronic cough etc. and so on. Therefore, it is very important to control population growth and judiciously use our natural resources.

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