

ROLE OF ETHICS IN SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENT

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Abstract

Due to modern urbanization, industrialization, over population growth, deforestation etc our environment has degraded. The qualitative and quantitative degradation of natural resources has immensely affected life of humans, animals, plants and micro organism. This environmental degradation can be prevented with the change in our life style and with the inculcation of some moral principles and eco friendly living. Then only we can provide a sustainable future to our children. Moral principles and ecofriendly living define the responsibility of particular person and the nation towards the environment

Key-words Environment, Pollution Ethics, Management

Between 1950 and 2000, the world population increased from 2.5 billion to 6.1 billion and is expected to grow to 8.9 billion by 2050. Our number continues to expand, but Earth's natural system do not. The amount of freshwater produced by the hydrological cycle is essentially the same today as it was in 1950 and as it is likely to be in 2050. Life on planet earth is suspected to be treading into a danger zone. The pace at which man has used nature's bounties for his own benefits has posed several threats for the physical environment and its flora and fauna.

Threats to the environment came from two sources: Pollution and Resource. Pollution refers to the undesirable and unlimited contamination of the environment by the manufacturer or use of commodities. Resource depletion refers to the consumption of finite or scarce resources. Pollution of air causes global warming, ozone depletion, acid rain, declining air quality, respiratory and skin disease, etc. water pollution from oil spills and disposal of organic waste aquatic life. Nature as a source of energy has also resulted in the depletion of fossil fuels, minerals, metal sand forests.

To highlight the problem, Kenneth Boulding in 1966 argued that Earth be viewed as a "single space ship" without unlimited reserves of any source and without unlimited capacity to assimilate wastes. Within this spaceship, if civilization has to survive every effort has to be made of recycle, reduce and reuse resources. The concept of sustainable development has received much attention after the Stockholm declaration resulting from the United Nation conference on human environment in 1972. The Brundt land report in 1987 also defined that sustainable development is a development that the needs of the present without compromising the ability of the future generations to meet their own needs. The Earth Summit held at Rio de Janerio in 1992 stressed the need for integration of Environment protection with the development goal of nations across the world.

Thus as global citizens it is our moral duty to minimize the effects of environmental damage. The Ethics of conserving natural environment is required not only for present generation but also for the future generation .John McConnell, founder of international earth day also when stated "Lets every individual and Institute now think and act as a responsible Trustee of choices in ecology, economics and ethics that will provide a sustainable future, eliminate pollution, poverty and violence."

The word ethics has been derived from the Greek word "ethos" which means characters. Ethics is a discipline dealing with value system or norms of conduct of people in a society. In primitive societies, the notions of duty arose In response to the desire to sufferings avoid to other members of the community. Eventually these duties crystallized as ethical codes can be great significance in various professions to play their part in controlling pollution level.

- Ethics of technologists lie in innovation production method which do not release pollutants.
- Ethics of economists lie in undertaking a good cost-benefit analysis and suggest measures which reduce the gap between social cost and private cost of production.
- Ethics of Legislators lie in making a resolution and act so that the defaulters are not pardoned.

- Ethics of Administration lie in sound implementation of procedures and institutes so that Pollution Controls become effective.
- Ethics of business Enterprises also should confirm complete sincerity and adherence to environment conservation.

Therefore, recent challenges to business leadership are to be profitable doing the right and helping to save the earth. Traditionally business enterprises were able to ignore their impact on the natural environment for two reasons.

1. Businesses were able to treat air and water as free that is, as good as that no one owns each firm can use without paying for its use.
2. Private companies saw environment as an unlimited good and each firm contributes in polluting these resources is relatively small and insignificant.

But the need of the hour is to ensure integration of economic and ecological sustainability. Modern corporate Sector must attempt to internalize the costs of pollution caused by disposable of Industrial wastes. Indian corporate sector has several examples of innovation in utilization of greener technologies of production.

- Suzlonenergy world fourth-largest wind turbine maker, is among the greenest Earth and best Indian companies. Tulsi Tanti the visionary behind Suzlon, convinced the world that wind is the energy of future.
- ITC Limited has strengthened their commitment to Green Technologies by introducing ozone treated elemental chlorine free bleaching Technologies for first time in India.
- Tamil Nadu Newsprint and Papers Limited (TNPL) was awarded green business leadership award for evolving clean development projects and wind farm project that helped to generate 230323 carbon emission reductions earning Rs17.40 crores.
- Indusland bank too has joined the list by opening country's first solar powered ATM in India.

if such ethical steps are followed by Business Enterprises, many environmental problems can be reduced. These 'green' thinking Enterprises have proved that environmental consideration are not barriers to profitability but potentials for growth. Such positive and innovative steps have also been undertaken by government, interest Group, Ngo's and self ship groups. They have promptly addressed this issue of environmental ethics at different points of time. Some remedial measures which have been taken or can be taken are:

- Reduction of Vehicular Pollution
- Reduction of benzene content in petrol
- Use of premixed 2T oil in 2 strokes engines
- Use of unleaded petrol
- Ban on old vehicles
- Adoption of CNG as fuel.
- Confirmation to EURO II norms
- promotion of battery-operated vehicles
- Methanol and ethanol to be reviewed as alternative fuels
- Electric vehicles to be encouraged as these emit no toxics.

Solid Waste Management

Problem of solid waste is serve in urban areas because of improper disposal of heterogeneous solid waste. Proper collection, segregation, transport and processing of solid waste can be managed through proper agencies for contract basis.

Renewable Source Of Energy

New and renewable source of energy like small hydro plants, biogas, solar energy, hydrogen energy, tidal energy, geothermal energy should be increasingly only used by industries.

Legislation

Environmental laws and policy can also be instrumental in preventing pollution. Under the Indian constitution article 48 A to Directive Principles of State Policy declares "the state shall Endeavour to protect and improve the environment and to safeguard the forest and wildlife of the country." A similar responsibility is also imposed on every citizen in the form of fundamental duty in article 51(a)(g) to protect and improve natural environment including forest , rivers and wildlife and to have compassion for the living creatures. "In addition, several acts were passed from time to time"

- The factory act 1948.
- The water (prevention and control of pollution) Act 1974
- The air(prevention and control of pollution) Act 1981
- The environmental (protection) Act 1986
- National environment Tribunal Act 1995
- National environmental appellate authority Act 1997

Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)

It is a process in which environmental factors are integrated into project planning and decision-making to achieve ecologically sustainable development. This practice identify environmental risks, reduce conflict by promoting community participating, Minimize hazardous effects and paves the way for the environmentally sound projects. In Rio declaration in 1992 gave emphasis to EIA as significant instrument for undertaking environment integrated projects.

Environmental Audits

It is a method of verifying that environmental regulations, internal policies and good operating practices followed by industries. The industries under environment protection rules 1986 are supposed to submit their environment statement for year to the concerned state pollution control board on 30th September each year. This management tool can prevent wastage and ensure efficiency, safety and health.

Environment Management System

The international organization of standards ISO has published ISO 14000 series of standards with a view to provide organizations world over with the structure for managing environmental impacts of this activities, products and services. It helps to build a "green image" for exporters.

Life cycle Assessment and Environmental Management (LCA)

It is a new environmental management tool to enclose all issues associated with production, use, and disposable and recycling of a given product. It is a process of evaluating the effect that a product has on the environment over the entire lifecycle as it covers all processes i.e. extraction, manufacture, transport, use and reuse recycling etc.

To conclude it can be said that for sustainable development our ethics lie in a conservation of resources and the physical environment. It is only way of ensuring supply for tomorrow generations. Furthermore, we should cut down our consumption and production of those goods depend on non-renewable resources or at least the recycle such resources or search for their sustainable so that we hand over to our successors a world that is not in worse condition than the one we received from our ancestors.

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