

BUDDHIST ENVIRONMENTAL ETHICS: TWO METHODOLOGICAL MODELS FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT*

Dilipkumar Mohanta, *Professor, Department of Philosophy, Calcutta University*
&
Former Vice Chancellor, The Sanskrit College & University;
Former Vice Chancellor, Kalyani University.

Email: dkmphil@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

There is no greater threat today to the security of life on this earth than environmental degradation covering all aspects of Nature ---- plants, animals and human. It is imperative to take interest in future which lies beyond the boundary of our short-sighted outlook and self-interests. Non-western and indigenous cultural approaches to environmental issues are relevant today. Following Buddhist Ethics we can extend love, compassion and non-violence in practice and limit our greed and also we can take interest in protecting the right to happiness of the future generations. In the light of the ethical teachings contained in the texts of Buddhism, I propose two different methodological models namely 'Honey-bee Model' and 'Mother-child Model' for addressing an ideal relation between man and nature. The Buddhist approach to environmental issue is based on the law of Dependent Origination and the theory of Not-Self or Relational Self. I shall also argue that Buddha's teaching integrates all aspects of eco-sphere –individuals and general species— in terms of mutual interdependence, which in a sense an attempt to institutionalize care and welfare ethics beyond human domain reaching animal and plant worlds. This paper is an attempt to address current ecological problems from the moral perspective of Buddhism.