

The Learning Approach: Environmental Education and Ethics

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ABSTRACT

Environmental education is a dynamic process. Such instruction should have the ability to instill in the students a cautious mindset about their entire environment. Its primary function is to provide the right knowledge and experience to solve complex problems of our environment deftly. It is vital that people have healthy bodies and a high quality of life by avoiding harmful effects on their health or harm to the environment as a result of pollution of air, water, and soil, noise, vibration, noxious smells, etc. Environmental education is a science that seeks to gain familiarity with their surroundings and ensures that they have acquired knowledge, skills, values, passions, and passion, which will enable them to act independently and collectively to address current and future environmental challenges. It is the study of the relationship and interactions between natural and human systems. Environmental education should be a comprehensive lifelong education, one that is adaptable to changes in a rapidly evolving world. It should prepare the individual for life by recognizing the major challenges of the modern world, as well as the development of the skills and attributes required to play a vital role in improving life and protecting the environment with due consideration given to ethical principles.

KEYWORDS: ENVIRONMENT, EDUCATION, ETHICS, PRINCIPLES

MEANING OF ENVIRONMENT EDUCATION:

Environmental education (EE) is a discipline that helps individuals familiarize themselves with their surroundings, acquiring the necessary knowledge, skills, values, passions, and motivation to tackle current and future environmental challenges in tandem and cumulatively.

In simpler terms, it is the study of relationships and interactions between natural and human systems.

Environmental education is provided so that people can better understand the world around them and how to take care of it properly so that it becomes a better place. Environmental education is a process that encourages individuals to investigate environmental issues, engage in problem-solving, and take steps to improve the environment. As a result, individuals gain a deeper appreciation of environmental issues and the confidence to make informed and responsible decisions.

Environmental education is a complex field that addresses a variety of topics related to the environment. It even includes aspects of engineering, which means that a person will even begin to grasp how they can play a part in environmental engineering.

Environmental education provides individuals with the confidence necessary to run organizations, comprehend NGO training, develop participatory urban planning strategies, and ensure future market opportunities for environmental businesses.

All of these are not only beneficial to the environment, but they will also be beneficial to the economy as well, so everyone will benefit from the efforts of those who are educating themselves on environmental issues. Ee is taught in schools, communities, and museums, as well as parks, zoos, and museums.

According to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), EE is vital in instilling a natural love for nature in society and raising public awareness of environmental issues. UNESCO stresses the importance of EE in ensuring future global advancements in social quality of life (QOL), including the protection of the environment, the elimination of poverty, minimization of inequality, and the guarantee of sustainable development (UNESCO, 2014a). Environmental education is a two-way system in that the learner is able to provide his findings to the people at the same time as the learner's effectiveness is monitored and disclosed to relevant authorities. Extension specialist or educator is a huge responsibility because he must be an expert in almost all areas because he is supposed to explain and answer questions on various aspects of the environment.

The content and spirit of environmental education is also being revised and enhanced. Environmental education has been developed within the theoretical framework established by the first international conference in Tbilisi (1977) and is now considered to be an awareness of sustainability. This enabled environmental education to address a wide variety of topics and concerns addressed in Agenda 21 and other initiatives that emerged as a result of the Commission on Sustainable Development's meetings (UNESCO 1997). Ee is a complex process that involves not just events but also a holistic approach to community development as a whole. Ee provides people with the skills needed to form partnerships, understand NGO activities, implement participatory urban planning strategies, and ensure future market opportunities for eco-business.

DEFINITION OF ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

“Environmental education is a learning process that increases people’s knowledge and awareness about the environment and associated challenges, develops the necessary skills and expertise to address the challenges, and fosters attitudes, motivations, and commitments to make informed decisions and take responsible action”. (Tbilisi Declaration, 1978).

According to UNESCO, “Environmental education is a way of implementing the goals of environmental protection. It is not a separate branch of science but lifelong interdisciplinary field of study.” It means education towards protection and enhancement of the environment and education as an instrument of development for improving the quality of life of human communities.

FEATURES OF ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION:

1. Imagination and curiosity are boosted

EE is interactive learning that sparks the imagination and opens the imagination. Students are more interested and engaged in learning when ee is integrated into the curriculum, which increases their success in core academic areas.

2. Learning outside the classroom

Not only does EE provide opportunities for experiential learning outside of the classroom, but it also helps students to make connections and apply their knowledge in the real world. Ee helps students understand the interplay of social, ecological, economic, cultural, and political issues.

3. Creative and critical thinking enhance

Students are encouraged to investigate, investigate how and why things happen, and make their own decisions about complex environmental issues, as shown by ee. Ee fosters a new generation of informed consumers, employees, as well as policy and decision makers by developing and enhancing critical and creative thinking skills.

4. Tolerance and understanding are promoted

EE encourages students to investigate a variety of perspectives in order to see the whole picture. It promotes tolerance of different points of view and cultures.

5. State and National learning standard are met for multiple subject

Teachers can combine science, math, language arts, history, and more into one rich lesson or activity while still meeting many state and national learning requirements for many subject areas by incorporating EE principles into the curriculum. Outdoor learning or bringing nature indoors provides an excellent backdrop or context for interdisciplinarity learning.

6. Bio-phobia and nature deficit disorder decline

Bio-phobia and nature deficit disorder are decreasing. EE introduces students to nature and encourages them to explore and play outside, fostering sensitivity, appreciation, and appreciation for the environment. It treats "nature deficit disorder"... and it's fun!

7. Healthy lifestyle are promoted

EE takes students outside and active, and it helps with some of the health issues that plague children today, such as obesity, attention deficit disorders, and depression. Through EE, good nutrition is often promoted, and stress is reduced as a result of more time spent outdoors.

8. Communities are strengthened

EE fosters a sense of place and community connection by means of community involvement. Students who want to learn more or take steps to improve their environment reach out to community experts, sponsors, volunteers, and local authorities to help bring the whole school community together to understand and address environmental issues impacting their neighborhood.

9. Responsible action is taken to protect the environment.

EE helps students understand how their choices and actions impact the environment, develops the knowledge and skills necessary to address complex environmental issues, as well as how we can improve our environment's sustainability. PIt and other ee groups provide students and teachers with grants and other assistance in implementing action plans.

10. Students and teachers are empowered

Active learning, citizenship, and student leadership are all promoted by EE. It empowers youth to express themselves and make a difference at their school and in their communities. Ee helps teachers to develop their own environmental knowledge and teaching skills. I hope these "top ten" benefits will give you the confidence and commitment to incorporate EE into your curriculum!

OBJECTIVE OF ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

Environmental education has broad implications in terms of geography. Through environmental education, the student learns how to apply and use natural resources for human growth and development. Environmental education's primary purpose is to provide students with knowledge of the principles necessary for the conservation and utilization of natural resources for the benefit of mankind. Environmental education provides the necessary knowledge and experience to realize the value of such

important viewpoints. The role of environmental education is vital in the realization of the importance of maintaining a close and mutual relationship between man and nature.

1. To increase the student's awareness of the environment and its various challenges.
2. To assist students in comprehending the relationship between man and the environment.
3. To educate the students about the social norms that promote unity in comparison to environmental conditions.
4. To acquire the necessary skills necessary for the achievement of the objectives of environmental education and educational evaluations.
5. To inculcate the students' curiosity about the solution to environmental problems so that they would be compelled to work on their own problems.
6. To provide opportunities for students to participate in the decision-making process regarding their environment.
7. To develop the ability to use knowledge to achieve the desired goals, to solve social, economic, cultural, and educational challenges by means of organizational, political, cultural, and educational systems.
8. To educate the people about the physical properties of the environment.
9. To educate them about the changes in the environment over the past decade and the consequences of their current actions.
10. To awaken awareness of the natural beauty in order to encourage its use for recreation.

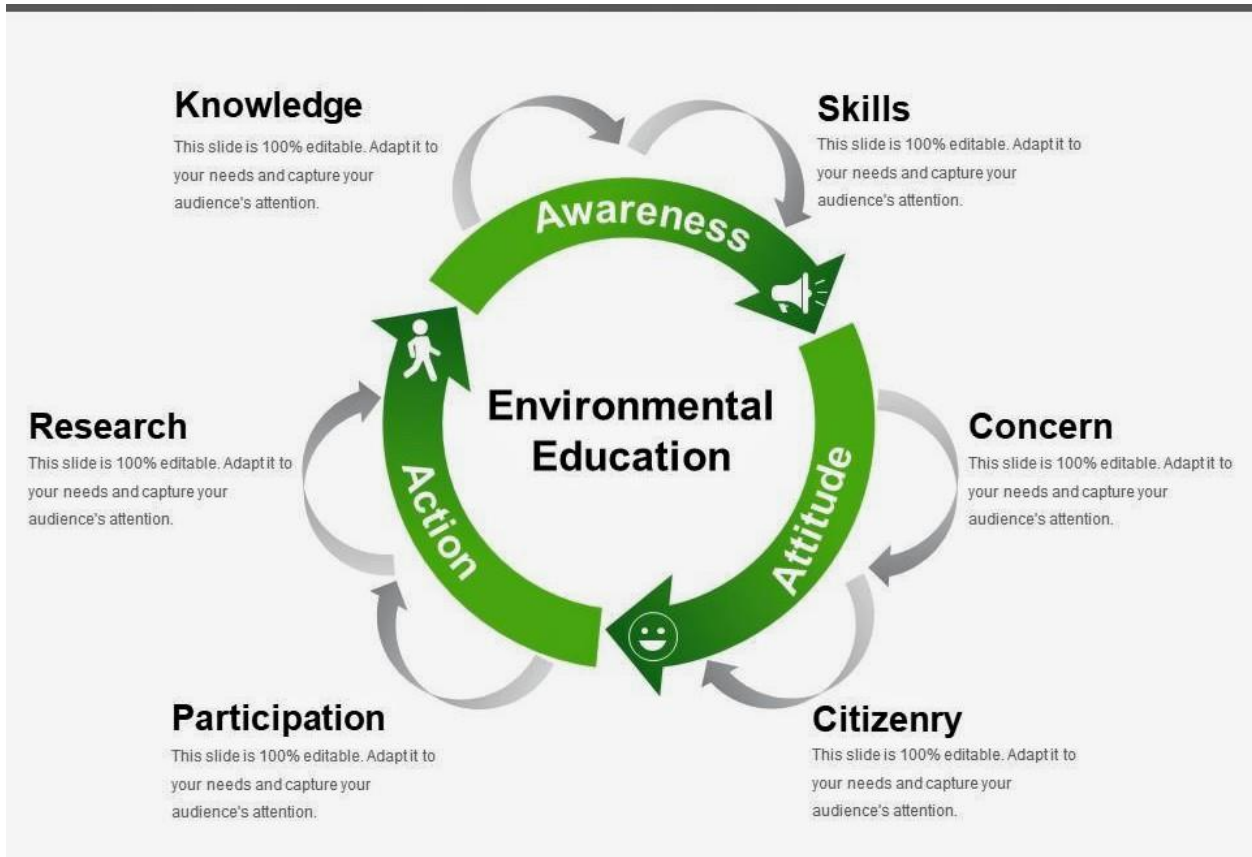
PRINCIPLES OF ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

1. Consider the environment in its entirety, natural and constructed technological and social structures, as well as human and industrial structures.
2. Environmental education is to be a continuous life-saving activity.
3. Environmental education should be interdisciplinary in its scope.
4. Examine major environmental issues from a local, national, and international perspective.
5. Environmental education will focus on current and future environmental challenges.
6. Promote the importance and importance of local, national, and international cooperation in the prevention and resolution of environmental problems.
7. Explicitly address the social aspects of a development and growth strategy.
8. Enhance the student's ability to make informed decisions about their environment and accept responsibility.
9. Help learners to recognize the signs and potential causes of environmental problems.
10. Enhance the learner's ability to master critical thinking and problem solving skills.
11. Use different learning styles and methods for understanding/teaching about and understanding the environment, focusing on first-hand experience.

COMPONENTS OF ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

Environmental education aims to demonstrate the global relationship of economic, social, political, and ecological factors in which decisions and actions by different countries have global consequences. In this context, environmental education should serve as the foundation for a new international order that will guarantee the conservation and improvement of the environment. Environmental education at the root level is intended to help individuals and communities understand the

inherent complexity of the natural and the built environments. In addition, to acquire the knowledge, values, attitudes, and practical skills necessary to act in a responsible and effective manner in anticipating and addressing social problems, as well as in the management of the environment's quality. Therefore, the following are the essential components for fostering environmental awareness:



ENVIRONMENTAL ETHICS:

Environmental ethics is a discipline of study that aims to understand human's moral responsibilities to protect and maintain the environment. It is a branch of ethics that emphasizes the intrinsic value of nature, the interconnection of all living things, and the responsibility of humans to act in accordance with ethical principles.

Environmental ethics is a branch of moral thought that focuses on the relationship between humans and their natural environment. It is a holistic approach to comprehending and evaluating our moral obligations to protect and preserve the environment. Environmental ethics seeks to bring together the needs of humans and the environment, while still acknowledging that both are interdependent and have intrinsic value. Environmental ethics is defined by a variety of aesthetic approaches, including consequentialism, utilitarianism, and virtue ethics. These moral theories provide a framework for recognizing our moral obligations to the environment and how we can best serve to protect it. Environmental ethics draws on the disciplines of philosophy, economics, ecology, and law, providing a holistic approach to understanding and evaluating the moral implications of human activities.

TYPES OF ENVIRONMENTAL ETHICS :

1. **Libertarians Extension:**

A liberal ethic is a branch of environmental science that emphasizes the individual's freedom to do whatever they like with the environment and its resources. This theory also emphasizes that an individual should not impose their own values on others but rather respect others' choices.

2. **Ecological Extension:**

Ecological extension is a branch of environmental science that focuses on preserving the natural environment and its resources in order to maintain the ecosystem's stability and stability. This theory emphasizes the importance of humans working with nature to ensure that it is available to future generations.

3. **Conservation Ethics**

Conservation ethics is a branch of environmental ethics that focuses on preserving natural resources for future generations by ensuring that existing resources are not depleted or damaged beyond repair. This approach encourages individuals to use natural resources wisely and judiciously so that there will be enough for future generations.

IMPORTANCE OF ENVIRONMENTAL ETHICS:

1. For preserving the environment, animals, and habitats, environmental ethics is vital.
2. It promotes sustainable development and encourages people to be more aware of the effect their actions have on the environment.
3. It emphasizes the interconnection between all living things and the need to respect them. It encourages us to think about our place in the world and how we can contribute to the preservation of the natural environment.
4. Environmental ethics promotes healthier interactions with nature by recognizing its intrinsic value, not just its instrumental value.
5. It encourages us to think beyond our immediate needs and consider the long-term consequences of our actions.
6. It teaches us about our environment by advocating for environmentally friendly practices that help protect natural resources.
7. Environmental ethics also promotes better public policies and regulations, which help ensure that our environment is properly cared for.

PRINCIPLES OF ENVIRONMENTAL ETHICS

1. **Respect for nature's intrinsic value:**

Nature should not be treated as a commodity or resource that can be exploited and discarded.

2. **Interdependence of species and ecosystems:**

Humans are dependent on nature and natural systems. We must acknowledge our role in preserving and protecting the environment.

3. **Ecological sustainability:**

Sustainability is a term used to describe how we should use natural resources responsibly and with an eye on preserving ecosystems and species diversity.

4. **Human Responsibilities:**

We are responsible for our own actions and choices, as well as their consequences for the environment.

5. Human Equity:

We must strive for a just world in which the rights and desires of humans, animals, and plants are respected and respected.

6. Precautionary Principles:

Even when scientific evidence is contradictory, we should take precautions to avoid environmental harm.

7. Right to know:

Individuals have the right to access information on environmental issues.

8. Right to participate:

Citizens have the right to participate in environmental decision-making processes.

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN ECOLOGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL ETHICS:

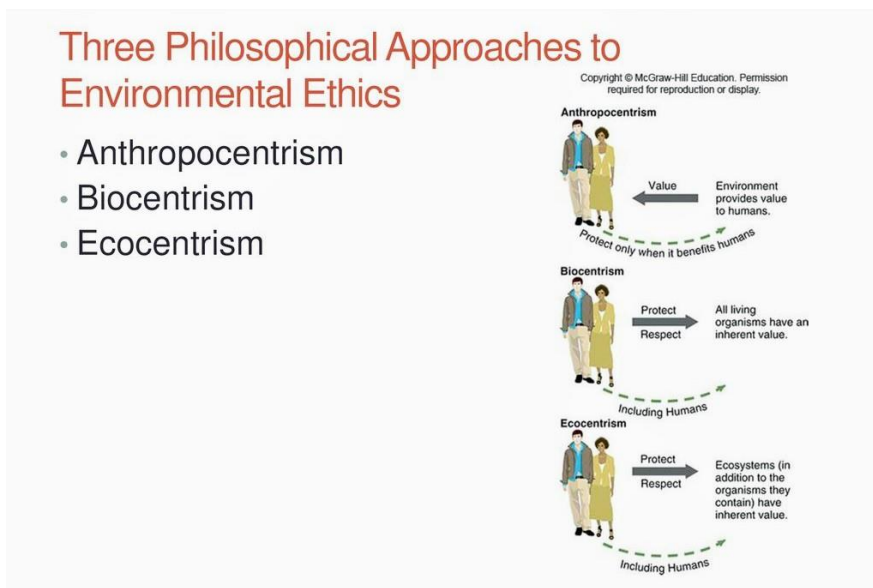
Ecology is the scientific investigation of the interactions between organisms and their environment, while environmental ethics is concerned with how humans should interact with the natural world. Ecology investigates how organisms interact with each other and with their environment. In contrast, environmental ethics investigates how humans should interact with the natural world in order to minimize harm and promote sustainability.

APPROACHES OF ENVIRONMENTAL ETHICS

Approaches to environmental ethics have emerged based on people’s environmental perspectives. These approaches are expanded under three headings:

- Anthropocentric,
- Bio-centric,
- Eco-centric

• ANTHROPOCENTRIC APPROACHES



Anthropocentrism consists of the words “antro” (human) and “centrism” (center) (Oakley, 2007). Thus, etymologically, anthropocentrism means “human-centered.” As such, it refers to the belief or worldview

that humans are at the center of the universe. Anthropocentrism is generally seen as the main cause of today's eco-crisis, overpopulation, and endangered species (Sarkar, 2012).

Anthropocentric ethics argues that only people have moral values (Gansmo Jakobsen, 2017). It emphasizes that the natural environment does not have an intrinsic (non-instrumental, non-derivative) value beyond humans (Kelbessa, 2005). Accordingly, the value of nature is measured by the benefits it provides and the happiness it gives to humans. To increase such benefits and happiness, it is considered legitimate for humans to do everything and utilize nature as they wish (Ozdemir, 1998). As a bias against other life forms, anthropocentrism does not accept that we, humans, are a part of these life forms and that they are a part of us (Drengson & Inoue, 1995).

The argument of mutual respect obligation presupposes a moral community that includes (potentially) all humans (but until recently excluding all non-human organisms) (Traer, 2019). Anthropocentrism regards humans as the most important life form and views other life forms as important only to the extent that they have a desirable effect on humans. Besides, anthropocentric ethics adopts a moral evaluation of nature because degrading or protecting nature can in turn harm or benefit people, respectively. In this understanding, for example, clearing rainforests is considered wrong because it contains potential treatments for human diseases (Kortenkamp & Moore, 2001). The anthropocentric view assumes the environment acts as a repository for raw materials beyond a holistic system; however, it ignores its situation of producing and supporting life and hosting the relations between all elements is not taken into account (Kirkpinar Ozsoy & Cini, 2020).

Anthropocentric people's motivation for protecting the environment is to increase their quality of life and maintain human life; the environment should be protected as long as it is for the benefit of humans. Environmental problems should only be prevented and resolved as they threaten human health. Besides, natural resources need to be used economically so that future generations do not have environmental problems. Anthropocentric attitudes are based on utilitarian philosophy (Erten, 2007; Erten & Aydogdu, 2011).

Examples of anthropocentric approaches include stewardship, enlightened anthropocentrism, weak anthropocentrism, reformist anthropocentrism, and modern anthropocentrism.

• **BIOCENTRIC APPROACHES**

Two closely related terms are commonly used under the non-anthropocentric umbrella: "biocentrism," which recognizes the intrinsic value of all living beings, and "ecocentrism," which emphasizes the intrinsic value of interrelated ecological systems, including humans (Quinn et. al., 2016). A group of non-anthropocentric environmental ethicists suggests that ethics should be expanded to include all living beings (Kelbessa, 2005).

Biocentric approaches expand the boundaries of moral importance to include other members of the biotic community, namely plants and animals. Besides, some philosophers advocate the principle of biocentric egalitarianism, in which humans are not only a part of nature but an equal part of it. Biocentrists also value ecosystems, but they do so on the grounds that protecting ecosystems will allow the protection of plants and animals (Karsli & Kurt, 2019; Thompson, 1998).

Biocentrism is a view contending that all living organisms should be respected (Ergun & Cobanoğlu, 2012; Rolston, 2012). It is sometimes understood as naturalistic or non-anthropocentric ethics. Opponents of anthropocentric views emphasize that the root cause of the ecological crisis and bad

behaviors towards non-human creatures is the tradition of interpreting the world and nature with upon anthropocentric perspective.

In general, biocentrism refers to the ethics of respect for life and focuses on all living beings, including plants, microbes, and animals. In this approach, only humans or superior animals that can suffer are not central to ethics. The key question here is not “Can it suffer?” but “Is it alive?” (Rolston, 2012).

Among the biocentric approaches, respect for life, respect for nature, the Gaia hypothesis, and the animal rights theory

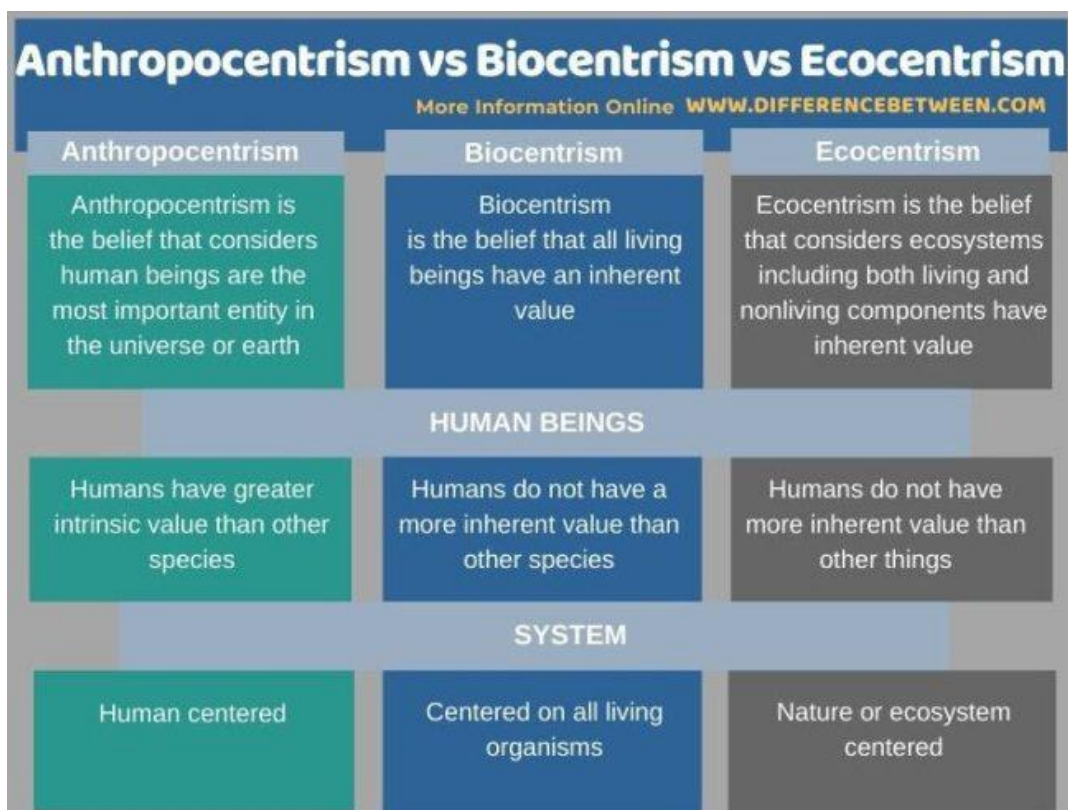
• **ECOCENTRIC APPROACHES**

Many environmental ethics supporters are uncomfortable with the philosophies of Singer and Regan. They do not see the focus on animals much better than the traditional moralists’ obsession with humans. These critics agree that environmental ethics will require better treatment of animals, but such concern for animals stems from greater concern for nature. Yet, Singer and Regan think quite the opposite: their concern for nature stems from their concern for animals (Jamieson, 2008).

Beyond biocentric ones, the transition to ecocentric approaches appeared in important environmental conventions at the end of the twentieth century. Preambles of these conventions utter that nature/species/ecosystems have an intrinsic value (e.g., the 1992 Convention on Biological Diversity, the 1982 World Nature Declaration, the 1979 Bern Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (Wilkinson, 2005).

Land ethic and deep ecology among ecocentric approaches are in this section.

Environmental ethics approaches are examined under anthropocentric, biocentric, and ecocentric approaches. Below is a comparison of these approaches.



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