



NATURE AND MAN: SOME IDEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES

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Abstract:

This paper presents an anthology of debate on nature and man's responsibility for it. Different perspectives are presented which constitute the lenses of man's conceptual and symbolic creations: mythologies, sciences, philosophies, theologies and even language. It is these conceptions which constitute man's experience that form the basis of his dealings with nature. These conceptions represent a dialogue that we all need to engage in about nature as everyone's business – not just that of specialists and intellectuals. This anthology is therefore offered in the belief that the present state of our environment demands that we reexamine our fundamental beliefs which underlie our treatment of the natural world.

Keywords: man, nature, environmental philosophy, Judeo-Christian theology, humanism, anthropocentrism, science and technology

1. Introduction

In dealing with the metaphysical questions about nature and man, the classic work of J. J. Clarke is used as a paradigm of ancient and modern mythologies and philosophies in this critique of the anthropocentric modern world-view of the environment and ecology. The new and old paradigms of human relation to nature characterize the ancient and modern epoch which carries with it sharp differences in spiritual cultural, economic and political interpretations and treatment of the environment. This has come to be known in philosophical thinking as deep ecology and shallow ecology (Clarke, 1993; Matthews, 2014; Naess, 1973).

The ancient period which represents the old paradigm saw and treated nature as something living and sacred. The ancient thinking, values and attitudes to nature support deep ecology. However, this serene attitude to nature changed with the emergence of a new paradigm which became mechanistic, materialist and consumerist in outlook. This paradigm shift led to a new attitude towards nature which 'encouraged masculine

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attitudes of exploitation and dominance in preference to the supposedly more feminine qualities of cooperation and mutual support, (Clarke, 1973:11).

The new paradigm gave rise to the dominant world-view about nature as a machine and human beings as isolated and fundamentally separate from nature, superior to and in some sense in charge of the rest of the natural world competing with each other, and values arising solely from the needs and rights of human beings. It is a world-view that demarcates the mental and the material, on the one hand and the spiritual and the physical, on the other, with the mental and the spiritual realm completely excluded from the realm of nature – a view that is termed dualism.

This anthropocentric view about nature is rejected by some environmental philosophers such as Arne Naess who advocates a return to a conception of nature which rejects the dualism and the narrow materialism of the modern-world view – that which re-integrates man within nature, and nature perceived not as a collection of separate material entities, but as a whole, one which recognizes the interdependence of all natural phenomena, and which fuses together again the spiritual and the material aspects of reality. Nature seen from the lens of the old mechanistic world-view is a collection of dead and valueless entities existing independently of human consciousness, whereas the new paradigm presents a picture in which all things are interconnected, not as a machine but as a living organism (Capra, 1982). This new paradigm is a mode of consciousness that sees the world as a living community of beings who are inseparably connected, and which elevates our collective sense of responsibility for the planet.

This is a renewed quest for environmental philosophy which links contemporary ecological concerns with some of the great metaphysical and mystical traditions of the past – traditions now referred to as the perennial philosophy. It is a new paradigm long relegated as old philosophies and superstitions emanating from cultural traditions of the East Africa, North America and Australia where there had been long held feminine attitude to nature as opposed to the masculine attitude to nature of the old paradigm. Thus, the contemporary environmental movement that arose in the late 19th century was primarily from concerns about the protection of the countryside in Europe and the wilderness in the United States and the health consequences of pollution during the industrial Revolution. Environmental movements and concerns about nature by environmental philosophers, scientists, ecologists, foresters and conservationists would continue to gain momentum as environmental ideas continue to grow in popularity and recognition arising from growing pressure on natural resources from human activities.

2. Some Theses and Antitheses of Environmental Philosophy

There are pessimistic views expressed among some environmental philosophers who argue that the environmental crises that beset man cannot be checked if the destruction of the biosphere continues within the anthropocentric humanism that forms the root of the ecological crisis. Radical environmental philosophers argue that disaster that occurs can be prevented only when people adopt a non-anthropocentric understanding of reality which induces man to live harmoniously with nature (Zimmerman, 1983).

Heidegger agrees that the doctrine of the rights of man justifies human exploitation of non-human beings. According to him, a non-anthropocentric conception of humanity and its relation to nature must go beyond the doctrine of rights. This presupposes a new ethics which calls for a new way of understanding. Being, a new ethics that allows beings manifest themselves not merely as objects of human ends, but as intrinsically important (Ratcliffe, 2002).

The anthropocentric view of nature has both Christian and philosophical root. Aristotle cited in Barnard (2006) expressed his anthropocentric view thus:

"In like manner we may infer that, after the birth of animals, plants exist for their sake and that the other animals exist for the sake of man, the tame for use and food, the wild, if not all, at least the greater part of them for food, and for the provision of clothing and various instruments. Now if nature makes nothing incomplete and nothing in vain, the inference must be that she has made all animals for the sake of man."

In Aristotle's philosophical bent, nature made everything for the sake of man. The Christian thought dominated the medieval period with some influences coming from the classical philosophers, beginning from Plato and the Neo-Platonists and later, in the twelfth century from Aristotle. The main theological interest of these times was the relationship between the creator and His creation. The Christians were preoccupied with the problem of good and evil. It was the concern of the early Christians to prove that there was order and harmony within nature, and that one true God created everything. Medieval Christians positively encouraged the knowledge of nature, and inspired a protective attitude towards nature because it was the sacred art of God. Although the Christian thought supported a positive attitude towards the environment, social and economic changes brought pressure on the environment which led to exploitation.

Science and technology were beginning to make tremendous impact on the environment. Increased knowledge increased man's control over nature which led to inevitable damage to the environment. Barnard (2018:22) citing Carolyn Merchant blames the rise of male dominance and industrialization for the disruption of the harmonious relationship between humans and nature that once existed in the past this way:

"The ancient identity of nature as a nurturing mother links women's history with the history of the environment and ecological change. The female earth was central to the organic cosmology that was undermined by the Scientific Revolution and the rise of a market-oriented culture in early modern Europe. The ecology movement has reawakened interest in the values and concepts associated historically with the premodern organic world... In investigating the roots of our current environmental dilemma and its connection to science, technology, and the economy, we must reexamine the formation of a world view and a science that by reconceptualizing reality as a machine rather than a living organism, sanctioned the domination of both nature and women."

Carolyn Merchant attributes environmental problems to science and technology as well as the growth of capitalism, all three labelled as 'male' activities that favour the oppression of nature and the female.

In the view of Lynn White, environmental problems date from Middle Ages as a result of the doctrines of the Christian church. According to White, Christianity had an attitude towards nature that allowed the introduction of new technology for agriculture. This was in the form of a more sophisticated plough as opposed to the old scratch plough, that demanded a different type of approach to agriculture (White, 1973:25):

"Thus, distribution of the land was based no longer on the needs of the family but, rather, on the capacity of a power machine to till the earth. Man's relation to the soil was profoundly changed. Formerly man had been part of nature; now he was the exploiter of nature."

On this narrative, there is the separation of humans from nature. As exploiters humans are no longer a part of nature. This separation of human from nature is blamed on Christianity because within Christian doctrine there is the assumption of a dualism – man and nature. As White (1973:25) further explains:

"Christianity, in absolute contrast to ancient paganism and Asia's religions... not only established dualism of man and nature but also insisted that it is God's will that man exploit nature for his proper ends..."

In contrast to the Christian doctrine, ancient paganism, according to White, had a different relationship to nature:

"At the level of the common people this worked out in an interesting way. In Antiquity every tree, every spring, every hill had its own genius loci, the guardian spirit. These spirits were accessible to men, but were very unlike men; centaurs, fauns and mermaids show their ambivalence. Before one cut a tree, mined a mountain or dammed a brook, it was important to placate the spirit in charge of that particular situation and to keep it placated. By destroying pagan animism, Christianity made it possible to exploit nature in the mood of indifference to the feeling of natural objects."

In another historic interpretation of humans alienated from nature, Berry (1993:33) illustrates that it was civilization that caused all the environmental problem. He maintains that there was a primordial harmony before civilization and that civilization separated humans from nature even before the ascent of Christianity:

"Our earliest human documents reveal a special sensitivity in human intellectual, emotional and aesthetic responses to the natural world... In its beginnings human society was integrated with the larger earth community composed of all the geological as well as biological and human elements. Just how long this primordial harmony endured we do not

know beyond the last hundred thousand years of the Paleolithic period. Some ten thousand years ago, the Neolithic and then classical civilizations came into being. It must suffice to say that with classical and general literate civilizations of the past five thousand years, the great cultural worlds of the human developed along with vast and powerful social establishments whereby humans became oppressive and even destructive of other life forms, alienation from the natural world increased."

Another blame for the separation of humans from nature has been attributed to science. And Merchant accuses Francis Bacon as the main instigator of the new destructive order (Barnard, 2018:25):

"The fundamental social and intellectual problem of the seventeenth century was the problem of order. The perception of disorder, so important to Baconian doctrine of dominion over nature, was also crucial to the ride of mechanism as a national antidote to the disintegration of the organic cosmos. The new mechanical philosophy of the mid-seventeenth century achieved a reunification of the cosmos, society and the self in terms of a new metaphor of machine."

However, the claim by Berry that there was 'primordial harmony' between humans and nature before civilization cannot be verified for lack of written records. This difficulty is compounded by the distortions and complexities inherent in archaeological findings.

3. The Ancient Dialogue of Environment

Any dialogue on environment and ecology will usually begin from the standpoint of humanism which places humanity within the centre of all the decision that need to be carried out to ensure a better environment. In the view of Clarke (1993) it is evident that the traditional cultures of the East, Africa, North American and Australasia have developed and preserved attitudes towards the natural world from which a lot can be learned to solve the environmental challenges of the present. What is common to them is a feeling for the affinity between the human and the natural worlds, and a sense that all things belong together and work together like the organs of a living thing. Animism, the belief that nature is activated by spiritual forces, is ancient and wider spread, and can be seen in the sacred writings of the Hindus as well as in the oral traditions of the North American Indians. One of the most refined philosophies of nature from the non-European traditions is that of Chinese Taoism. It is a philosophy with many faces, from the popular and the medical to the metaphysical and the mystical. In this philosophy, as in so many other pre-modern traditions, the emphasis is on the need to cooperate with nature, to respect its inherent wisdom and to live in accordance with its ways. The following excerpts depict a sense of the unity of all things:

“There was neither non-existence then; there was neither the realm of space nor the sky which is beyond. What stirred? Where? In whose protection? Was there water, bottomlessly deep?”

“There was neither death nor immortality then. There was no distinguishing sign of night nor of day. That one breathed, windless, by its own impulse. Other than that there was nothing beyond...”

“Desire came upon that one in the beginning; that was the first seed of mind. Poets seeking in their heart with wisdom found the bond of existence in non-existence.”

“Who really knows? Who will here proclaim it? Whence was it produced? Whence is thus creation? The gods came afterwards, with the creation of this universe. Who then knows whence it has arisen?”

“Whence this creation has risen – perhaps it formed itself, or perhaps it did not – the one who looks down on it, in the highest heaven, only he knows – or perhaps he does not know.”

4. The Rig Veda, ‘The Creation Hymn’

*“Homage to the breath of Life, for this whole universe obeys it,
Which has become the Lord of all, on which all things are based.
Homage to thee, O Breath of Life, [homage] to thy crashing;
Homage to thee, the thunder; homage to thee, the lightening;
Homage to thee, O Breath of Life, when thou purest rain.*

*The Breath of Life takes living creatures as its garment,
As father [takes] his beloved son.
The Breath of Life is the Lord of all,
Of whatever breathes and what does not.*

*The Breath of Life is death, is fever;
The Breath of Life the gods revere.
In the highest world hath the Breath of Life
Set the man who speaks the truth.”*

5. The Atharva Veda, ‘To the Breath of Life [prama]’

*“Believe me, my son, an invisible and subtle essence is the Spirit of the whole universe.
That is Reality. That is Atman (Soul) THOU ART THAT.”*

6. The Chandogya Upanishad

“Nature [Tien] operates with constant regularity. It does not exist for the sake of [sage-emperor] Yao, nor does it cease to exist because of [wicked king] Chieh. Respond to it with peace and order, and good fortune will result. Respond to it with disorder and disaster will follow. If the foundation of living [i.e agriculture] are strengthened and are economically used, then Nature cannot bring impoverishment ... if the Way is cultivated without deviation, then Nature cannot cause misfortune.”

7. Hsun – Tzu

From the age of philosophy, emerged an extraordinarily creative tradition of speculation and argument concerning all aspects of human experience from morality and politics to religion and cosmology. Some of this speculation either leaned towards and refined older ideas about the divine order of things and the pervasive presence of soul in nature, or sought to establish completely the ancient myths and to establish a completely rationalistic view of nature. At one end of the pole Plato meditates:

“...Let us therefore state the reason why the framer of this universe of change framed it at all. He was good, and what is good has no particle of envy in it; being therefore without envy he wished all things to be like himself as possible. This is as valid a principle for the origin of the world of change as we shall discover from the wisdom of men, and we should accept it. God, therefore, wishing that all things should be good, and so far as possible nothing be imperfect, and finding the visible universe in a state not of rest but of inharmonious and disorderly motion, reduced it to order from disorder, as he judged that order was in every way better. It is impossible for the best to produce anything but the highest. When he considered, therefore, that in all the realm of visible nature, taking each thing as a whole, nothing without intelligence is to be found that is superior to anything with it, and that intelligence is impossible without soul, in fashioning the universe he planted reason in soul; and soul in body, and so ensured that his work should be by nature highest and best. And so, the most account must say that this world came to be in very truth, through god's providence, a living being with soul and intelligence...”

8. Plato: Timaeus (Clarke, 1993: 32 – 33)

Like Plato, Aristotle, his pupil sees nature in organic rather than purely materialistic terms, and expresses the excellence of human nature and its precedence over other species:

“We may infer that, after the birth of animals, plants exist for their sake, and that the other animals exist for the sake of man, the tame for use and food, the wild, if not all, at least the greater part of them for food, and for the provision of clothing and various instruments.

Now if nature makes nothing incomplete, and nothing in vain, the inference must be that she has made all animals for the sake of man."

9. Aristotle: The Politics (Clarke, 1993:41-42)

The Judaeo-Christian-Islamic traditions see nature in the hands of God.

"Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord from the heavens, praise him in the heights! Praise him, all his angels, praise him, all his host! Praise him, sun and moon, praise him, all you shining stars! Praise him, you highest heavens, and you waters above the heavens! Let them praise the name of the Lord! For he commanded and they were created. And he established them forever and ever; he freed their bounds which cannot be passed. Praise the Lord from the earth, you sea monsters and all deeps, fire and hail, snow and frost, stormy wind fulfilling his command! Mountains and all hills, fruit trees and all cedars! Kings of the earth and all peoples, princes and all rulers of the earth! Young men and maidens together, old men and children! Let them praise the name of the Lord, for his name alone is exalted; his glory is above earth and heaven."

10. Psalm 148

"The judgment of Allah will surely come to pass: do not seek to hurry it on. Glory to Him! Exalted be the above their idols! By His will He sends down the angels with the Spirit to those of His servants whom he chooses, bidding them proclaim: 'There is no god but Me: therefore fear Me. He created the heavens and the earth to manifest the truth. Exalted be He above their idols! He created man from a little germ: yet man openly disputes His judgment. He created the beasts which provide you with warm clothing, food, and other benefits. How pleasant, they look when you bring them home and when you lead them to pasture! They carry your burdens to far-off lands, which you could not otherwise reach except with painful toil. Compassionate is your Lord, and merciful. He has given you horses, mules, and donkeys, which you may ride or use as ornaments; and He has created other things beyond your knowledge. Allah alone can show the right path. Some turn aside from it, but had He pleases, He would have guided you all right. It is He who sends down water from the sky, which provides drink for you and brings forth the crops on which your cattle feed. And thereby He brings up corn and olives, dates and grapes and other fruit. Surely in this there is sign for thinking men."

The world was seen as a machine by the Renaissance thinkers. Under the influence of Plato's theory of Forms, woven into Christian theology, the world was seen as a manifestation of Spirit whose meaning was encoded in the beauty and harmony of nature. It was in effect a kind of magical universe for its signs could not only be read but, since they manifested hidden powers and influences in nature, could be exploited for human purposes.

This underlying assumption of the occult-philosophy flourished in the Renaissance, a philosophy which had its origins in the ancient world and which was beginning to resurface in the European mind through the rediscovery of ancient manuscripts. Astrology, magic, and alchemy all represented a new – or renewed – concept of nature which though often considered by the church to be heretical, still viewed the universe as an essentially spiritual being, and nature as the embodiment of spirit. Thus astrology, widely practiced in the period, was based on the belief that earthly and human events – the microcosm – reflect and are influenced by the motions and dispositions of the heavenly bodies – the macrocosm – and hence that nature is part of a meaningful whole whose activities can be read and, with the appropriate knowledge, used for human purposes.

“...if you force me to say something still more daring, it is [god’s] essence to be pregnant with all things and to make them. As it is impossible for anything to be produced without a maker, so it is impossible for this maker [not] to exist always unless he is always making everything in heaven, in the air, on earth, in the deep, in every part of the universe, in what is and in what is not, for there is nothing in all the cosmos that he is not. Those that are not he holds within him. This is the god who is greater than any name; this is the god invisible and entirely visible. This god who is evident to the eyes may be seen in the mind. He is bodiless and many-bodied; or, rather, he is all-bodied. There is nothing that he is not, for he also is all that is, and that is why he has all names, because they are of one father, and this is why he has no name, because he is father of them all...”

You are everything, and there is nothing else; what is not, you are as well. You are all that has come to be; you are what has not come to be; you are the mind that understands, the father who makes his craftworld, the god who acts, and the god who makes all things.

11. The Hermetic Philosophy (Clarke, 1993: 17-68)

“Man has been called by the ancients a lesser world and indeed the term is well applied. Seeing that if a man is composed of earth, water, air, and fire, this body of earth is similar. While man has within himself bones as a stay and framework for the flesh the world has stones which are the supports of earth. While man has within himself a pool of blood wherein the lungs as he breathes expand and contract, so the body of the earth has its ocean, which also rises and falls every six hours with the breathing of the world, as from the said pool of blood proceed the veins which spread their branches through the human body, as the ocean fills the body of the earth with an infinite number of veins of water... But in all other things man and the earth are very alike.”

12. Leonardo da Vinci: The Notebook (Clarke, 1993:72)

In spite of the overriding sense that beings are integrated into the cosmic harmony, many Renaissance thinkers viewed humanity as having a special, almost divine, status in the order of things, and even went so far beyond Christian orthodoxy as to claim that 'man can do anything that he wills'.

13. The Modern Dialogue of Environment

The mechanistic image of nature as matter in motion became a central philosophical assumption of the leaders of the scientific revolution. And it was in the work of Isaac Newton (1642 – 1717) that the mechanical philosophy received its most powerful and fully articulated expression, providing a theoretical framework and methodology out of which much of modern science has been constructed.

"Hitherto we have explained the phenomena of the heavens and of our sea by the power of gravity, but have not yet assigned the cause of this power. This is certain, that it must proceed from a cause that penetrates to the very centres of the sun and planets, without suffering the least diminution of its force; that operates not according to the quantity of the surfaces of the articles upon which it acts (as mechanical causes used to do), but according to the quantity of the solid matter which they contain, and propagates its virtue on all sides to immense distances, decreasing always as the inverse square of the distances. Gravitation towards the sun is made up out of the gravitations towards the several particles of which the body of the sun is composed; and in receding from the sun decreases accurately as the inverse square of the distances as far as the orbit of Saturn... But hitherto I have not been able to discover the cause of these properties of gravity from phenomena, and I frame no hypotheses; for whatever is not deduced from the phenomena is to be called an hypothesis, and hypotheses, whether metaphysical or physical, whether of occult qualities or mechanical, have no place in experimental philosophy. In this philosophy particular propositions are inferred from the phenomena and afterward rendered general by induction. Thus, it was the impenetrability, the mobility, and the impulsive forces of bodies, and the laws of motion and of gravitation, were discovered. And to us it is enough that gravity does really exist, and acts according to the laws which we have explained and abundantly serves to account for all the motions of the celestial bodies, and of our sea."

14. Newton: Principia Mathematics (Clarke, 1993:93 – 94)

"...In short, Nature is but an immense chain of causes and effects, which unceasingly flow from each other. The motion of particular beings depends on the general motion, which is itself maintained by individual motion. This is strengthened or weakened, accelerated or retarded, simplified or complicated, procreated or destroyed, by a variety of combinations and circumstances, which every moment change the directions, the tendency, the modes of existing, and of acting, of the different beings that receive its impulse..."

15. d'Holbach: The System of Nature (Clarke, 1993:108)

In the following passage, the writer expresses the nostalgic feeling of spontaneity and of approaching nature through direct experience.

"A taste for rural scenes, in the present state of society, appears to be very often an artificial sentiment, rather inspired by poetry and romances, than a real perception of the beauties of nature. But, as it is reckoned a proof of refined taste to praise the calm pleasures which the country affords, the theme is never exhausted. Yet it may be a question, whether this romantic kind of declaration, has much effect on the conduct of those, who leave, for a season, the crowded cities in which they were bred..."

16. Wollstonecraft: 'On poetry and Our Relish for the Beauties of Nature' (Clarke, 1993:116)

*"Nature! We are surrounded and embraced by her: powerless to separate ourselves from her, and powerless to penetrate beyond her.
Without asking, or warning, she snatches us up into her circling dance, and whirls us on until we are tired, and drop from her arms."*

17. Goethe: Aphorisms on Nature (Clarke, 1993:199)

Karl Marx (1818 – 1883), in his writings, showed interest in the world of economics and politics, and not the natural world. Writing with strong romantic overtones, he showed concern for the way in which modern modes of production had estranged man from nature.

"Thus, on the one hand production which is founded on capital creates universal industry – i.e surplus labour, value-producing labour; on the other hand, it creates a system of general exploitation of natural human attributes, a system of general profitability, whose vehicles seem to be just as much science as all the physical and intellectual characteristics. There is nothing which can escape, by its own elevated nature or self-justifying characteristics, from this cycle of social production and exchange. Thus, capital first creates bourgeois society and the universal appropriation of nature and of social relationships themselves by the members of society. Hence the great civilizing influence of capital, its production of a stage of society compared with which all earlier stages appear to be merely local progress and idolatry of nature. Nature becomes for the time simply an object for mankind, purely a matter of utility; it ceases to be recognized as a power in its right; and the theoretical knowledge of its independent laws appears only as a stratagem designed to subdue it to human requirements, whether as the object of consumption or as the means of production. Pursuing this tendency, capital has pushed beyond national boundaries and prejudices, beyond the deification of nature and the inherited, self-sufficient satisfaction of

existing needs confined within well-defined bounds, and the reproduction of the traditional way of life."

18. Marx: Grundrisse (Clarke, 1993:157-158)

Positivism and existentialism were the two strands of philosophical thoughts that continued unresolved into the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

"God orders the universe, according to pantheism [God in everything], by taking into his own life all the currents of feeling in existence. He is the most irresistible of influences precisely because he is himself the most open to influence. In the depths of their hearts all creatures (even those able to 'rebel' against him) defer to God because they sense him as one who alone is adequately moved by what moves them. He alone not only knows but feels (the only adequate knowledge, where feeling is concerned) how they feel, and he finds his own joy in sharing their lives, lived according to their own free decisions, not fully anticipated by any detailed plan of his own. Yet the extent to which they can be permitted to work out their own plan depends on the extent to which they can echo or initiate on their own the divine sensitiveness to the needs and precious freedom of all. In this vision of a deity who is not a supreme autocrat, but a universal agent of 'persuasion' whose 'power is the worship he inspires' (Whitehead), that is, flows from the intrinsic appeal of his infinitely sensitive and tolerant relativity, by which all things are kept moving in orderly togetherness, we may find help in facing our task of today, the task of contributing to the democratic self-ordering of a world whose members not even the supreme orderer reduces to mere subjects with the sole function of obedience."

20. Conclusion

In the dialogue that precedes, four viewpoints are canvassed. These points of view: Judeo – Christian theology, anthropocentrism, science and technology, and humanism are echoed by many environmentalists and philosophers from the medieval period through the 21st century. These viewpoints have dominated arguments – with each being blamed at one point of history or the other for the environmental problems that threaten human kind, and separation of humans from nature. Whatever the claims and assumptions, the present state of the environment calls for environmental stewardship (not as implied by Christian theology) and ethic built on long-term interest as grounds for ethical concern about the environment.

The foregoing analysis has implication for moral obligations that would apply actions affecting future generations of non-human species as well as those affecting future human generations. More importantly, it requires a review of current policies and actions (in particular as it affects sustainable development) that can affect the flourishing of living creatures. The way forward, therefore, is that humanity must engage in continuous debate and consensus building on current actions and policies that are directed at reconciling man with nature.

Conflict of Interest Statement

The author declares no conflicts of interests.

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