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GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL VALUE SYSTEMS: WHICH OPTION TO CHOOSE?

Abstract. *The article dwells upon the two systems of natural and scientific worldviews: technocentrism and ecocentrism. Technocentrism focuses on technology and science as a way to repair any damage done to the environment rather than changing ethical perspectives on environmental issues Ecocentrism, on the other hand, places the ecosystem at the center and stress that we need to limit our natural resource exploitation, so that we can conserve the environment and prevent its destruction. Its prior objective is to investigate the advantages of ecocentrism over technocentrism.*

Keywords: *ecocentrism, sustainable development, technocentrism, anthropocentrism, environmental value system.*

Statement of the problem. At present, environmental degradation has become one of the most complex and controversial problems. Over the years, economists have studied and discussed the relationship between human and economic activity. It is widely believed that the growth of industrialization, the extensive extraction and the maximum possible use of natural resources have caused many environmental problems, such as global warming, air pollution, water pollution, biodiversity reduction, and climate change. All these problems have led not only to environmental degradation but also to serious consequences for human health. Most countries sacrifice with the environment for the sake of economic development and economic wealth. Among the commonly used tactics is increasing manufacturing and industrialization as a way to boost the economy and when the economy is on its feet, the countries would compensate for the environmental damage done. The ways people feel about environmental issues make up the basis for so-called Environmental Value Systems or Environmental philosophies.

Ecocentrism, technocentrism, and anthropocentrism are among them. The question is which of them to choose.

Analysis of recent research and publications. When considering the concepts of Environmental Value Systems (EVSs), we explored the works of a number of modern scholars. S. Papert, T. O’Riordan, A. Hays, S. Phillips, S. Doaa, A. Marshall, Th. Kirchhoff, Ip King-Tak are among them.

Purpose of the research. The aim of the article is to explore the peculiarities of different Environmental Value Systems and identify which of them Ukraine adheres to.

The key findings. An environmental value system is a particular worldview or a philosophy, which shapes the way an individual or group of people perceive and evaluate environmental issues. An EVS, like every system, consists of assemblages of parts and the relationship between them, which together constitute a whole. It has certain inputs (education, cultural influences, and mass media) and outputs (perspectives, decisions on how to act regarding environmental issues). Environmental philosophies influence the decision-making process within societies about how to act on environmental matters.

An ecocentric viewpoint comes first. It integrates social, spiritual and environmental dimensions into a holistic ideal. It puts ecology and nature as central to humanity. An ecocentric viewpoint prioritizes biorights, emphasizes the importance of education and encourages self-restraint in human behaviour. Ecocentrists believe that all natural resources are valuable and essential even if humans do not find them of value; the intrinsic value of all natural resources goes beyond their ability to satisfy humanity’s needs. This is known as the concept of deep ecology, which is the core of ecocentrism. Ecocentrism aims at raising awareness that humans are only abiotic factors that must follow the laws of ecology (Doaa S, 2019). In a sense, ecocentrism has been with humanity since we evolved; it underpins what can be called the «old» sustainability. Many indigenous cultures around the world speak of lore and «law» that reflects an ecocentric view of the world [W.Haydn, T. Bron, K. Helen, 2017].

A technocentric viewpoint argues that technological developments can provide solutions to environmental problems. Technocentrists believe that technology has affected our everyday lives since it is easily accessible and more convenient. Environmental management has also been greatly influenced by technology. Technology has not only provided solutions to environmental problems but also played a crucial role in creating environmental awareness. This means that technology will most likely continue to affect environmentalism in the twenty-first century.

The belief that science and technology are always capable of solving environmental problems is the center of technocentrism (Doaa S, 2019).

An anthropocentric viewpoint follows. It argues that humans must sustainably manage the global system. This might be through the use of taxes, environmental regulation and legislation (H.Kopnina, W. Haydn, T. Bron).

Each of the above philosophies can be implemented through a number of managerial practices. Subsequently, the managers can be fall into deep and soft ecologists, environmental managers, and cornucopians. The scholars characterize them as follows:

Deep ecologists:

- put more value on nature than humanity
- want policies to reduce the impact on the environment

- argue that all species and ecosystems have value and humans have no right to interfere

- call on humans to consume less

Soft ecologists:

- state that all life has inherent value

- believe that resources are limited

- prefer small scale local markets

- deny radical political agenda

Environmental managers:

- see the Earth as a garden that needs tending; and humans have an ethical duty to take care of it

- support sustainable development

- seek to integrate natural and social science, policy making and planning

Technocentrists or Cornucopians:

- believe that the Earth has infinite resources

- argue that through technology any problem can be solved

- state that free-market economy is the best way to manage the planet

Sustainable development has been widely presented as three sectors including the economy, environment, and society. The model is represented as three equal-sized interconnected rings that intends to balance the three sectors together and reconciles conflicts (Giddings, Hopwood, & O'brien, 2002). However, the assumption that these three sectors are separate is one of the major weaknesses of the model as this approach risks dealing with sustainable development issues in a compartmentalized way. This separation underestimates the major connections between the environment, economy, and society and results in trade-offs between them and usually, governments focus more on the economic sector compared to the environmental and social sectors (Giddings, Hopwood, & O'brien, 2002). The concept of sustainability is a contested one that can be described along a continuum from ecocentric to technocentric perspectives.

Homo sapiens has evolved over 3.5 billion years. There is no logical dividing line that could determine where or when intrinsic value began.

Technocentrism and other types originate in modern times. In addition, the failure to recognize that we are part of nature undermines the notion of human superiority.

In practice, EVSs vary greatly depending on cultures and time periods, and they rarely fit simply or perfectly into any classification. You cannot be a pure ecologist, environmental manager or a cornucopian. Nevertheless, let us make attempt to identify Ukraine's EVS through the latest Ukrainian Environmental trends supporting them by certain governmental initiatives.

Trend one. Ukrainian Ecocentrism is being implemented through:

- the moratorium on forest exports;

- the EMBLAS (Environmental Monitoring in the Black Sea) project.

Trend two. Ukrainian Anthropocentrism is being implemented through:

- the use of economic instruments for environmental objectives;

- the preference to Environmental managers or Cornucopians in institutions.

Trend three. Ukrainian Technocentrism can be illustrated by the following initiatives:

- the Ministry of digital transformation launched «Country in a smartphone» project in Feb. 2020 (mission: providing business, educational, parenthood services online, attracting investments, support Ukraine-based innovation projects etc.);

- Info Com Tech sector has become the 3rd largest export service industry in Ukraine, amounting to more than 20% of all Ukraine service exports (4,5B). CAGR = 26%; 4000+ tech companies operating on the market; the tech talent pool consists of 200,000+it specialists.

As you may notice, Ukraine has entered the trend of technocentrism and is likely to strengthen it with digital transformation in the near future.

Why ecocentrism is an essential solution for Ukraine? In ethical norms, ecocentrism, through its recognition of humanity's duties towards nature, is central to solving our unprecedented environmental crisis. Its importance is for multiple reasons: First, in ethical terms, ecocentrism expands the moral community from being just about ourselves. It means we are not concerned only with humanity; we extend respect and care to all life, and indeed to terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems themselves. Ecocentric care for life has been an important theme for many individuals and some societies for millennia. At a societal level, we must translate this into building a regenerative economy. It's only with this mindset that we will be willing to take the actions necessary to prevent consequences such as further biodiversity loss, ecosystem collapse, unpredictable severe weather events, rising sea levels, epidemics and the displacement of millions of people.

Conclusion. Humanity's perception of environmental resources focuses on the use of gifts that the environment can offer, without due regard to the consequences of this «utilitarian» approach. While ecocentric ecologists claim that all natural resources are conserved thanks to internal values, technocentrists advocate that technological tools and achievements can be used to solve all environmental problems for the common good of mankind.

Despite the positions taken by both philosophies, it is appropriate to understand that environmental ideologies, such as ecocentrism and technocentrism, alone cannot solve a number of environmental problems that are common in the modern world. The only thing that can be done is to synchronize it with environmental management in order to ensure sustainable development. This implies that environmental protection in the 21st century should coordinate both ecocentric and technocentric perspectives, highlighting the positive aspects in both of them for the general life support of the Earth. Therefore, humanity must use technological tools in such a way that the negative impact on natural resources is minimized.

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