

Enviroprudence: Ancient Indian Perspectives in International Context

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ABSTRACT

The modern concept of environmental law was developed as an umbrella to encompass a variety of related concerns, but the concerns and related conflicts are threaded through history like the underside of a tapestry, sometimes not visible, but always a part of the fabric of life. However, environmental concerns have shifted over time and vary by location. The historical perspective of any society shows that protection and preservation of the nature has been fundamental to the cultural and religious ethos. India, being rich in its culture and heritage have a golden root that inherited the values like tolerance, non-violence, equity, and compassion for animate objects, apart from this, nature is the common heritage of human beings.

In this context, this paper conducts a comparative study on how the current International Environmental principles that we have derived from different treaties, conventions, summits etc were already germinated in ancient Indian theories and philosophies. The Indian enviro-prudence had its own proper scientific basis, and the very fact that International Environmental principles have a reflection of the same. The Indian theories were derived from different ancient sources like Upanishads, Vedas, Epics etc.

This paper, further, includes an analysis of the ancient Indian era and Modern era by keeping the view of environmental principles. It also focuses on harmonious relationship and sustenance between man and environment, highlighting the idea of sustainability and its relevance. Moreover, it explores the concept of welfare of all that can be understood by the idea of “**Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam**” which means that the world is one family and hence we can derive from it that we need to work collectively and responsibly to curb the environmental challenges.

INTRODUCTION

“Mother Earth, may whatever I dig from you grow back again quickly, and may we not injure you by our labour.” —Atharva Veda

Environmentalism refers to a social movement and associated body of thought that expresses concern for the state of the natural environment and seeks to limit the impact of human activities on the environment. Environmentalism has grown out of concerns that the natural environment and human health are adversely affected by the rapid growth of urbanization, industrialization, population, and increased consumption in the modern era. These processes are associated with loss of natural habitats and endangerment of species, land degradation, natural resource depletion, and pollution of air, land, and water due to waste products. In this context, the term ‘enviro-prudence’ can be understood as a broad philosophy, ideology and social movement regarding concerns for environmental protection and improvement of the health of the environment, particularly as the measure for this health seeks to incorporate the concerns of non-human elements. In other words, it is the wisdom and judiciousness that encompasses theories about the nature and causes of environmental problems, moral views about our relation to nature, and attempts to define and bring about an environmentally sound society.¹

Environmental concerns have shifted over time and vary by location, however, deeply rooted in the history and philosophical thoughts of ancient India. The historical perspective of any society shows that protection and

¹ J. Thompson, Environmentalism: Philosophical Aspects, International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences, 2001, ed. Neil J. Smelser and Paul B. Baltes

preservation of the nature has been fundamental to the cultural and religious ethos. Almost all ancient writings had adored nature, believing that different forms of nature radiate the spirit of God. They are the great supporter and promoter of environmentalism and denoted various concepts of enviro-prudence that are reiterated by contemporary principles of environmental law.

India being rich in its culture and heritage, inherited the values like tolerance, non-violence, equity, and compassion for animate objects, apart from this, nature is the common heritage of human beings. Deep concern regarding environment could be seen in Vedas, Puranas, Upanishads and sacred texts. In ancient Indian literature earth is honoured as mother. According to Atharvaveda, earth is to be respected and protected like a mother “*bhoomi mata putroham prithivya*”². In many parts of India, communities have inherited the rich tradition of love and reverence for nature through the ages. Religious preaching’s, traditions and customs played a prominent role in this reference. To preserve and protect nature human being must make sincere efforts. The core theme of ancient literature is harmonious relationship and sustenance of relationship between man and environment.

INTERNATIONAL CONTEXT AND PRINCIPLES OF INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL LAW

Principles and concepts embody a common ground in international environmental law; and they both reflect the past growth of international environmental law and affect its future evolution. Principles and concepts play important roles in international environmental law. They can indicate the essential characteristics of international environmental law and its institutions, provide guidance in interpreting legal norms. Principles and concepts also appear in national Constitutions and laws; and they are referred to in, and influence, international and national jurisprudence. Today, almost all major binding and non-legally binding international environmental instruments contain or refer to principles or concepts and are engines in the evolving environmental law. The development of environmental law during the past three decades has led to the emergence of an increasing number of concepts, principles and norms.

Of particular importance are the principles established at two important United Nations conferences, the 1972 Conference on the Human Environment (“Stockholm Conference”) and the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (“UNCED”) in Rio de Janeiro. Both of these conferences produced declarations of principles (the “1972 Stockholm Declaration” and the “1992 Rio Declaration”, respectively), which were adopted by the United Nations General Assembly. Together with the hundreds of international agreements that exist relating to protecting the environment (including human health), the principles in the 1972 Stockholm Declaration and 1992 Rio Declaration are widely regarded as the underpinnings of international environmental law.

Major Principles of International Environmental Law are:

1. Sustainable Development, Integration and Interdependence
2. Inter-Generational and Intra-Generational Equity
3. Responsibility for Transboundary Harm
4. Transparency, Public Participation and Access to Information and Remedies
5. Cooperation, and Common but Differentiated Responsibilities
6. Precaution
7. Prevention
8. Polluter Pays Principle
9. Access and Benefit Sharing regarding Natural Resources
10. Common Heritage and Common Concern of Humankind
11. Good Governance

Sustainable Development, Integration and Interdependence:

Brundtland Commission on Environment and Development, which stated in its 1987 Report, Our Common Future, that sustainable development is “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.” Principle 4 of the Rio Declaration provides: “In order to achieve sustainable development, environmental protection shall constitute an integral part of the development process and cannot be considered in isolation from it.” Principle 25 states that “Peace, development and environmental

² Atharva. 12-1-12

protection are interdependent and indivisible.” Paragraph 5 of the 2002 Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development confirms this, by stating that “we assume a collective responsibility to advance and strengthen the interdependent and mutually reinforcing pillars of sustainable development (economic development, social development and environmental protection) at the local, national, regional and global levels.” The concepts of integration and interdependence in international environmental law are wholly consistent with the nature of the biosphere, i.e. the concentric layers of air, water and land on which life on earth depends. Scientists increasingly understand the fundamental interdependence of the various elements of the biosphere, how changes in one aspect can affect others, and the essential roles that nature plays with respect to human activities and existence.

Inter-Generational and Intra-Generational Equity:

Equity means any country, should not face disadvantages in dealing with environmental hazards, disasters, or pollution. Ideally, no one should need extreme wealth or political connections to protect the well-being of their families and communities. Equity is central to the attainment of sustainable development. Equity includes both “inter-generational equity” i.e. the right of future generations to enjoy a fair level of the common patrimony and “intra generational equity” i.e. the right of all people within the current generation to fair access to the current generation’s entitlement to the Earth’s natural resources. Principle 3 of the 1992 Rio Declaration states that “The right to development must be fulfilled so as to equitably meet developmental and environmental needs of present and future generations”

Responsibility for Transboundary Harm:

The International Court of Justice (“ICJ”) recognized in an advisory opinion³ that the transboundary harm is “the existence of the general obligation of states to ensure that activities within their jurisdiction and control respect the environment of other states or of areas beyond national control is now part of the corpus of international law relating to the environment.” This means that states are responsible not only for their own activities, but also with respect to all public and private activities within their jurisdiction or control that could harm the environment of other states or areas outside the limits of their jurisdiction. The responsibility for damage to the environment exists not only with respect to the environment of other states, but also of areas beyond the limits of national jurisdiction, such as the high seas and the airspace above them, the deep seabed, outer space, the Moon and other celestial bodies, and Antarctica.

Transparency, Public Participation and Access to Information and Remedies:

Public participation and access to information are recognized in Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration “Environmental issues are best handled with the participation of all concerned citizens, at the relevant level. At the national level, each individual shall have appropriate access to information concerning the environment that is held by public authorities, including information on hazardous materials and activities in their communities, and the opportunity to participate in decision-making processes. States shall facilitate and encourage public awareness and participation by making information widely available. Effective access to judicial and administrative proceedings, including redress and remedy, shall be provided.” According to chapter 23 of Agenda 21, one of the fundamental prerequisites for the achievement of sustainable development is broad public participation in decision-making. The empowerment of people in the context of sustainable development also requires access to effective judicial and administrative proceedings.

Cooperation, and Common but Differentiated Responsibilities:

Principle 7 of Rio Declaration can be divided into two parts: (1) the duty to cooperate in a spirit of global partnership; and (2) common but differentiated responsibilities - “States shall cooperate in a spirit of global partnership to conserve, protect and restore the health and integrity of the Earth’s ecosystem. In view of the different contributions to global environmental degradation, States have common but differentiated responsibilities. The developed countries acknowledge the responsibility that they bear in the international pursuit of sustainable development in view of the pressures their societies place on the global environment and of the technologies and financial resources they command.” According to the concept of common but differentiated responsibilities, developed countries bear a special burden of responsibility in reducing and eliminating unsustainable patterns of production and consumption and in contributing to capacity-building in developing countries.

³ Legality of the Threat or Use of Nuclear Weapons, Advisory Opinion, ICJ Reports, pp. 241-42, 1996

Precaution:

Probably the most widely accepted articulation of precautionary principle is Principle 15 of the Rio Declaration - "In order to protect the environment, the precautionary approach shall be widely applied by States according to their capabilities. Where there are threats of serious or irreversible damage, lack of full scientific certainty shall not be used as a reason for postponing cost-effective measures to prevent environmental degradation." The exercise of precaution with respect to risk management can take many forms, including most commonly taking pollution-prevention actions or placing the burden of proof safety on the person or persons carrying out or intending to carry out an activity that may cause harm, including using or importing a drug or other potentially dangerous substance. Another precautionary method is to provide additional margins of safety, beyond those that are directly verifiable by existing scientific information, for vulnerable groups such as children.

Prevention:

Experience and scientific expertise demonstrate that prevention of environmental harm should be the "Golden Rule" for the environment, for both ecological and economic reasons. One obligation that flows from the concept of prevention is prior assessment of potentially harmful activities. In fact, the objective of most international environmental instruments is to prevent environmental harm, whether they concern pollution of the sea, inland waters, the atmosphere, soil, or the protection of human life or living resources. The concept of prevention is complex, owing to the number and diversity of the legal instruments in which it occurs. It can perhaps better be considered an overarching aim that gives rise to a multitude of legal mechanisms, including prior assessment of environmental harm, licensing or authorization that set out the conditions for operation and the consequences for violation of the conditions, as well as the adoption of strategies and policies. Emission limits and other product or process standards, the use of best available techniques and similar techniques can all be seen as applications of the concept of prevention.

Polluter Pays Principle:

Principle 16 on internalisation of costs includes what has become known as the "Polluter Pays Principle". According to it, the environmental costs of economic activities, including the cost of preventing potential harm, should be internalized rather than imposed upon society at large. "National authorities should endeavour to promote the internalization of environmental costs and the use of economic instruments, taking into account the approach that the polluter should, in principle, bear the cost of pollution, with due regard to the public interest and without distorting international trade and investment."

Access and Benefit Sharing regarding Natural Resources:

Principle 22 of the Rio Declaration provides: "Indigenous people and their communities and other local communities have a vital role in environmental management and development because of their knowledge and traditional practices. States should recognise and duly support their identity, culture and interests and enable their effective participation in the achievement of sustainable development." As a practical matter, the knowledge of indigenous and other local communities, their participation in decision-making and their involvement in management is often crucial for the protection of local ecosystems, for sound natural resource management, and for the broader effort to achieve sustainable development taking into account their traditional knowledge and cultural environment.

Common Heritage and Common Concern of Humankind:

The protection, preservation and enhancement of the natural environment, particularly the proper management of the climate system, biological diversity and fauna and flora of the Earth, are generally recognized as the common concern of humankind. The resources of outer space and celestial bodies and of the sea-bed, ocean floor and subsoil thereof beyond the limits of national jurisdiction are generally recognized as the common heritage of humankind. The concepts of "common heritage of humankind" and "common concern of humankind" reflect the growing awareness of the interdependence of the biosphere and the environmental problems besetting it, as well as of the global nature of many environmental problems and the critical importance of those problems.

Good Governance:

The concept implies, that states and international organizations should: (a) adopt democratic and transparent decision-making procedures and financial accountability; (b) take effective measures to combat official or other corruption; (c) respect due process in their procedures and observe the rule of law more generally; (d) protect human rights; and (e) conduct public procurement in a transparent, non-corrupt manner. Good governance requires

full respect for the principles of the 1992 Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, including the full participation of women in all levels of decision making. Achieving good governance is essential to the progressive development, codification and implementation of international and domestic law relating to sustainable development.

ANCIENT INDIAN ENVIROPRUDENCE

The ancient Indian literature comprising of Mandukya Upanishad, suggests nothing is outside man, that there is no separate entity. The Isavasya Upanishad tells there is no separation between man and other beings in the Universe. The ancient Indian philosophy is engaged with theme focused on man's spiritual development, macro & micro understanding of universe and focus on self and spirituality. But spirituality could not be obtained in isolation so Hinduism focused on interconnectivity.

The diverse theologies of Hinduism suggest that:

- **Ecological Awareness:** Man and environment work together.
- **Attribute of Divinity:** The earth can be seen as a manifestation of the goddess, and must be treated with respect.
- **Interconnectivity:** The five elements -- space, air, fire, water and earth -- are the foundation of an interconnected web of life. Our treatment of nature directly affects our karma.
- **Acknowledgment of Duty:** Dharma -- often translated as "duty" -- can be reinterpreted to include our responsibility to care for the earth.
- **Sustainability:** Simple living is a model for the development of sustainable economies.
- **The Notion of the Welfare of All Beings:** *The Sarva Bhuta Hita*

Ecological Awareness:

The idea that man and environment work together has been talked earlier in Taittiriya Upanishad and that there is no conflict between man, environment and forests. (I – I – 1)

By accepting the divinity in all beings, living and non-living, Indian thought and philosophy view the universe as a family or, in Sanskrit, '*Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam*'. Thus, it can be said that ancient Indians were very much aware about the ecology and sustainability. It is clear that the most ancient texts demonstrate through the praise of the deities an ecological awareness and great respect for the natural world. There are many specific teachings on environmental matters contained in all these writings and ecological activists have drawn much inspiration from the text. A few examples are:

- "Do not cut trees, because they remove pollution." (*Rig Veda*, 6:48:17) Part, Chapter, verse
- "Do not disturb the sky and do not pollute the atmosphere." (*Yajur Veda*, 5:43)
- Destruction of forests is taken as destruction of the state, and reforestation an act of rebuilding the state and advancing its welfare. Protection of animals is considered a sacred duty. (*Charak Sanhita*)

Atharva Veda declares that, the land flourished with tree and vegetation is capable of nourishing the human beings of whole world⁴. The whole Aranyayani Sukta (10.146) of Rigveda is indicative of this fact. The sukta directs not to commit violence unnecessarily towards innocent creatures by giving 'aranya' or forest the divine character and expressing reverence towards it⁵. Vedic Sages were fully aware of the fact that ecological balance could be maintained only with the harmonious co-existence of human beings, animals, birds etc.⁶ Animals and birds like fox, eagle, vultures, crow, pig etc. protect air and water from being polluted by eating dead bodies and contaminated substances. Rigveda directs towards the conservation of trees and its more and more plantation. Atharva Veda directs various trees and medicinal plants which are anti pollutant like peepal, banyan, neem, deodar, pine tree, wild fig. etc.⁷ Thus, it can be said that ancient Indians were very much aware about the ecology and sustainability. The most ancient texts demonstrate through the praise of the deities of nature and great respect for the natural world. This concept is very much similar to Morden days principles of Integration and

⁴ Atharva Veda, 12-1-27

⁵ Rigveda, 10-146-5

⁶ Rigveda, 6-48-17

⁷ Dr. Ritu Shukla, Environmental Management in Ancient Ages, IJSRST, Volume 2 (6), 2016

Interdependence, Precaution, and Prevention Principle.

The concepts of integration and interdependence in international environmental law are wholly consistent with the nature of the biosphere, i.e. the concentric layers of air, water and land on which life on earth depends.

Attribute of Divinity:

In ancient Indian literature, natural energies, activities and aspects are glorified and personified as deities. Different attributes are assigned to deities fit in their natural forms and activities. Hymns and prayers are tributes to natural elements like air, water, earth, fire, sun, dawn, rain, etc. Hinduism contains numerous references to the worship of the divine in nature in the Vedas, Upaniṣads, Purāṇas, Sūtras, Smṛtis and other sacred texts. Sanskrit mantras (hymns) are recited to admire rivers, mountains, trees, animals, and the earth.

An important feature of the Hindu worldview is that the supreme deity resides in all things. This divinity is present in all things for as Sri Krishnan says in the *Bhagavad-Gita*:

“On me the Universe is strung

Like clustered pearls upon a thread

In water I am the flavour

In sun and moon the light”⁸

The Rig Veda reveres Earth and Heaven as the spiritual cosmic entities and not mere the physical objects, thus prohibited indiscriminate abuse of Earth and its resources⁹. The way of life incorporated worship of the Earth and its resources. Further, materialistic aspect in the life was missing, the economic activities were the other side of the life with the spiritual paradigm, displaying life as combining of spiritual and materialistic elements. This view of the relationship between God and creation inspires people to maintain a harmonious relationship between human beings and nature. We can compare this with the principles of Common heritage and common concern of humankind and Public trust doctrine.

Interconnectivity:

It is twofold concept. Firstly, the five elements of life (Universe) -- space, air, fire, water and earth -- are the foundation of an interconnected web of life. The idea dealt on life and aspects of life of man. It specified that man should restrict his desires so that the sustenance of both man, his needs and environment can be made possible together, and that there may not arise conflict between realities. The interconnectivity between man and environment and earth has been put forth in the Taittiriya Upanishad that from the earth herbs are born resulting food and thus man from herbs.¹⁰

Secondly, the ‘Karma’ and re-incarnation theory. According to this, every action performed creates its own chain of reactions and events, some of which may take a long time to surface. And environmental pollution is an example of the karma of those who believe that they could continue polluting the environment with impunity and regardless of the consequences for future generations. Once karma begins, it continues without a break. Regardless of whether the person is dead, his or her karma will survive into their next birth.

Within that cosmic view there is also a view of the interconnectedness of all things. The nexus between things past, present and future is emphasised as is the causal relationship between them. All of this flows from the concept that God pervades all things. Since the divine presence is everywhere all things have an integral connection with all others. It follows that past, present and future are one organic whole just as all of humanity is one organic whole. This entire concept of Interconnectivity is representation of Inter-generational and intra-generational equity and Polluter Pays Principle.

Acknowledgment of Duty:

Dharma -- often translated as "duty" -- can be reinterpreted to include our responsibility to care for the earth. Ancient literature regarded by its adherents as *Sanatana Dharma*, or the Eternal Truth, contains perhaps the most ancient religious scripture known to the world. These texts contain the theology, philosophy and guidance for daily life that form the basis of the religion. It is rightly said, “Wealth and life are preserved by men for enjoyment. But what avail a man to have wealth and life who has not protected the land?”¹¹

Hindu literature is very strong on the duties of rulers in relation to the environment. In fact, the titles associated

⁸ *Bhagavad-Gita* 7-7

⁹ Rig Veda :VI-51-8, www.vidyavikshah.org/THERIGVEDA.pdf

¹⁰ Taittiriya Upanishad, II-i-1

¹¹ Sukra Niti Sara, 23-4-5

with kingship reflect this very strongly. Among these are descriptions such as Bhupalana (protector of the earth), Bupala (earth guardian), Bhubharata (husband of the earth). Following examples can be taken into consideration. *"We invoke all supporting Earth on which trees, lords of forests, stand ever firm."* (Atharva Veda 12-1-27)

"It brings great sin if fire is not offered purifying material(havan); if trees are cut down on auspicious days , if human waste , spit and cough etc. are dropped in water." (Shanti Parva)

This Acknowledgment of Duty is manifestation of Cooperation, and common but differentiated responsibilities and of good governance.

Sustainability:

Ancient Indian texts like *Arthashastra, Sathapatha Bhramanas, Vedas, Manusmrti, Brhat-Samhita, Ramayana, Mahabharata, Rajtarangini* reflected the concepts of forest ecology and conservation in a sustainable manner.

It is not the case that the life in ancient times in society of India was devoid of economic activities and development was absent, it was not the case the man's capability to economic progress had been unacknowledged. The ancient literature reflects life on Earth harmonious balanced between development and conservation of the "green" with spiritual element. As the life took a leap from the Vedic to Upanishad to Arthashastra time the conservation acknowledging development and environment in terms of public policy.

Ancient Indian philosophy with its deep notions of trusteeship of earth resources and its reverence for nature as a sustainer of humanity had encapsulated within it the modern notion of sustainable development. The assets of nature are there for humans to use for their sustenance and development. But the assets of nature are held in trust.

"Resources are given to mankind for their living. Knowledge (Isha) of using them is necessary." – The first stanza of Isha Upanishad

Trusteeship of resources is based on the philosophy that the wealth of nature provided by God is provided for humanity in general and not for this generation or that. The long term vision of Hinduism reaches through to thousands of generations and all eternity. It is totally incompatible with this notion that any one generation has the right to diminish or extinguish the resources that nature provides. Indeed this would almost amount to sacrilege and also to theft from future generations of their rightful inheritance.

In the "Mundakya Upanishad", there is merging of 'One' with all the consciousness, rather creating different realities and focus on non – duality. The understanding is sought to limit one's desires and to surrender the understanding of the world rather than senses or its desires¹². Hence, if there is no a different reality or different nature of rights in the form of rights of life and need to develop, thus not requires the need to balance two of them and thus free from development and sacrifice of the "green" or sacrifice of development to sustain environment. The "Katha Upanishad", argues on curtailing of all longings. The Katha Upanishad believes physical and spiritual refinement through aparigraha signifying non possessiveness, greed and non-acquisitiveness. The Mundakya Upanishad argues on the merger of the One with all the other entities and rejoining with the Brahman. The Upanishad premised on the importance to be given to the spiritual rather than material, fulfillment rather than greed.¹³ This is clear reflection of Morden days Sustainable development principle and Access and benefit sharing regarding natural resources.

The Notion of the Welfare of All Beings:

The highest ethical standard that Hindus ought to apply, according to their *dharma*, is the concept of *Sarva Bhuta Hita*. The tradition requires that the common good takes precedence over private advantage. That includes protection of the environment, the support of the poor and needy, the oppressed, the needs of children and those who are yet to be born and the welfare of other living beings.

"Don't destroy forest with Tigers and don't make forest devoid of tigers. Forests can't be saved without tigers and tigers can't live without forests because forests protect tigers and tigers protect forests." (Virat Parva 5.45-46)

People, in ancient India practiced a sacred ecology ascribing merit to forestry, irrigation and horticulture. Even *Charaka*, the atheist philosopher of ancient India, who totally rejected Vedas, the Hindu scriptures, considered the principles of Vayu (air) Bhumi (earth), Jala (water), Agni (fire) as important factors in regulating the lives of humans, animals and plants. This Hindu worldview of ancient Vedic times became formalized into the Samkhya system of philosophy that promoted ecology-care in Hindu attitude. The conception of the Welfare of All Beings

¹² II-ii-7 Katha Upanishad

¹³ <http://shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in/bitstream/10603/145973/12/m.chapter-v%20evolution%20of%20the%20law%20relating%20to%20environmental%20p.pdf>

can be seen in the Common heritage and common concern of humankind, Transparency, public participation and access to information and remedies.

COMPARATIVE TABLE

Following observation may be taken into consideration to understand further that how the current International Environmental principles that we have derived from different treaties, conventions, summits etc were already germinated in ancient Indian theories and philosophies:

S. No.	Ancient Indian Concepts	Principles of International Environmental Law
1	Ecological Awareness	Integration and Interdependence, Precaution, and Prevention Principle
2	Attribute of Divinity	Common heritage and common concern of humankind, Public trust doctrine
3	Interconnectivity	Inter-generational and intra-generational equity, Polluter Pays Principle
4	Acknowledgment of Duty	Cooperation, and common but differentiated responsibilities, Good governance
5	Sustainability	Sustainable development, Access and benefit sharing regarding natural resources,
6	The Notion of the Welfare of All Beings	Common heritage and common concern of humankind, Transparency, public participation and access to information and remedies

CONCLUSION

The significance of environment and environment protection are not new to India. It is traced to around 1500 B.C. Not only Vedas, Puranas, Upanishads; the principles of environment protection are also found in Arthashastra written by Kautilya. The Arthashastra premises on the duties of king as the protection of territory¹⁴, the role of government and governance and its effect on life of the people. It contains various other subjects on the urban planning and urbanization based on population size and resources¹⁵ and use of land classified for settlement for forests for elephant forests for wasteland.¹⁶ In the time of the Arthashastra, Kautilya directed the King to establish forests, forest produce, establishing factories outside forests and rights of forests dwellers to shelter and livelihood¹⁷.

Further, during the period of Ashoka the 5th pillar edict lays down that killing different species of animals and birds which are harmless, which are of utility and are not eaten. Those animals which are with younger ones and are giving milk should not be killed and during fast days and full moon days deforestation must be prohibited. The forests maintain ecological balance; they are reserve of food, and to sustain cultivation on hilly areas and products of medicinal plants.

Thus, it is evident that Vedic Sages and people of Ancient ages are very much concerned and aware of environmental protection. They managed to conserve it by worshipping each and every element of nature and showing reverence towards it. They laid much stress towards the use of natural disinfectants as compared to chemicals. They regulated the human behaviour through dharma and stressed the righteous use of natural elements by them. The Indic environmental ethos declares that all aspects and phenomena of nature belong together and are bound in a physical as well as metaphysical relationship and views life as a gift of togetherness and of mutual accommodation and assistance in a Universe teeming with interdependent constituents. The strength of ancient Indian enviro-prudence is that nature is an inseparable part of our existence. Protecting the environment is an

¹⁴ <http://idsa.in/system/files/momograph20.pdf>

¹⁵ Sameer Deshkar . Institute Of Town Planners , India Journal 7-1, 87-95, January-March 2010 Kautilya Arthashastra and its relevance to urban planning Studiesswww.itpi.org.in/uploads/journalfiles/jan8_10.pdf

¹⁶ Ibid

¹⁷ Manubendu Banerjee . Kautilyan Athshastra On Forestry .www.sanskrit.nic.in/Svimarsha/V6/c9.pdf visited on 6 April 2018

important expression of dharma. It can be considered as a twig of eco-spirituality or a representation of deep ecology.

At the end, it can be concluded that Enviro-prudence is a different way of thinking in which people try to care more about the planet and the long-term survival of life on Earth. It means recognizing the planet's environmental problems and coming up with solutions, individually and collectively. It deals with the inter-relationship between environment, society, development and economy.
