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The deontological perspective of sustainable development

Abstract

The idea of sustainable development as a normative concept emphasizes the necessity for a wider consensus on meeting human needs, ensuring social equity, and respecting planetary boundaries. The purpose of the article focuses on the deontological orientation in perceiving sustainable development. It is expected that looking at sustainability from the deontological perspective might increase individuals' awareness of responsibility towards respecting the needs of the world's poor, environmental boundaries, and moral equity, which emphasizes that all people are equal. Any attempt to achieve sustainability demands, first of all, rational action placed on moral duties/obligations before individual people or institutions can achieve their particular desires and goals. According to this perspective, sustainability should be treated as a prior constraint in obtaining economic maximization.

Keywords: sustainable development, ethics, deontology, human needs, Planetary boundaries, equity

JEL Classification: Q1, JO, Z10

1. Introduction

The idea of sustainable development is related to contemporary threats to human life. They are connected to the rise in global consumption, increasing environmental degradation, rapid population growth, unsatisfied basic human needs, or the deep destabilization of natural and socioeconomic systems. It is accepted that the 1969 UN Report, Problems of the Human Environment, launched a new era of looking at and thinking about development (*Problems…*). The authors emphasized the need to evaluate problems such as the arms race, the degradation of natural resources, population explosion, and economic stagnation. It should be noted, however, that sustainable development is not only the problem of science, or technological opportunities for remodeling or reengineering life on the Earth to create better conditions for global industrialization. The idea of sustainable development focuses more on the need for human civilization to reconnect with the natural world. It encourages us to seek ways to develop environmental and socioeconomic stewardship of the place we treat as our home. When we think of sustainable development, the following three interdependent dimensions should be considered: ecological integrity, economic vitality, and social well-being. It means that the model of sustainability provides a sense of balance between three pillars: environmental, economic, and social. A basic element of this model is, of course, the responsibility to meet the needs of current as well as future generations.

The purpose of the article is to show that the balance within the three-pillar model of sustainable development is related to the deontological perspective of ethics, which especially emphasizes the role of duty in human moral actions. According to the Brundtland Report, sustainable development is a …*development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs* (*Report of the World on Environment and Development "Our Common Future"*, p. 43). The definition seems to point to three-fold moral dimensions which are indispensable for development: (1) the idea of needs, especially the basic needs of the world's poor to whom the main priority should be given; (2) the concept of environmental limits, which should be enforced by states, technology, and social organizations, and (3) the idea of equity, which arises from the awareness of moral equality that people ought to be treated as equals. The main argument of our reasoning is that if sustainability is about the global problems of redistribution, technology transfer, trade, and so on, initially, it should start on a more individual level. First of all, it is important to explain what duties we have or what is right and wrong, what rights we have, or what moral demands are imposed on us regardless of our desires or requests. Sustainable development is a normative value concept with the emphasis on achieving a wider consensus, primarily reached at the individual and civil society level, with a special focus on the set of principles that can lead individual people and institutions to achieve mutually desirable outcomes. The article has a theoretically oriented character.

2. A general context to the research

Despite several years of intense debates over sustainable development there has been still a great need to rethink the concept over again. It is clear when looking through the current literature on the subject. Unpredictable threats in the world caused by today's technocratic modernization demand a radical switch from the economic paradigm to an ethically focused model of development. The emphasis on the ethical perspective of the relationship between man and the environment requires a change of preferences in order to recognize the adequate duties towards nature and future generations. It seems that the deontological perspective is the most suitable to describe the relationship between duty and the morality of human action (Matviychuk, 2014, p. 152). Deontological ethics is characterized by a focus on obedience to independent moral rules and duties. To make optimal moral choices, one must comprehend what one's duties are and what rules should be applied to regulate those duties. Deontologists, in some sense like consequentialists, argue that in some situations, man is obliged to make decisions that bear the best results. However, there are also certain restrictions on promoting values. Robert Nozick calls them "side-constraints." In some sense, those restrictions are external, because they do not entrench the field of accepted values inside the formula supported by consequentialists, and there are certain circumstances where the maximization of the greater good is, in fact, forbidden (Nozick, 2000, pp. 46–50). According to deontologists, there are various situations where certain acts are not permissible, even though the actual circumstances might cause worse results. It includes, among others, behavior such as corruption, perjury, betrayal, torture, violence, or discrimination. Deontologists argue that those acts have always had morally pejorative connotations. In other words, not all circumstances make the ends justify the means (Saja, 2015, p. 98).

It is accepted that deontological thought originates from the Kantian idea of the Categorical Imperative. In formulating deontology, the German philosopher proposed a moral system that should provide a set of universal principles that would not be judged by anyone's subjective experience or tradition. "*Act only in accordance with that maxim,"* Kant writes, "*whereby you can at the same time will that it become a universal law"* (Kant, 1997, p. 31). If a person acts in accordance with a mixim believing that it is morally right and deserving, it becomes a universal law. That maxim constitutes the Categorical Imperative which defines the constraints of subjective desires, and is universall suitable for everyone to act on (McNaughton & Rawling, 2007, pp. 436–437). In that aspect, the Kantian understanding of duty plays a central meaning in his ethics.

At this point, the notion of "duty" needs to be clarified. John Rawls provides a reasonable platform for further discourse in his "Theory of Justice." In modeling the basic structure of society, the American philosopher develops the concept of justice using an artificial device which he calls "the original position" in which everyone can decide on choosing the principles of justice from behind so called "a vail of ignorance" (Rawls, 2005, p. 109). When Rawls writes about moral re-

quirements, he plainly distinguishes between "natural duties" and "obligations."
Natural duties are imposed upon each of us unconditionally. We owe them to
everyone because of their equal moral value and not as a result of our voluntary
actions. Obligations, on the other hand, are the things we have as a consequence of
participating in institutions that are fair, and from which we obviously benefit.
Obligations presuppose principles for social forms, and they are a consequence of
voluntary decisions (Rawls, 2005, p. 112).[1] So the requirements specified by the
principle of fairness as the result of a social contract are the obligations that are
institutionally defined. They play the role of a test of how public office agents
should behave both towards each other and also towards individuals who are not
institutionalized.

The distinction between natural duties and obligations seems to be reasona-
ble. However, the problem appears when Rawls argues that institutionalized obli-
gations, derived from social forms in time prior to non-institutionalized natural
duties, which regulate unconditional human behaviors. In that case, the institu-
tional behavior is very narrow because it is defined only by institutional goals, and
it might happen that those who are within institutions would lose their sense of
being "a person among other persons" (Mills, 2001, p. 175). In that sense, apply-
ing such reasoning to sustainability bears obvious weaknesses and disadvantages.
When talking about sustainable development as a normative value system based
on the ethics of moral duty, we ought to regard human beings as rational moral
agents. In that case the basic principle of moral act becomes the universal law to
the othe agents. It obviously appeals to the needs of present as well as future gen-
erations with a special respect to the limits of natural resources. Such an approach
can provide a wider perspective of the human moral position, where the difference
between what must be done and what ought to be done is more persuasive.

3. Meeting human needs

At the core of almost all definitions of sustainable development is concern about
meeting human needs. Before compiling the 1987 Brundtland Report, the mem-
bers of the World Commission on Environment and Development decided to in-
vestigate the most crucial problems in the natural environment around the world.
The outcomes of the research demonstrated that environmental threats were con-
nected with issues related to economy, health care, population growth, and many
other social problems (Hallsmith, 2003, p. 35). Therefore, meeting human needs
and guaranteeing the integrity of resources was of critical concern for sustainable
development. However, although the Brundtland Commission pointed to human
needs as one of the main issues of the report, it did not give any details on how to
define those needs.

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[1] At this argument, Rawls relates to Hart's fair play concept of political obligation – see: Hart, 1955,
p. 185; Klosko, 1994, pp. 251–270.

So, for the further steps of our research, an explanatory foundation should be prepared. A reasonable proposition of human needs as universally and objectively related to all people, regardless of where and when they live, was provided by Len Doyal and Ian Gough (1991). They argue that there are essentially two types of human needs, i.e., health (physical well-being) and autonomy (mental health, cognitive understanding, opportunities to participate). Health and autonomy as basic human needs must be met in order to avoid a serious obstacles in social participation. In that case, serious harm is defined as the *fundamental disablement in the pursuit of one's vision of the good, whatever that vision is* (Doyal & Gough, 1991, p. 50).

Beyond the universal and objective needs for health and autonomy, individuals also have the right to their unconditional achievement. However, if the individual's needs for physical health and autonomy are recognized as universal and objective, the goods and services that are required to obtain those needs are culturally dependent. For instance, the needs of nutrition and housing generally relate to all people, but those needs can be met in a large variety of ways. All the objects, activities, and relationships that can potentially meet people's basic needs, in that case, are defined as "satisfiers." Basic needs, then, are always universal, but their satisfiers are culturally relative. So, to avoid any potential misunderstandings, Doyal and Gough built a conceptual bridge to link basic needs with their specific satisfiers. They introduced the notion of "universal satisfier characteristics," hoping that they would fulfill that role.

Universal satisfier characteristics, or "intermediate needs," are regarded as a set of features that contribute to satisfying human needs, regardless of any cultural settings. Doyal and Gough group those intermediate needs into the following then categories: (1) adequate nutritional food and water, (2) adequate protective housing, (3) non-hazardous work environment, (4) non-hazardous physical environment, (5) security in childhood, (6) significant primary relationships, (7) physical security, (8) economic security, (9) safe birth control and child bearing, and (10) basic education (1991, p. 50).

It is unquestionable that attaining "intermediate needs" can decrease poverty and eliminate hunger. However, recognizing human needs only from the perspective of intermediate needs might be insufficient. It is true that all people have needs, and it is also hypothetically possible to make the same set of resources accessible to all people. Still, at the same time, we all realize that some individuals are capable of making more effective use of those resources than others. Assessing individual well-being, social engagements, policy decisions, and concepts of social change in this way bring the following discourse is grounded in Amartya Sen's capability theory.[2]

According to the Nobel Prize Laureate, the essence of human life depends not only on our living standards nor need-achievements, but, most of all, on the freedoms and capabilities we enjoy. We are not only concrete "patients" whose needs ought to be satisfied; we are also "agents" whose freedom allows us to reason,

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[2] More recently capability approach has been developed among others in such investigations: (Nusbaum, 2011; Robeyns, 2005, pp. 93–117; Robeyns, 2006, pp. 351–378).

apprise, choose, participate, and act (Sen, 2009, p. 50). Sen's understanding of freedom refers directly to the quality of human life, which should be perceived through human diversity. The author of "Freedom and Development" accepts neither the utilitarian approach, which is centered on income, wealth, and resources, nor the basic-need concepts of distributive justice that are focused on the need to ensure primary goods (Sen, 2009, pp. 52–73; Sen, 1982, p. 366; Sen & Williams, 1990, pp. 1–25). The central point of Sen's approach on the quality of human life is the presupposition that people are different, and they should be measured in terms of their "functionings" and "capabilities."

According to Sen, human life might be considered a set of interrelated functionings that consist of "beings and doings." In the most basic sense, they are constitutive achievements of a person's existence. A person's achievement in that respect shall be regarded as a vector of man's functionings. Essentially, functionings are the subject of capabilities that refer to what people are and what they do. Functionings can vary from simple things such as eating, starving, being healthy, or having a job, to more complex aspects, like voting in democratic elections, having self-respect, or being calm. The idea of functionings is related to the Aristotelian concept of human good in the sense of man's activity (*The Nicomachean ...*, p. 10).

Regarding the distinctions presented above, we can draw certain conclusions. First, the functions generally apply to a person's existence or action. We can say that a person is the owner of a charming house or consumes natural resources for life survival. Secondly, some functionings can be morally neutral, e.g., eating vegetables, or morally bad, e.g., killing animals without reason. However, the badness or goodness of some functionings is not so straightforward; it depends on various social, normative, and/or political contexts, e.g., taking part in a political debate or voting in democratic elections is related to various social, normative, and/or political dependences.

Closely related capabilities are an individual's real freedoms or opportunities to achieve functionings (Sen, 2006, p. 40). The concept of capability deals with a wide range of opportunities. However, basic capabilities refer more to factual opportunities that are necessary for survival, e.g., to avoid or escape poverty, or to minimize vulnerability or other social deviations. In his capability approach, Sen argues that everyone should have the same opportunity (or capability), but each individual should become responsible for his/her own choices (Crocker & Robeyns, 2010, p. 71). The importance of the capability approach lies not only in assessing poverty in poor countries or regions, but it also plays an indispensable role as a measurement of inequality in well-developed countries. Sen's capability approach has strong moral implications. It assumes that all social arrangements ought to be primarily evaluated due to extent of human freedom, which is essential for promoting and achieving functionings that individuals value.

Despite evident differences in both theories, Doyal and Gough's concept, as well as Sen's capability approach, it seems to be obvious that that human beings should always be treated as ends in themselves, not as means to other possible ends. Trying to evaluate the usefulness of those two propositions for interpreting

sustainable development, it should be pointed that the two concepts emphasize: (1) rejection of the utilitarian understanding of needs, (2) respect for the plurality of human needs/functionings, (3) the importance of public interaction, and most of all, (4) the significance of duties/obligations towards others.[3] Having been built on a firm normative foundation, both approaches faithfully follow the Kantian formula of humanity expressed in the Categorical Imperative: *So act that you use humanity, whether in your own person or in the person of any other, always at the same time as an end, never merely as a means* (Kant, 1997, p. 38).

4. Respecting planetary boundaries

All current scientific data demonstrate that the Earth's natural resources are reaching their limits. At present, over 80% of the world population consumes more resources then the ecosystems can effectively renew. This is what the authors of *The Limits to Growth* wrote in 1972: *We are convinced that realization of the quantitative restraints of the world environment and of the tragic consequences of an overshoot is essential to the initiation of new forms of thinking that will lead to a fundamental revision of human behavior and, by implication, of the entire fabric of present day society* (Meadows et al., 1972, p. 190). The basic purpose of the report was focused on two aims: (1) getting the insights into the limites of the world system, (2) identifying the basic elements which might influence the long-term behavior of the world system. Nevertheless, the proposals of the document have been widely ignored, especially within the economic and political environments.

The Earth's System has regularly fluctuated between cold glacial and warm interglacial states. The current warmer period, the Holocene, began approximately 12,000 years ago (Roberts, 1997). It is when humankind has been able to develop agriculture, settlements, cities, complex societies, and the technology that we have today. However, many scientists have demonstrated that we no longer live in the Holocene, but have entered a new period of human civilization with an increasing sense of instability. This period is often defined as the Anthropocene (Leinfelder, 2013, pp. 9–28; Crutzen & Stoermer, 2000, pp. 17–18). The anthropogenic impact on the Earth's climate, land, oceans, and biodiversity after the Industrial Revolution is unprecedented. Most of us are aware that humans have an unquestionable influence on the Earth's processes, but a meaningful percentage of us is not aware of the scale of those processes.

In 2009, a group of environmental scientists led by professor Johan Rockström, in cooperation with 26 leading international academics, pointed to nine basic planetary boundaries which included: climate change, changes in biosphere integrity, ocean acidification, biogeochemical flows, stratospheric ozone depletion, fresh-water use, land system change, atmospheric aerosol loading, and novel

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[3] Read more on the similarities of those two approaches: (Gough, 2015, pp. 1210–1211).

entities (chemical pollution) (Rockström et al., 2009, pp. 472–475). Four areas, such as carbon dioxide concentration in the atmosphere, energy imbalance at the top of the Earth's atmosphere, loss of biosphere integrity, and altered biogeochemical cycles, have been already recognized as unsafe operating spaces for humanity.

Moreover, approximately 77% of all ice-free land surface can no longer be treated as untouched by man. The world can no longer be defined by biomes, understood as a community of habitats, classified according to the principal adaptations and vegetation of organisms in their original environment. It is estimated that about 90% of the planet's main productivity results within human biomes. Since 1945, human activity has changed biodiversity much faster than at any comparable time in the past. In the 30 years after 1950, more land was converted into cropland than in the 150 years after the Industrial Revolution. At the same, the time growing costs of those changes contributed to the worldwide loss of 50% of wetlands, 40% of forests, 35% of mangroves, and in many cases, it increased poverty for vast numbers of people.

Since 1960, the amount of water stored behind dams increased four times, and almost all of it (roughly 70%) has been used for agriculture. During the last several decades of the twentieth century, around 20% of the world's coral reefs were lost or severely damaged. Despite occupying less than 0.1% of the world's seabed, coral reefs provide a home for almost 25% of marine species, which are the primary source of food for millions of people. Naturally, they also protect thousands of coastal human settlements form natural disasters and rising sea levels.

Most changes to ecosystems have happened as a result of intense growth in demand for food, water, wood, fiber, fuel, etc. Those changes have undoubtedly contributed to substantial improvements in human well-being and economic development. However, not all regions and groups of people have benefited from those processes. In fact, many have been harmed and marginalized. Beyond that, the degradation of ecosystem services contributes mostly to poverty in developing countries, which also affects well-developed countries by slowing down regional economic development, the outbreak of local conflicts, and uncontrollable migrations of refugees. These are only a few examples (*Ecosystems…*, 2005, pp. 1–24).

The transformation towards respecting planetary boundaries implies ethically relevant consequences for individual as well as societal thinking, lifestyles, and concrete actions. Ethical concerns regarding the need to respect natural resources should be the point of departure for sustainability in the world. Almost all of the Earth's surface, its biodiversity, vast parts of the oceans, and the Earth's atmosphere are affected by human activities. Thus, it should make us responsible for respecting and protecting the environmental limits. It may certainly require a more meaningful response from business, politics, corporate law, and finance. They may not always agree with environmentalists and eco-protectionists, but they have an unquestionable influence on the world's affairs.

As moral agents, we are not only obliged to rethink how we invade the natural environment, but we should also encourage others to think about why they ought to do the same. Of course, there is no easy solution that might provide just

principles to protect planetary boundaries, especially in the face of contemporary developments. However, in pursuing sustainability in the world's resources, both science and society should closely collaborate to produce knowledge and act upon it. It seems that the only acceptable anthropogenic influence on the Earth system can be acceptable when humans, both as individuals and as institutions, regard themselves as an integral part of nature. Human economies and other activities must not dominate ecosystems; rather, they should be compatible with their existence, which means that every individual takes responsibility in this matter. That might lead to the other formula of Kant's Categorical Imperative: *Act as if the maxims of your action were to become through your will a* **universal law of nature** (Kant, 1997, p. 31).

5. Ensuring social equity

Particular attention was paid to ensuring social equity for sustainability by the Delegates of the 1992 UN World Summit in Rio de Janeiro. One of the 27 articles of the Rio Declaration states: *The right to development must be fulfilled so as to equitably meet developmental needs of present and future generations* (*The Rio Declaration…*, 2015, p. 140). In this context, "equity" relates to the idea of equality and social justice. The implementation of sustainable development requires such a process of change in human well-being and social relations that would be equitable and compatible with the principles of democratic governance and justice (*Research for Social Change…*, 2015, p. 4). As Sen argues, "*every normative theory of social justice that has received support and advocacy in recent times seems to demand equality in "something" – something that is regarded as particularly important in that theory. The theories can be entirely diverse* […] *and they may be in combat with each other, but they still have the common characteristic of wanting equality of something*" (Sen, 2009, p. 291).

The idea of equity usually occurs as a central category within the theories of justice, as represented by liberal egalitarian philosophers such as John Rawls (2005), Ronald Dworkin (1981, pp. 283–345), Thomas Nagel (1991), and Thomas Scanlon (2000), among others. Nevertheless, it is worth mentioning that even those theories that are skeptical about the importance of social justice leave a special "space" for discourse on equality. For instance, Robert Nozick supports equality of libertarian rights, which, according to him, ought to guarantee the same access to the rights of liberty (1989). James Buchanan, the main founder of public choice theory, favors equal legal and political treatment as the basic elements of a good society. Even utilitarian theories emphasize the importance of equity (1987, pp. 558–575). Richard M. Hare argues that the fundamental principle of utilitarianism is […] *giving equal weight to the equal interests of all the parties* (2002, p. 26). Regardless of the obvious differences, those approaches do have something in common, though. It seems that a mutual core of all those theories is the idea that an equitable society is not necessarily focused on making all people

equally rich, happy, or educated. Rather, it is a society that is concerned about the equality of people's life chances/opportunities.

A reasonable explanation of equal opportunities was provided by, among others, John Rawls in his "two principles of justice." The American philosopher argues: *First: each person is to have an equal right to the most extensive basic liberty compatible with a similar liberty for others. Second: social and economic inequalities are to be arranged so that they are both (a) reasonably expected to be to everyone's advantage, and (b) attached to positions and offices open to all* (Rawls, 2005, p. 60)*.* What is particularly meaningful in the context of social equity and sustainability here is that Rawls gives the first principle absolute priority over the second, which means that basic liberties/freedoms cannot be exchanged for greater equality of opportunity or greater social and economic equality. Additionally, the first part of the second principle of justice is more important than the second, which means equality of opportunity cannot be exchanged for greater social and economic equality.

Inevitably, there is a variety of different positions, statuses, payments, and rewards that are constantly being distributed in society. Many of them are limited in number, but they are still socially desirable and valuable elements of human wellbeing. So, the principle of equity should be related to distribution based on people's merits (Jones, 2009, p. 7). In that situation, an inclusive **meritocracy** is one of the main guidelines which holds that individual people's knowledge and skills are dominant requirements for recruitment, promotion, and hierarchies. In other words, according to the principles of meritocracy, people who apply for their positions ought to be treated fairly on the basis of their abilities and qualifications. There is an undeniable inter-connectedness between such a meritocracy and democracy. Meritocracy, in this case, plays the role of a cornerstone for democracy. Here the person's past record of achievements and experiences, not just expectations and desires, are crucial to gain positions and seats.

It is beyond any doubt that those with more persuasive and convenient merits gain credibility. Unfortunately, meritocracy as an idea of political and social order also has evident weaknesses, especially when different inequalities of opportunity appear. The problem begins when factors such as place of birth, race, gender, family background, religion, or health become a serious obstacle for people to gain an equal position, job, or social status. The fact that males and females are rewarded differently for doing the same tasks and jobs is a case in point. It seems important to add two additional inclusive standards here, especially with regard to meritocracy as a principle of equity in relation to the idea of sustainable development. First, all people must have the same rights to the positions which other people have access to. Getting a job in a certain department of government administration would require the adequate skills and knowledge to perform it efficiently, but advertising a job in only one language in multilingual societies would not make everyone able to apply for it. Second, special obligations and requirements should be established to provide just competition founded on the idea of equal opportunities, allowing people to develop the skills and knowledge needed to achieve success. In this case, it is not only goods themselves that are the object of

distribution, but also the chances for obtaining the relevant goods. This is clearly seen when, based on free-market competition, some institutions leave very little room for people to gain an adequate education or skills. Those two standards of moral justifications should be applied to individual human actions, but they also should play a special role in establishing particular goals for and limitations on actions by governments and institutions.

6. Conclusions

Sustainable development is a major issue in the contemporary world. Facing modern development threats, the Brundtland Commission proposed three universal moral duties/obligations: meeting human needs, respecting planetary boundaries, ensuring social equity. The main purpose of the article was to show that in obtaining sustainable development, the fundamental task depends on moving towards an ethically oriented society. It seems that the deontological approach is the most suitable point of departure in preparing the axiological ground for constructing sustainability in the contemporary world. According to this perspective, morality relates to the obligatory norms that initiate actions from the perception of what should be done with the expectation of equal rules imposed on human decisions. Moral norms are applied to what individual or collective actors ought to do, not to the results of human action or any other criteria. It is not about who an actor should be or what he/she should become. The main concern of the deontological approach is fairness guaranteeing all individuals and parties the same opportunities to attain their specific goals. Moral norms refer to what we must or mustn't do; they do not answer any questions concerning the practical aspects of human activity or public policy. They are valid not only for us but also for all of those who are in the same life situation. Moral norms are a sort of driver that can harmonize different expectations in social conflicts between individuals and groups who have a variety of opposing interests. From the deontological perspective, the moral community is not a group of individuals or institutions that share only the same values on a common good, but it is a community of people who are ready to share the consequences of each other's actions with a strong desire to adjust a mutual coexistence in a peaceful way by respecting norms that play a fundamental role in achieving a mutual goal.

     Looking at sustainable development from the deontological perspective can increase the awareness of our individual duties/obligations towards respecting the boundaries of our planet, meeting basic human needs, and ensuring the moral equality of people, regardless of their origin, occupation, culture, nationality, or gender. It cannot be missed that all of us have responsibilities to be guardians in the living environment, including natural ecosystems. All human interactions, both in societal and natural environments, should be carried out in accordance with respect to scientific suggestions and warnings, socio-economic analyses, and cultural regards. Every human action is a potential factor of imbalance that can dete-

riorate the synergic relationship of elements that support human survival on Earth. It is worthwhile remembering that the central issue of the Brundtland Report, which relates to global development problems, was the idea of *the same boat*. It suggests that all mankind ought to learn co-dependency between human spheres of activity and the natural environment, otherwise, the world will face the risk of a global catastrophe.

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