

## The Lecture Contains:

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## Community Concept:

Environmental Ethics is based on community concept, the concept that is widely used by mankind in their daily life. Having the philosophy of community concept mankind has evolved various social laws and regulation to be followed by its members. Each community may evolve its own social ethics based their beliefs and customs which would enhance the social harmony between its members. Community Policy is created based on the mutual cooperation between Community Participation and Government Agencies.

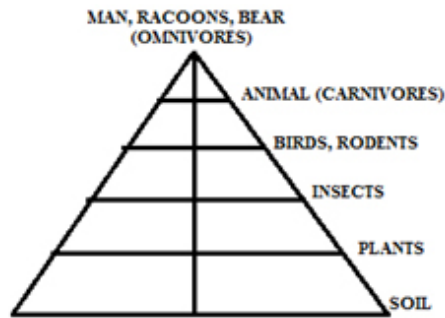
The Conservation Theory has the following three aspects -

- a) A state of harmony between man and environment,
- b) Based on community participation,
- c) Introduction of any law (Govt.) becomes effective depending on community participation

Land use ethics are still governed wholly by economic self-interest, just as social ethics (commercial value conflict) were a century ago, when King used his subjects for his personal gain and strength. If one non-economic category is threatened and if we happen to admire it we try to give economic importance to save it. The evidence happens to be economic to validate its existence. On the other hand, if we do not like its appearance and has no economic value, we do not consider its right to live. For example, a domestic lizard, a spider, or bats eat insects. We do not consider the right for their existence simply because we cannot attach economic gain or profit with their existence, and therefore they have not right to live where they belong. Thus, the ethical attitude correlates with to something that we can see, feel, understand, love, admire, or otherwise have faith (religions, ritualistic).

## The Land Pyramid

The land where we belong has always given us food, water, water and soil, etc. for the survival. The land stores energy with the help of biotic and other elements. Aldo Leopold created an important structure of living beings that survives on the land. Plants absorb energy from the sun. This energy flows through a circuit called the *biota*, which may be represented by a pyramid consisting of layers.



(Read more: Aldo Leopold, '*A Sand County Almanac*' Pub: Dover Publications, N.Y)

The bottom layer is soil. A plant layer rests on soil, an insect's layer on plants, a bird and rodents layer on the insects, and so on up through various animal groups to the apex layer, which consists of the layer carnivores. Thus, each successive layer has to depend on those below it for food for other services, and each in turn furnishes food and services to the layer above. Proceeding upward, each successive layer decreases in numerical abundance. Thus, for every carnivore there is hundreds of his prey, millions of insects, uncountable plants. The pyramidal form of the system reflects this numerical progression from apex to the bottom. Man (omnivores) shares an intermediate layer with the bears, raccoons, and squirrels, which eat both meat and vegetables.

## Module 14 : Spirit of Ethics- philosophical &amp; environmental

## Lecture 38 : Community Concept, The Land Pyramid, Conclusion

Leopold writes, "Land, therefore is not merely soil, it is a fountain of energy flowing through a circuit of soils, plants, and animals." Food chains are the living channels that conduct energy upward; death and decay brings it back to the same soil. The circuit is not closed; it is an ongoing process, which must remain open. Some energy is dissipated in decay and some is added by absorption from air. The velocity and character of the upward flow of energy depends on the complex structure of the plants and animals community. This interdependence between the complex structure of the land and its smooth functioning as energy unit is one of its basic attributes. When a change occurs in one part of the circuit, many other parts have to adjust themselves to the new changes. In environment the changes are part of the evolutionary process. Such changes are usually slow and local.

Whereas man made changes are violent and rapid with tools such changes destabilize the natural circuit. Man's invention of tools has enabled him to make changes of unprecedented violence, rapidity, and scope. Mankind is proud of their achievements and progress through science and technology. Unfortunately, they have forgotten scale of their changes, which might affect the environment much beyond their limit. For example, if the fossil fuel remains expensive we would be forced to limit our vehicular movements. But with the help of new discoveries fuel-efficient engines would certainly attract a larger number of customers to buy motor vehicles. In result, the total use of fossil fuel is surely going to increase in short period of time. The present economic strategy encourages such technique to expand the consumer's market. Therefore, as member of the biotic society, Industrial Designers have enormous responsibility in pursuing the spirit of ethical responsibility through the design process. Each design solution should have strong ethical considerations that would reflect the true intentions and sincere effort.

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## Conclusion

The Spirit of Ethics and its relationship to Nature may not have direct relevance to design decisions however it cannot avoid its obligation. Therefore it is necessary to understand the relevance of ethical issues while considering any design solution. Design solutions with sound ethical consideration would have long time effect on human beings and environment. Hence, it is imperative to include the topic of ethics in design thinking. It is unfortunate that Design Ethics may discuss in the light of design management and elements of design solutions but may not include its relationship with environment. Environmentally sound design solutions and 'green design' have drawn attentions in the recent years. The topic of Environmental Ethics raises vital issues that have indirect bearing on the design process. However, it does not go to search for the root of the conflicting interest. Therefore, Design Education has to include Environmental Ethics as part of Design Curriculum that has direct application and effect on nature and human society.

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