

## Tourism and Aldo Leopold's Environmental Ethics: A Review

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**How to cite this article:** Ramukumba, T. (2022). Tourism and Aldo Leopold's Environmental Ethics: A Review. African Journal of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure, 11(1):208-220. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.46222/ajhtl.19770720.221>

### Abstract

The tourism industry's substantial reliance on the natural environment continues to raise debates with spatial and temporal aspects. There have been debates around the ethics of using sentient animals as attractions; using nature as a resource to suit tourist requirements; using the environment as a pollutant sink, and using a carbon-centric transportation system as concerns mount on how nature is misused in tourism. As we have grown more aware of the co-dependency of our relationship with nature as a result of the environmental issues posed by human activities, we have to re-evaluate our ethical relationship with nature. However, while a critical review of the application of environmental ethics is crucial to tourism's interaction with nature, there has been a considerable effort of studies done in tourism studies. Tourism is at the crossroads of several important ethical concerns, including good environmental and natural resources management, respect for and empowerment of local populations, the necessity of development and property rights, and the consequences of commodification and globalization. This paper adopted a methodology of the review of the very scarce literature available on ethics and tourism based on Aldo Leopold's environmental ethics. The review of the available literature leads to a conclusion that very little has been done to include the ethical environmental principles suggested by Aldo Leopold by the tourism industry for its benefits.

**Keywords:** Tourism ethics, Aldo Leopold, Environmental ethics, Tourism activities

### Introduction

Tourism studies have developed a strong ethical platform in recent decades in response to issues arising from disproportions in tourism development. According to Tribe (2002) supported by Fennell (2006), this strong ethical platform was propelled by the interaction between filtration of the tourism industries from the West political-economic domination with the less developed countries. These views were further supported by Lovelock and Lovelock, (2013) and Weeden and Boluk (2014) who noted that the interaction between Western tourists with local communities in developing countries necessitated ethical considerations. Regardless of the views of the authors above regarding ethical considerations in the tourism industry, Mostafanezhad and Hannam (2014) advanced that even though tourism is a known cause of environmental change, little thought has been given to ethical questions surrounding the interests of nature within the tourism system as the business grows.

Environmental ethics' application to tourist studies is a development of environmental philosophy, an academic topic founded in the 1970s in response to worries about the harmful effects of human activity on nature. Pollution, acid rain, ozone depletion, biodiversity loss, and global warming are examples of anthropogenic-related environmental concerns that have caused a re-evaluation of our place concerning the natural environment and the extent to which we are a part of or separate from it. For many years, attempts to understand our purpose and relationship to our surroundings have been a component of western thought (Glacken, 1967). Nonetheless, scientific research and media coverage have elevated awareness of environmental

crises and threats to ecosystem stability in recent decades, making it particularly important. The continued rise in global tourism demand is projected to put more pressure on nature, generating moral and ethical questions about tourism's relationship with it. People are increasingly being placed in areas where there has been little if any, direct human impact, thanks to tourism. The exploitation of animals and ecosystems as tourism resources, as well as the environment's role as a sink for tourism-related pollution, makes the application of environmental ethics to tourism extremely important.

Several calls for further ethical studies in tourism have been made over the last few decades (Fennel, 2006). The necessity to thoroughly explore contemporary theories of ethics and their application to the tourism sector has been recognized (Fennel 2006). As value issues and disputes are the norm in tourism (Smith & Duffy, 2003), ethics is regarded as fundamentally significant (Macbeth, 2005). As a result of this influence, emerging domains of moral theory, such as environmental ethics, can be applied (Holden, 2005b; Smith & Duffy, 2003). Environmental ethics, according to Holden's definition, is concerned with determining the bounds of human commitment to the environment and assessing the human position toward it (Holden, 2018). During the 1990s, there was a surge in interest in tourism and ethics, which corresponded with the rise of ecotourism. The rapid amplification of ecotourism is one example of how environmental ethics has influenced tourism (d'Amore, 1993: 66).

The work of Aldo Leopold (1966), the philosophical father of modern environmentalism, has been extensively cited in the literature on ethics and the environment (Fennel, 2006, 2009; Holden, 2003; Macbeth, 2005; Smith & Duffy, 2003). Leopold's pivotal transition from anthropocentric to non-anthropocentric ethics has had particular significance, as it has broadened the interdependent virtuous community beyond hominids to wildlife, and eventually to the land herself (Holden, 2003, Macbeth, 2005).

The tourism literature, on the other hand, has largely ignored the nuances of Leopold's Land ethic, as well as the implications of Leopold's approach to the ethical difficulties of tourism. Fennel (2006) observed the scarcity of ethical concepts in tourist studies and suggested that environmental ethics should be used as a template to help advance tourism ethics. The objective of this paper is to present an original account of the ethics of Aldo Leopold (1887-1948), a key figure in the development of modern environmental ethics on how the tourism industry can benefit from his proposed ethical principles.

### **The review: Environmental ethics**

Environmental ethics strives to extend moral thought beyond the human community's borders to give a framework for evaluating the rights and wrongs of our conduct toward nature (Attfield, 2003). While we may not be consciously aware of environmental ethics, we are aware that man-made activities have negative implications on nature that may jeopardise our economic and social well-being. This has prompted us to reconsider how we interact with the environment. At the same time, global urbanisation is causing a growing separation between much of the world's people and nature, which may help to explain why there is a growing demand to visit protected areas and other rare natural regions (Attfield, 2003).

Environmental ethics, on the other hand, is concerned with the philosophy of our place in the environment, which serves as a framework for evaluating our interactions with the natural world rather than serving as a substitute for the management of technological solutions to specific environmental problems (Holden, 2016). As a result, environmental ethics would strive to develop the reasoning for new environmental standards based on an eco-centric ethic that would avoid the scenario from arising in the first place, rather than immediately seeking a solution to issues such as how we lessen our carbon footprint. While environmental ethics is largely concerned with philosophical notions, it also serves as a vital link between ideas and



reality (Holden, 2016). Two assumptions of environmental ethics are critical as a framework for research inquiry, first is that the general attitudes toward nature performance a momentous role in the creation of ecological problems, and second is that adopting better environmental attitudes will play a substantial role in rectifying existing and avoiding future environmental problems (Attfield, 2003). Recognising nature's intrinsic value, for example, that it has a value defined by its sheer existence, even if it has no value to people in its natural state, is central to environmental ethics. Many environmental ethicists would reject an argument for nature's protection based on ecosystem services that benefit humans or the pleasure it provides us through its aesthetic beauty. Intrinsic value refers to the amount to which the environment has value in and of itself, irrespective of what individuals think of it.

While it may be difficult to separate an intrinsic value of nature from that granted to it by people, recognition of an inherent value acknowledges nature's independent worth and, as a result, its right to exist. Such reasoning may be seen in the current animal rights movement, which advocates for animals to have a right to exist free of harmful human actions, which is equated to "speciesism" if it is not recognised (Singer, 1993). Environmental ethics is grounded on the affirmation that the rights to the existence of all supernatural entities and objects are based on the principle that their existence and inherent value merit moral respect with emphasises on the intrinsic value of the ecosystem as a whole, rather than individual animals or objects. It also emphasises the preservation of nature for the benefit of the current generation and future generations.

These divergent perceptions of the location of intrinsic worth can occasionally result in a prioritising conflict between individual animal protection and environmental well-being. For example, moral judgments about culling a single species that threatens the ecosystem's integrity may elicit distinct responses based on these two ethics. Kill-a-seal pup holidays have previously been promoted in Canada and Norway to entice visitors to assist in the culling of newborn seals under the guise of reducing the threat of fish supply extinction (Holden, 2016). While the right to existence ethics would consider this behaviour to be immoral because it damages individual animals, the intrinsic value of ecosystem ethics would consider it to be correct because it maintains ecosystem integrity. Instead of endorsing the most 'humane' approach of reducing seal pup numbers, eco-holism would not regard visitors taking joy in the culling as morally acceptable. While libertarian extensionism and eco-holism acknowledge nature's intrinsic value, a third environmental ethic does not. The conservation ethic emphasises the preservation of nature for the benefit of humans now and in the future and this is the underlying ethic of sustainable development, and it's one that most sustainable tourism policy and strategy adhered to (Holden, 2003; Macbeth, 2005). However, given its absence of explicit acknowledgment of wildlife's intrinsic value for most environmental ethicists, the extent to which this may be properly accepted as a bona fide environmental ethic is debatable.

The discussions above therefore seem to suggest that ecological ethics is fretful with the creation of a framework for evaluating the honesties and injustices of human acts toward nature, with the awareness that a behavioural shift in our interactions with nature is a prerequisite for a symbiotic connection with the environment. The acknowledgment of the multiplicity of values held by nature, including its own, i.e. intrinsic worth, is fundamental to environmental ethics. However, what appears to be an environmental ethic oriented on nature conservation can function within an anthropocentric framework of environmental preservation for human benefit. Recognising the fundamental value of nature and its right to exist, on the other hand, prioritises its conservation for its benefit, not ours. However, within this eco-centric framework, there may be a dispute about the focus of intrinsic value, with libertarian extensionism emphasising the value of individual creatures and ontological objects, whilst eco-holism emphasises the value of the entire ecosystem.

### **Aldo Leopold land ethic for environmental management**

Aldo Leopold was a famous conservationist (1877-1948) and his land ethic was proposed as a technique for dealing with major environmental concerns that were causing the natural environment to deteriorate due to human actions (Barnoksy et al. 2014). The subject of environmental ethics has been profoundly affected by the eco-centric perspectives of Aldo Leopold's work according to Schmidt, Brown, and Orr (2016). In my opinion, Leopold's eco-centric land ethic strikes the right balance between human and natural requirements. This land ethic proposes a compromise between the two ideologies of anthropocentric conservation advocated by Pinchot (1910) and deep ecology advocated by Naess (1973). The essential tenet of a land ethic is that it places a value on the environment while not devaluing human beings; in other words, the natural environment must be revalued in the same manner that we respect human lives. This is an ethical approach to conservation strategy that calls on humans to take moral responsibility for the natural environment (Kobylecky, 2015). The basic goal of a land ethic is to establish a reciprocal interaction between people and the environment (Hodson & Hodson 2017; Leopold, 2004).

The views of Calliot (1984) posit that Leopold acknowledged that all objects capable of suffering should be accorded ethical value and, as a result, be given the status of moral beings. Leopold's land ethic is constructed on inherent value principles, and as such, it implies the notion that the energy flows in the ecosystem connote the belief of the inherent value of nature, Hattingh (2019) and Milstein (2018) wrote. Leopold (1949) used the term biotic community implying that it is a comprehensive system with connections and exchanges, of which humans are an integral component. The concept of biotic community was best summarised by (Hodson & Hodson 2017; Leopold 1949; Leopold 2004), who stated that the fundamental goal is the protection of ecologies as a whole because the environment is perceived in a more holistic perspective.

All individuals in the ecosystem are important, according to Kobylecky (2015) and Leopold (1949), but inorganic organisms such as foothills, astounds, and stream systems also have inherent worth. Schmidt, Brown, and Orr (2016) argued that hominoid beings are accountable for maintaining the biotic community grounded on the dogmas of the land ethic. This is mirrored in Leopold's proclamation from 1949 where he noted that an entity is proper when it inclines to reserve the veracity, firmness, and splendor of the biotic community, and it is bad when it tends to the contrary. Both Kobylecky (2015) and Norton (1988) suggested that the anthropogenic and non-anthropogenic spheres would be closely guarded due to the minor differences in their demands. Leopold was a fervent believer that humans have an impact on the ecosystem as a whole, affecting its stability. While acknowledging Leopold's contributions to the land ethic, there have been criticisms of this approach, with the viability of the approach's principles at the centre of the criticism. There has been denunciation based on a misconception of the term 'biotic community', according to Millstein (2018). Additional objection flattened against the land ethic is that it is interpreted differently by different eco-centrists (Dinneen 2014). Other detractors, according to Millstein (2018), criticise the land ethic for its idea of putting equal emphasis on humans and the environment, implying that this suggests a devaluing of human beings. Contrary to popular belief, I believe that the land ethic values humans and that if the land ethic is read with greater accuracy and comprehension, it becomes evident that it may be used to address environmental issues which are fundamental for the existence of tourism.

As noted by Holden (2003); and Macbeth (2005), that the land/conservation ethic emphasises the preservation of nature for the benefit of the current generation and future generations, it is also seen as the underlying ethic of sustainable development, and it is the

backbone for developing sustainable tourism policy and strategies. As discussed in the previous sections, tourism is known to cause negative environmental impacts and Leopold's land ethic is central in dealing with these negative environmental impacts caused by tourism. According to Leopold, there is interconnectedness amongst hominids and their environments, but this interconnectivity is reciprocal but flows unevenly. Leopold's understanding of the necessity for resource management, according to Norton (1990), originated from his observation that resource management actions aimed at maximising sustainable production could end up harming the greater environment. As a result, Leopold's land ethic should be interpreted as implying that practical environmental management is required, with a focus on the ecological state in which resource production is embedded. Leopold also introduced the concept of 'Thinking Like a Mountain' according to Norton (1990) and this was founded on his beliefs that people should examine their acts on the environment in a short period, however, there was also a need for impacts of human actions on the environment over an extended period. The examination of human impacts or actions on the environment over an extended period would therefore be a fundamental approach/strategy to sustainable tourism. The land ethic as an approach for sustainable tourism is discussed in detail in the next section.

### **Aldo Leopold land ethic for sustainable tourism**

Ethical ideals are inextricably linked to long-term sustainability. The World Commission on Environment and Development's (1987:255) "Our Common Future," which popularised the concept of sustainable development, is replete with moral obligations and exhortations. The call to action in this key statement is that "people survival and welfare may be contingent on triumph in raising ecological development to a global ethic". The sentience of moral principles is also a foundation of sustainable tourism theory. Hugh (1995: 49) proposed a move to an "ethical response" whilst Macbeth (2005) argued that achieving sustainable tourism requires moving beyond the anthropocentric approach to a "non-anthropocentric incarnate terrain ethic" (2005: 964), The ideals of shifting away from anthropocentric approach were further strengthened by Holden (2003) where he proposed ethics of stewardship and in the same vein Fennell (2014) proposed ethics for animal welfare. However, important ethical issues remain unanswered. The sustainable tourism debate necessitates a re-visit philosophically and investigated thoroughly to re-claim the virtuous and ethical obligations that early sustainability advocates envisioned (Jamal & Camargo, 2014: 12). Indeed, Bramwell and Lane (1993: 3) confronted theorists in the first edition of the Journal of Sustainable Tourism's editorial to figure out how tourists may get a deeper appreciation and regard for the places they visit and the beliefs of the people who live there. Since then, researchers have responded to Jamal and Camargo's call to investigate the ethical proportions of sustainable tourism, as well as Bramwell and Lane's call for tourists to better understand and reverence the places they visit, by drawing on the work of Aldo Leopold (1887-1948) to illustrate how tourism can be used to foster a human pledge to guard other cultures, creatures, and the land itself, and to ensure that tour guides are properly trained.

As one of the progenitors of the current environmental movement, Leopold has been frequently cited in the tourism and ethical literature for insight and argument (see Fennell, 2000, 2006, 2009; Holden, 2003, 2005; Hollinshead, 1990; Hultsman, 1995; Lemelin & Smale, 2007; Macbeth, 2005; Shultis & Way, 2006). Leopold (1968, first published 1949) famously changed humans as ordinary participants and fellow inhabitants of the land community, rather than captors, and thereby prolonged the ethical community from humans to animals, and eventually to the land itself. Despite this, Leopold's land ethic did not protect nature and its resources from all human contact. Leopold's ethic was shaped by his lifelong forestry and game management efforts, and the pastimes of discovering, shooting, and angling continued to hold



a significant place in his ethic. Tourism, like these activities, necessitates a healthy local environment and, ironically, an active human populace within it. Leopold's ethic provides direction on economic and social sustainability through the substantial galaxy for human activity and addressing social as well as environmental challenges. Furthermore, Leopold remarked on tourism matters, bringing his ethical perspective to bear on the leisure diversions of his time (Hollinshead, 1990). Fennell summarised Leopold's potential significance to the field of sustainable tourism by stating that the land ethic "stands as a basic premise from which to design and develop tourism in light of sustainability and the precautionary principle" (2009: 220). Using the rarity and trophy hunt as examples, the preceding debate on the land ethic as a fundamental foundation on which to base sustainable development can be better described and linked to tourism activities. The latter is linked to the former because the most valuable trophies are the rarest goods and experiences. Trophies do not have to be physical, and any lasting memory of individual accomplishment or unique experience that we take with us qualifies as a crown in this context. Furthermore, the significance of the prize rests less in the trophy itself than in the methods used to obtain it; as Leopold comments after recounting a memorable trout-catching encounter: "What was big was not the trout, but the chance". My memory, not my creel, was overflowing" (1968: 40; see also List, 1997). Leopold (1968:168-169) elucidates the relevance of prizes in his article "The Conservation Esthetic": "The pleasure they give is, or should be, in the seeking as well as the gaining." A certificate is placed into the cairn on a mountain pinnacle, whether it's a bird's egg, a mass of trout, a basket of mushrooms, a bear snapshot, a pressed specimen of a wildflower, or a message placed into the cairn on a mountain peak. It proves that its possessor has been somewhere and done something, that he has used talent, perseverance, or discrimination to overcome, outwit, or take ownership of something. One might expect, as Hollinshead (1990) argues in his in-depth analysis of Leopold's pastime, that the desire to claim prizes would irritate Leopold's ecological awareness (1990: 375).

However, as elsewhere in Leopold's thinking, a heightened sense of community moulds rather than severs the underlying human motivations. Trophy hunting is still a big part of Leopold's relationship with the land, and there are plenty of anecdotes about it in the Almanac. His encounters with the land, on the other hand, changed the kind of trophies he valued and the rules that governed such behaviours (List, 1997). Some sorts of hunting, for example, were completely condemned by Leopold, such as killing the most important hunters at the top of the food chain; sorrow for killing a wolf in his youth still haunts his work. Other types of hunting were not wholly rejected by Leopold. "No one would sooner hunt woodcock in October than I," he says, "but since learning about the [woodcock's] sky dance, I find myself calling one or two birds enough" (1968: 34). However, he is progressively praising the most sustainable trophies, such as his search for the songs of the world's most remote and hermetic birds, and he makes a clear dissimilarity concerning the sustainability of pursuing crowns such as photos and experiences versus other types of hunting and collecting (Leopold, 1968). Tourism activities, as Leopold recognised, permit individuals to hunt and internment the rarity and spectacle of the world around them. Todd (2009) posits that wonder rests partially in experiencing the first-hand and the unexpected, and in the absolute exertion and effort involved in doing so and he linked beauty with rarity and achievement. Todd (2009) also points out the concerning issue in which tourism expansion makes such unique experiences more accessible, removing the experience's demanding aspect and thus jeopardizing its attraction. Todd's assessment echoes Leopold's criticisms of the recreation movement at the time (Hollinshead, 1990; List, 1997). He chastised the singularly meaningless endeavour of looking for crowns that are meritoriously provided to tourists, such as when businesses theatrically produce trout in streams so that fishermen can relish a simple intellect of fulfillment in catching them.

Facilitating access to tourism attractions, on the other hand, does not necessitate the abolition of crown prestige; it only alters the number and/or scope of crowns.

Tourists may be compelled to learn about and interact with a variety of ecologies, animals, and people to acquire rare items, which they will treasure because we have recollections and keepsakes of them. Trophies, on the other hand, are a double-edged ethical sword. Exotic animals and vulnerable landscapes suffer when tourism creates scarcer proficiencies available to meet the demand for trophies. The primary question concerns the tourists' basic motivations: are they merely looking for a trophy? Or do they realize how unique and special their experience is? (Lemelin & Smale, 2007; Fennell, 2000). Trophy hunting simultaneously promises a commanding second-stage manner of engaging tourists' yearnings and individualities while also posing a threat to third-stage principles of animal protection, wilderness preservation, and foreign cultures (Fennell, 2013).

Recognising nature's inherent worth and right to exist is likely to raise ethical concerns about how the natural environment is used for tourism. Morals can be defined as an individual's or a group's ideas about the right or wrongness of the acts they are pursuing. For example, while the majority of people in many civilizations believe it is wrong to hunt an animal just for pleasure due to the animal's suffering, others disagree. To determine if a certain activity toward nature is beneficial or negative, environmental ethics guiding concepts such as libertarian extensionism or eco-holism must be applied. As a result, a component of the equation of an environmentally sustainable relationship between nature and tourism is based on our moral judgments of our behaviours toward it, as well as our knowledge of environmental ethics principles to assist us to assess whether it is good or bad. Moral issues are so interwoven with ethical thinking, either overtly or implicitly, and there are several examples of moral views changing behavior, such as the elimination of slavery, human rights, and animal rights.

Apart from moral difficulties that are interwoven with other ethical arguments, the land ethic goes on to say that tourist ethics gives chances for knowledge and learning (Falk et al., 2009). Tourism offers a wide range of learning opportunities and approaches. For starters, many tourist destinations give elucidation as the foundation for the visitor's learning experience. This clarification "may help people form connections with or comprehend inter-relationships between what they are seeing or feeling at the location and their own lives," (Ham & Weiler, 2006: 3). Second, scholars and experts have examined the learning experience from the viewpoint of free-choice learning, recognising that tourist learning occurs outside of conventional education institutions (Falk et al., 2009). Third, because of this element of learning, many researchers differentiate "ecotourism" from comparable types of tourism, such as nature-based tourism (Baral et al., 2012; Fennell, 2001).

### **Environmental ethics and tourism**

Morality and ethics are two terms that can be used interchangeably. It usually entails well-established moral rules of right and wrong that guide human perceptions and actions (Tolkach et al., 2017). Environmental ethics is a well-established subfield of environmental philosophy that deals with humanity's moral extension to the rest of nature (Callicott, 1980). It challenges anthropocentric ideas by incorporating moral theory into discussions of the natural world (Fennell, 2013b) and recognising the intrinsic value of non-human natural phenomena (Lovelock & Lovelock, 2013). Environmental ethics is predicted to aid the development of more reasonable human-nature interactions, given that moral value is inseparably intertwined with moral obligation (Engel, 1990). The contemporary state of environmental ethics, on the other hand, is diverse, with several methods to recognise and/or prioritise the natural world's intrinsic value (Holden, 2018). Surface anthropocentric ethics (conservation ethics), biocentrism and animal emancipation (libertarian extensionism), and eco-centric ethics

(ecological extension) are the most commonly researched environmental ethics in tourism (Fennell, 2013b; Holden, 2018).

Environmental ethics applications have provided a wide range of insights into nature-based and wildlife tourism experiences. Kontogeorgopoulos (2009) finds that visitors to elephant camps in Thailand who are inspired by eco-centric concepts and emphasise the inherent value of elephants have much better levels of pleasure than those who visit camps that represent an anthropocentric viewpoint. According to Fennell (2012b), tourists who recognise the rights and inherent value of animals have negative opinions toward tourism activities that prioritise human needs over animal interests (e.g., hunting and captive environments). Due to a lack of professional knowledge and psychological biases that mask the ethical components of important decisions, Moorhouse et al. (2017) found that tourists may be fairly content with wildlife attractions with low quality in animal care and conservation benefits. Winter (2020) believes that tourists at nature-based and wildlife attractions may experience cognitive dissonance and ethical issues when faced with a decision between their pleasure and the wellbeing of the animals, they choose the latter, based on a comprehensive literature analysis on animal ethics and tourism.

The convergence of tourist, environmental, and animal ethics is relatively unexplored territory, with much previous research being theoretical rather than empirical (Holden, 2005a). Due to broad regional, cultural, and generational disparities, the environmental ethics of tourists at the moment of their connection with the natural environment are mainly unknown (Holden, 2005b). Nonetheless, there are a few significant studies that focus on the environmental ethics of Asian and/or Western tourists that are notable exceptions. Gao et al. (2018) find that older Chinese generations are more likely to embrace stronger anthropocentrism than younger ones, based on evidence from a tourist survey performed in a UNESCO World Natural Heritage Site in China. Traditional Japanese visitors, according to Arlt (2006), value nature for its "relation and subjection to humans" rather than its "naturalness or augustness." Packer et al. (2014) compare Chinese and Australian tourists to a nature-based resort in Australia and find that Chinese vacationers are more likely to have an instrumental view of nature and detest or fear wild animals than Australian tourists. Different ethical perspectives shaped by cultural variations may cause potential confrontations between tourists and local cultures (Winter, 2020). The impact of environmental ethics on international tourists' experiences, as well as how visitors perceive 'invasive' and 'native' species, ecosystem integrity, and conservation management practices used in various ecological restoration situations, remains fundamentally unanswered.

### **Aldo Leopold's environmental ethics and its relevance to tourism**

Tourism's reliance on climatic and ecosystem stability necessitates a long-term symbiosis between the two, even if limited to an anthropocentric justification of nature protection for long-term economic growth and the preservation of places for future generations to enjoy. While the paradigms of how we evaluate and judge our interactions with the environment are shifting, the incorporation of environmental ethics into the framework of variables that influence the tourism system's operation is still in its infancy. The very minimal reference to the environment in the comprehensive UNWTO Global Code of Ethics, which reflects a traditional ethical approach focused on human issues, shows its historical marginalisation of ethical consideration of nature (Fennell, 2014). Apart from philosophical differences in environmental ethics regarding the location of intrinsic value, the ethical debate over the natural environment's relationship with tourism is complicated by the involvement of multiple stakeholder groups, the spatial scale of its impacts, and a reliance on nature as both a theater for experiences and a source of essential resources. As a result, environmental ethics can be



seen as being relevant to tourism policy, industry operations, and consumer behavior. Tourism is a thriving component of the worldwide consumer market for environmental experiences, thus how we behave as tourists is crucial in defining tourism's connection with the environment. As a result, tourist stakeholders must continue to reflect on the values they place on nature, and their responsibilities to it are highlighted by tourism's unique economic relationship with nature. As a result, the ethical frameworks we use to judge behaviours will have a significant impact on how the sector evolves and interacts with nature. Leopold's (1949) land ethic which is closely tied to libertarian extensionism, recognises the need for our role in nature to be understood as a part of a biotic community. The central focus of the land ethic is based on the view that it transforms human beings from a captor of the land community to simple members and citizen of it. It signifies that he respects his fellow members as well as the community as a whole (Leopold, 1949: 219). While this appeal for an expansion of community recognition to include animal citizenship and the entirety of nature was somewhat radical at the time, it nevertheless resonates today and represents an expected progression of our ethical framework for Leopold's land ethic. The application of the land ethic to tourism has received very little attention in tourism studies, despite an obvious link to the construction of an ethical paradigm for environmental sustainability in tourism.

Hultsman (1995) is an exception, alluding to the land ethic being a viable model for a universal ethic for 'just' tourism services based on fostering tourism's development as a moral actor for the greater good. Breakey and Breakey (2015), in an all-inclusive analysis of the notion, stressed the applicability of Leopold's land ethic cultural harvest component to tourism as a catalyst for personal ethical growth, resulting in a virtuous human character that values nature. Tourism mirrors the lack of mainstream philosophical consideration of nature's values and ethical obligations that characterises wider discussions of the human relationship with the environment. As a result, while a conservation ethic today informs much of sustainable tourism policy, the emphasis is on preserving nature for the sake of increasing human well-being. Many seminal reports on human-environment interaction, such as the Brundtland Report (WCED, 1987), Millennium Eco-System Assessment (2005), and Stern Report (2006), take an anthropocentric approach, all of which implicitly or explicitly advocate a conservation ethic to ensure human and economic well-being.

The importance of a conservation ethic to sustainable tourism policy is emphasised in the United Nations World Tourism Organization's (UNWTO) Global Code of Ethics, which states that all tourism stakeholders must safeguard the natural environment to achieve sound, continuous, and sustainable economic growth geared to satisfying equitably the needs and aspirations of present and future generations (UNWTO, 1999). The focus on environmental protection for economic gain maintains the anthropic tradition of valuing nature in terms of its use. Environmental policies in the tourism industry are primarily based on nature conservation for social and economic benefit and to sustain tourism (Holden, 2005), as exemplified in the following citation from the world's largest tour operator Touristik Union International sustainability strategy of 2015 (TUI 2015: 5), which notes that 'decreasing our carbon footprint and addressing local environmental concerns are crucial to the future viability of travel and tourism, not just for the planet and local people'.

## Conclusion

Moral shifts in attitudes toward tourism as a result of its environmental repercussions, as implausible as they may appear at the moment, are likely to have enormous insinuations for how tourism is expended and it would most likely prompt a re-evaluation of its pleasure-seeking orientation. It could also lead to a quest for alternative forms of tourism that have lower carbon footprints and are more environmentally friendly. Based on the assumption that

universal understanding and adoption of an environmental ethic will aid in the transition to a more symbiotic relationship between humans and nature, obvious concerns arise as to how the framework for practical application of an eco-centric ethic might be developed. Curry (2011) believes that an eco-centric ethic must be deontological to make a beneficial effect in the world. As a result, it should have both a measurable impact and enforced norms that reward a culture that encourages eco-centric conduct while punishing the opposite. However, in the context of tourism, such an approach may not be possible without the widespread endorsement of an environmental ethic among stakeholders. According to Callicott (1999), society's increased ecological literacy is necessary for the establishment of an environmental ethic centered on the inherent value of nature. As a result, it could be claimed that the cultivation of a greater environmental ethic among tourism stakeholders is outside of tourism's scope. However, as Breakey and Breakey (2015) point out, tourism provides an opportunity for people to connect with nature and develop a deeper environmental ethic. It is, therefore, necessary to consider a circular flow between tourism and the environment, for example, if emotional connections with the environment can be developed through tourism, thereby encouraging sustainable lifestyles, there will be ramifications for the types of experiences we seek from tourism, as well as the number of natural resources and environmental impacts required to fulfill them.

However, given the global development of tourism and a decreasing amount of nature, for example, a loss of biodiversity and ecosystems not directly influenced by humans, it is highly likely that the environmental repercussions of tourism will become more widely recognised and discussed. As a result, tourism cannot avoid moral concerns about its impact on people and the environment. The topic of future generations is significant because it brings the moral concern of environmental harm to others into the immediate context of a society where human relationships are strongest. As a result, even within an anthropic ethical framework, there is likely to be a growing awareness of the environmental implications of a holiday. While understanding environmental ethics as a set of guiding principles for the morality of our actions concerning nature is still a work in progress, the continued global expansion of tourism is expected to raise moral concerns about the exploitation of nature. As a result, it's important to think about how environmental ethics should be reflected in long-term tourism policies and initiatives. Full acceptance of nature's inherent value would necessitate weighing human interests against those of nature, which could create challenges for tourism development. To sum it all, Leopold's Land ethic suggests that the tourism industry stakeholders should treat the natural environment to have the same value as themselves, and as such, it will lead to the industry being more sustainable.

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