

# ECO-CLUB MANUAL

## (FOR ECO-CLUB INCHARGES)

2012



स्वाध्यायान्मा प्रमदः

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## CHAPTER

# 6

## ENVIRONMENTAL ETHICS AND LEGAL ASPECTS

Environmental ethics believe in the ethical relationship between human beings and the natural environment. Just as human beings are a part of the society, living beings are also a part of it. When we talk about the philosophical principle that guides our life, we often ignore the fact that even plants and animals are a part of our lives. They are an integral part of the environment and hence have a right to be considered a part of the human life. Thus, it is clear that they should also be associated with our guiding principles as well as our moral and ethical values.

### **What is Environmental Ethics?**

We are cutting down forests for making our homes. We are continuing with an excessive consumption of natural resources. Their excessive use is resulting in their depletion, risking the life of our future generations. Is this ethical? This is the issue that environmental ethics takes up.

Thus human beings are disturbing the balance in the nature. The harm we, as human beings, are causing to the nature, is coming back to us by resulting in a polluted environment. The depletion of natural resources is endangering our future generations. The imbalance in nature that we have caused is going to disrupt our life as well. But environmental ethics brings about the fact that all the life forms on Earth have a right to live. By destroying the nature, we are depriving these life forms of their right to live. We are going against the true ethical and moral values by disturbing the balance in nature. We are being unethical in treating the plant and animal life forms, which coexist in society.

- Is it important for us to preserve nature for the future generation? If so, are we even making an effort to do that?
- Is the human race alone important on this earth? If not, then aren't our actions proving otherwise?

- What would happen if animals, plants and other species are destroyed. Would we be affected?
- Are our future generations entitled to a clean and green environment? Do they even have a right?
- Is it right for us to be responsible for the extinction of certain species only for the sake of our consumption and greed?
- Is it our moral right to be clearing forests for the sake of human consumption?
- In spite of knowing that gasoline run vehicles lead to the destruction of natural resources, is it right for us to continue manufacturing and using them? Can we not use alternate natural resources?
- Are the guidelines which are drawn to protect the environment and nature any effective? What is causing their failure?
- What is environmental pollution and pollution of the air, soil and water doing to the world?
- If you ask yourself any of these above mentioned questions, you'll know what the solutions are. But is that enough?

Environmental ethics is definitely just not a fancy term which is added into the dictionary of environmental words but is going to get results. It is the generation of today who can make clean, non-polluted and healthy environment of tomorrow provided they are guided in the right direction. So, let us inculcate some ethical environmental values in them for a better tomorrow. Have we the right to take all the Earth's resources for our own use?

NO! Then why are we doing so? Let us first understand what can happen if our resources are not judiciously used?

1. Ecological balance will be disturbed.
2. Survival of the human race will be seriously affected.

What can we as responsible citizen's of India do in order to save the earth's resources?

The student's will give answer to this question

You could tell them short instances in story way form so that they realise the importance of our resources. For example: A girl is taking bath with the shower on. She is applying soap and singing in real masti. Her mother is repeatedly telling her from outside to close the shower otherwise the water will finish, but the girl is so busy entertaining herself with the latest melodies that she is not listening to her mother and suddenly water finishes. She shouts!!!! She has soap all over her body. She dose'nt know what to do. She now curses herself for not closing the shower when it was not required and realises the importance of water.

And do you know after this incidence the girl started preaching her mother how to save water. She told her mother that the washings of the pulses, rice and vegetables could be used for watering the plants. Similarly, the water of the washing machine could be used for cleaning the floor/ tiles.

Another story to inculcate in students that using electricity judiciously can not only bring down the electricity bill, but can also save you from frequent power cuts. When there is a power cut and the generator is on your elders tell you to sit in one room with minimum of the lights, fans and other gadgets to be used so that the generator lasts for long, as one does not know for how long the power cut is. Think, if you switch off the lights, fans and other gadgets when not in use then won't you be saving electricity? Like the generator, the electricity too will last for a longer duration and a time will come when you will not require a generator at all.

By these short stories you will at least make the students think how to save our natural resources particularly water and light which are the two major resources required in our daily life.

## ADOPT A PLANT

**ACTIVITY:** In a small pot each student will be asked either to sow seeds of some simple vegetables like tomato, chillies or they can take a sapling of some ornamental plants, they can even take sapling of

tulsi plant or curry patta. Now they will be asked to look after their own plant till the time they pass out from the school. The plant can then be given them as their farewell gift.

**Evaluation:** Periodical evaluation for each student in the class can be done monthly by the class teacher. The most healthy plant can also be rewarded by a gift.

### CLEAN YOUR ENVIRONMENT

**ACTIVITY:** Every classroom and the part of the corridor in front of their classroom has to be kept neat and clean. This will be the responsibility of all the student's of one class.

The principal or its representative can take a round at the end of the day and the student's of neat and clean classroom along with the neat corridor can be rewarded by some small gift-----may be toffees, pencil, eraser, etc. and the dirtiest classroom students can be fined (may be asked to bring one pencil, eraser, scale etc which can be given as reward to the one that has won the prize.

**Evaluation:** The student's can be evaluated on the basis of:

- Neat and clean classroom
- Neat and clean corridor
- Tables and chair properly arranged

Most of you have pets at home. Where do you take them for their nature's call. On the road? But when you are going to school early in the morning you must have seen the faeces of these pets on the road and you were just about to step on it or may be sometime in a hurry you must have stepped on it. What feeling do you get? You curse the society. Have you ever thought that you are also a party to it? Now what you can do? You could suggest your RWA (Resident's Welfare Association) to select a small park which is already there at the extreme end of the society. If the park is not there a small pit can be dug in one corner of the society and can be marked as pet's toilet. Pets should be taken there only for the nature's call. In some days you will realise that the pet will also go to that place only for easing out. You could ask your society sweeper to clean the place once in a day by accumulating all the faeces in one corner. Soon the faeces will decay and become manure which can be used in the society park.

We often crib about water logging especially during the rainy season and curse the government's inefficiency. But are we not responsible? Do we not throw our waste all around without realising that it can block the sewer lines. Are we not constructing houses by cutting down our natural greenery without giving a thought whether our land can withstand it or not. You all love to go to a park on a holiday. Think where will you go if most of the parks are cut for residential / commercial purposes.

### SAVE PAPER, SAVE TREE AND SAVE THE ENVIRONMENT

We all use paper but most of the time we throw the waste paper in the dustbin. We tear off the envelopes of our electricity, water other bills and throw them in the dustbin. Don't you think we are doing wrong? Do you know where do we get our paper from? YES! You are right. Paper is made from the wood. So, we are cutting a large number of trees to make paper. You also know that trees are very important for a clean and healthy environment and thus it becomes necessary for you to use the paper judiciously. Recycling of the paper is the need of the hour.

**ACTIVITY:** Select five children in your neighbourhood studying in different classes from class 6<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> and ask them the following questions:

1. Do they use full page, half page, single side, both sides of their notebooks?
2. What do they do with the pages left in their notebooks after the session is over?
3. Do they use these empty pages for rough work?
4. What do they do with their old note books? Throw it in the dustbin, give it to the kabadiwallah or burn it?

Record your data in a tabular form. What conclusion do you draw from this?

If these children are not using the paper judiciously, explain them how they are disturbing the natural environment and that their own doing can harm their own future.

Do you know what all you can make with the waste paper?

1. Carry bags
2. Cards
3. Wall hangings and many more articles

**ACTIVITY:** Ask the students to make best out of waste paper and you could arrange for an exhibition and prizes can be given to the 1<sup>st</sup> -3<sup>rd</sup> best articles made out of waste paper.

**EVALUATION:** Student can be evaluated on neatness of the article, whether the article has actually been made from the waste paper and the innovative idea.

### MAKE YOUR OWN COMPOST

- Collect the biodegradable waste in one corner of the school
- The students of each class will be asked to throw the biodegradable wastes in a dustbin kept outside their class.
- At the end of the day one student (every day the student will change and in this way there will be involvement of the whole class) will throw this waste in the large pit made in one corner of the school.
- In this way all the biodegradable waste of the school will be collected in this pit.
- You can select two small corners of your school. Fill one at a time. For two months use one pit and then throw your biodegradable waste in the other pit. Cover the first pit containing the biodegradable waste with soil and leave it for two months. Make sure you keep the soil moist.
- After some time you will see that all the biodegradable waste has been converted into manure.
- This manure can now be used in your school gardens.

You can make your own compost at home also in a pot. Put the used tea leaves, egg shell or any other biodegradable vegetable waste in this pot and cover it with atleast 15cm. of soil. Make sure you keep the soil moist.

And in this way you you have not only made your own compost, but also have saved the environment from pollution.

### SANITATION AND HYGIENE

The need of the hour is to make the people aware they have a great role to play in keeping their surroundings neat and clean and that their participation is essential in the management of garbage in their neighbourhood. Why always curse the MCD? If we can keep our house spick and span then why not our surroundings?

**ACTIVITY:** Each student will be asked to do a survey of atleast 5 families in their neighbourhood and the following questions can be included in the survey sheet.

1. Is there any accumulation of garbage in and around your society/house?
2. Who all are responsible for dumping the garbage in the neighbourhood? The people of the society/ house or street sweepers or any other person. Who throws your garbage and where?
3. Is there a municipal corporation dustbin?

- If yes, then who comes to collect the garbage and how frequently? Twice a day, once a day or once in two days or only when repeatedly complaints are sent to the MCD.

The student will record the observations in a tabular form.

**CONCLUSION:** Who is responsible for dirtying the environment?

- The students will be asked to write ways of educating their neighbours on proper disposal of garbage.
- The children of their society can take out a rally with placards and shouting slogans educating the society on hygiene and sanitation. This is our place. We live here. Keep the place neat and clean.

**EVALUATION:**

- Did the students complete their survey on time?
- The different ways that they have suggested for educating their neighbours for disposal of garbage.
- Neatness and presentation of their survey data.
- Put three dustbins for disposing off your waste outside your classroom and also in your house. Paint one with red colour, 2<sup>nd</sup> with green colour and third with blue colour.
- In the red dustbin throw your non-biodegradable waste, in blue recycled waste like paper etc. and in the green dustbin put bio-degradable waste.
- The biodegradable waste can be put in a pit for making of the compost, recycled waste to be given for recycling (there are green peace people who collect this, including the newspaper from your doorstep), and only the non-biodegradable waste should be thrown in the municipal corporation dustbin.

**ACTIVITY:**

BIODEGRADABLE DUSTBIN (GREEN)	NON-BIODEGRADABLE DUSTBIN (BLUE)	RECYCLED DUSTBIN (BLUE)

- Record the waste of your house for a particular day in the above table.
- Record your observation for seven consecutive days.

What did your mother do with the respective waste?

Were you successful in segregating the household waste?

**EVALUATION:**

- Was the student able to segregate the waste correctly?
- Presentation of his/her work.
- Neatness
- Was the work done on time?

**ACTIVITY:** Role play: The student to be given some topics and asked to enact in the assembly. In this way the entire school will be educated on the environmental ethics. The topic can be chosen from any of the questions written in the beginning of this topic.

- Inter class/ inter school debate/extempore :
- Some of the topics for debate:
  - Should the paper be recycled?
  - Should we think of the present and use our natural resources?
  - Any other topic-----help in choosing the topic can be taken from the questions given in the first part of the topic.