ORIGINAL ARTICLE

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

ISSN: 2692-515-x, Impact Factor: 9.23

American Academic publishers, volume 6, issue 01,2026

Journal: https://www.academicpublishers.org/journals/index.php/ijai

ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP: VITAL AND ETHICAL PERSPECTIVES

Muqimjonova Kamolabonu Qaxramonjon kizi

ORCID 0009-0009-0387-2174

k9970328@gmail.com

TURAN UNIVERSITY ANDIJAN BRANCH

Vaxidova Feruza Muxamadjanovna

ORCID 0009-0005-0533-7037

feruzavohidova@97gmail.com

Abstract: This article analyzes the vital and ethical foundations of environmental stewardship. The research emphasizes the necessity of perceiving nature not merely as a resource for human consumption but as a complex living system. Drawing upon the ecological roles of flora, the study explains the ethical and scientific dimensions of environmental protection, supported by the philosophical insights of both ancient and modern scholars. Ultimately, the paper calls for a reassessment of humanity's responsibility to live in harmony with the natural world.(3)

Keywords: environmental protection, nature care, ecological sustainability, ethical responsibility, Aristotle, Ibn Sina, Paul Taylor.

1. Introduction

Humanity has long recognized the importance of living in harmony with nature. However, contemporary ecological imbalances and the depletion of natural resources pose a serious threat to the future of mankind. In this context, environmental stewardship is not only an ecological necessity but a fundamental human responsibility. Vital elements such as trees, plants, water sources, and air are essential for human life and constitute integral parts of the global ecosystem. Their protection is vital for maintaining ecological stability, supporting biodiversity, and ensuring human health. Consequently, it is imperative for every individual to contribute to environmental preservation.(4)

2. Problem Statement

In modern society, nature is often viewed through a utilitarian lens as a resource to serve human interests. This paradigm leads to:

- The destruction of trees and vegetation.
- The depletion of water and land resources.
- The disruption of ecosystem stability.

The central question of this study is: what ethical and scientific norms are required for humanity to achieve a harmonious coexistence with nature?.

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3. Analysis and Discussion

The vital and scientific aspects of environmental protection are manifest in several key areas:

3.1. The Ecological Role of Flora Trees purify the air, stabilize the soil, conserve water, and support biodiversity. Plants function not just as food sources but as indispensable components of the ecosystem.(1)

3.2. Ethical Responsibility Negligence toward plant life contradicts the ethical responsibilities of humanity. Historically, scholars have viewed living in harmony with nature as a human duty. Furthermore, environmental care reflects respect for future generations and ensures societal stability.(1)

3.3. Modern Environmental Ethics In his seminal work Respect for Nature, Paul Taylor posits that all living beings possess intrinsic value. He emphasizes that nature should not be viewed solely as a means to satisfy human ends, but rather as an entity deserving of respect.(1)

4. Scholarly Perspectives

The integration of historical and modern philosophy provides a robust framework for environmental ethics:

- **Aristotle:** Viewed nature as a goal-oriented system where every creature has a specific purpose, making harmony with nature a necessity.
- **Ibn Sina:** Regarded nature as the foundation of life and evaluated plants as essential entities for the survival of both humans and animals.
- **Paul Taylor:** Argues that because living beings have inherent worth, humans must look beyond the instrumental value of nature.

5. Practical Recommendations and Conclusion

To strengthen ecological sustainability, the following practical measures are recommended:

- Planting trees and maintaining gardens.
- Reducing and recycling waste.
- Conserving water and energy resources.
- Utilizing environmentally friendly products.

These actions manifest human responsibility and contribute to significant global changes. Environmental stewardship is a multifaceted responsibility—ethical, cultural, and social. Since trees and plants are vital components of the human life-support system, their protection is both a duty and a mark of respect for the fu

ture. Ultimately, to protect nature is to protect life itself.(4)

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