


Chapter 8

Environmental Human Rights: An Innovative Approach to Achieving Sustainable Development

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ABSTRACT

Human rights are necessary for the prosperity of every individual, irrespective of their country or any other status. There are several agreements to safeguard human rights on a global scale; however, complete protection is still missing. Modern environmental ethicists believe that assigning human traits to the environment, which sustains our existence, is vital for sustainable development. The notion of sustainability pertains to the current economic development and its implications for future generations. The principles of international cooperation are based on three global values: peace, a healthy environment, and sustainable development. The realization of these values' correlations with humans leads to the quest for legal methods to defend humanity's existence and rights. This chapter examines the inclusion of the right to sustainable development within the framework of environmental human rights. Furthermore, it discusses the failure of certain Rio efforts and highlights the need to explore ways to acknowledge the right to a safe and sustainable environment.

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INTRODUCTION

Protecting human rights and the environment are also fundamental ideals in the contemporary international community, in addition to the goal of promoting peace and security throughout the globe. The nexus between safeguarding human rights and the environment has been widely acknowledged for a considerable time. In the modern world, there is no question that the well-being of an individual may be influenced by the quality of the environment in which they reside. The human environment may not be sufficient for some people to relish their other human rights, like the right to life and the right to live in a safe place for their health (Chakraborty, 2020).

It is vital to recognize the relationship between protecting human rights and the environment, also called environmental protection. In order to have a happy and satisfying life, one must have a clean and sustainable environment. However, environmental protection might be reinforced if all human rights, together with the right to education, assembly, freedom of speech, and full enjoyment of economic, social, and cultural rights, were effectively enjoyed. This is because all of these rights are fundamental to human dignity. This is accomplished by establishing situations that encourage the change of behavioural designs that result in the deterioration of the environment (Craissati et al., 2007).

According to a declaration issued at the “*United Nations Conference on the Human Environment in 1972*”, “man's environment, both natural and man-made, are essential to his well-being and to the enjoyment of basic human rights, including the right to life itself” (Hoelting, 1994). Specifically, the relationship between human rights and the environment has been shown to exist for the very first time in this specific instance. “Environmental Human Rights,” or the universally recognized entitlement to a healthy and safe natural setting, is an old concept. Many international accords have addressed the issue since the United Nations Stockholm Conference in 1972. The growth of human rights, such as the right to life and development, protected by the constitutions or laws of around sixty nations, depends on a healthy environment (Boyd, 2015). Although many international laws and processes are intended to safeguard human rights, there is still a significant distance to go until these rights are completely safeguarded. Regardless of their citizenship or other status, everyone has a fundamental right to human dignity and the opportunity to realize their full potential. Building a relationship between environmental justice and human rights has been a long and winding road. However, modern environmental ethicists contend that putting a face on the planet that provides us with food, shelter, and water is essential to achieving sustainable development (Lewis, 2012). Peace breaches, pollution, and resource depletion put the development of future generations at risk, in addition to the development of those who have already been affected. Sustainability offers a solution concerning the effects of current economic expansion on

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