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# Managing sustainability: Poetry of motion

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## Abstract

Anthropocentrism and eco-centrism are the two complementary philosophies that are trying to offer an answer to the question “How can people continue their civilization on Earth without destroying both – the nature and themselves”? The crucial motivation for the study was to emphasize the necessity for a joint sustainability of nature-made and man-made systems, as five largest-in-population religions, Buddhism, Hinduism, Judaism, Christianity and Islam, teach. Through comparative discussions, the study argues that sustainable development is a very plausible paradigm for obtaining a balance between both systems, maintainable over time and space. Basically, the concept of sustainable development itself is founded on three main criteria – knowledge, morality and timeliness which enable it to be a negative entropy mechanism securing planet Earth’s survival. The objective of this Paper is to demonstrate that anthropocentrism and eco-centrism exhibit a certain degree of rigidity, one sidedness and (to an extent) inconsistency and to offer a possible alternative for survival and progress - the paradigm of sustainable development based on the unifying concept of the main religions.

**Keywords:** Anthropocentrism; Eco-centrism; Religion; Negative Entropy; Survival

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## 1. Introduction

While in the past, the human I was one of the most studied subjects in psychology, today it is the structure of the human I that has become the main topic of a plethora of scientific disciplines – economic sciences, political sciences, societal sciences, etc. The alibi for incorporating the human I in all areas of society as a reason for rises and progresses, but also destructions, devastations and failures on individual, social and global levels, is uniquely special. It is the knowledge that the man and human I are at the center of all activities and events in secular life on Earth and beyond - in the spiritual world, where in the name of God he is given the right to act in the role of a “guardian” and “ruler”. Facing the challenges of this role, man puts his I in the center of HIS attention, which, to some extent, could be justified if he, with all his actions, does not intend to be the center of attention of the whole planetary world, subjecting and subordinating it to his own needs, desires and drives. The problem is that the man perceives his own I through a magnifying glass that distorts the views and perspectives, thus distorting the perception of the way he understands and experiences himself.

In short-term, the consequences of this may be insignificant. Yet, the gap between man and nature is growing, and seemingly “the invisible” is reflected on the sustainability of the material world which surrounds us, the existentialism of open space and vitality of the Earth – the natural mosaic in which man constitutes just a miniature part. The question is: How can mankind continue the civilization on Earth without destroying itself and the nature? The answer to this question leads us to two philosophical concepts – eco-centrism and anthropocentrism “recognized as one of the common ecological moral dilemmas” (Kortenkamp and Moore, 2001, p. 262).

The rest of this article is structured as follows. A comparative review of the fundamentals of Anthropocentrism and Eco-centrism is placed in Sec. 2. In Sec. 3 it proceeds with an overview of the impact of the religious perspectives for managing sustainability and imposing sustainable development. The “debates” on the possibility of sustainable development are presented in Sec. 4, which is followed by concluding remarks in Sec. 5.

## 2. Anthropocentrism vs. eco-centrism

*“The survival of the world depends upon our sharing what we have and working together. If we don't, the whole world will die First, the planet and next the people.”* Fools Crow [I]

There are numerous hypotheses attempting to explain (inter) relationships between the man and everything else that exists. One of them is the Gaia hypothesis named after the Greek Goddess Gaia who drew the living world from Chaos. According to this hypothesis, the Earth is a living organism which, in order to ensure its own survival, is capable of self-regulation. “The assumption was if there is a life, the atmosphere of a planet must have very different composition from its surface, as is the case with Earth. This assumption was based on the idea that a lifeless planet would be in the state of equilibrium, and its atmosphere and surface would be very similar.” [II]. So, life is one that preserves the state of imbalance between the

atmosphere and surface. The suggestion was that this imbalance is maintained by an active control system that allows the continuation of existence. This active control planetary system is life itself and it has become known as Gaia.

Hypothesis that is opponent of Gaia hypothesis is the Medea hypothesis. "The base of this one is that multi-cellular life, understood as a super-organism, is suicidal; in this view microbial-triggered mass extinctions are attempts to return the Earth to the microbial dominated state it has been for most of its history. It is named after the mythological Medea, who killed her own children. Medea represents the Earth, and her children are multi-cellular life." (Anthony-Gardner, 2013).

Currently, there are various thoughts and efforts directed to elucidate connectivity between the man and nature. In general, all of them can be summarized into two "philosophies": anthropocentrism and ecocentrism.

## 2.1. Anthropocentrism

Anthropocentrism postulates that the focus and the purpose of everything that happens on Earth is the man and his life; that one exists only for himself, that he is the unit of measure for all things and the fundamental meaning of everything that happens. Anthropocentrism is the position that "human beings are the most significant entity of the universe", thereby elevating them to be more valuable than other species. Alternatively, it can be defined as "interpreting or regarding the world in terms of human values and experiences". This idea can also be referred to as human supremacy over the planet. The standpoint "of a human-centered nature", explicitly states that humans are the sole bearers of intrinsic value and all other living things are there to sustain humanity's existence." (MacKinnon, 2007, p. 331). People, who support anthropocentric view, acknowledge themselves as human beings who are superior, most important and most valuable in the universe. They believe that man is not equal with the other beings, but has a sovereign right to rule the flora, fauna and everything that exists on Earth. They are turned towards their rights and needs, and do not understand or respect neither the needs nor the rights of other species on the planet and the nature in general. Consequently, not only does the human use the environment, he also rapes and abuses it, he makes scars that may not be able to recover, he actually heartlessly vivisects it - a phenomenon that already has reached a global level and consequences. It is something that inevitably may lead to drama of one civilization, only for the purpose of economic growth that would provide material abundance. Anthropocentrism, in its extreme form, is a variation of shallow and vulgar hedonism which promises a "wealthy" society through economic progress. Based on the reductionists view, anthropocentrism starts from the simple principle that man has power over earth, to heartlessly use and exploit it for its own benefit. The following views are results of this principle (Decleris, 2000, pp. 53, 54):

- The man, who also comes from nature and is its highest achievement is defined and assigned to change the environment and nature in the human world, rich with material wealth!
- There is no natural barrier to the above stated principle: even though population will stabilize in the future, in the meantime it can be multiplied without any fear since Earth can exist with unlimited population!

- There are enough natural resources and, in any case, the technology would discover new ones - if the old ones are depleted!
- There is no environmental crisis and the alleged threat is a scientist's fantasy. All environmental problems could be successfully solved with the help of technology!
- Production and consumption can continue indefinitely, endlessly - there is no reason for their reduction!

However, this interpretation is misleading and prejudicial, it hurts ethical judgments and criteria, it strengthens centripetal forces that drive humanity to its own self-destruction, since the "ecological footprint" (Gaston, 2005, p. 239) that resulted from those approaches and humans' greediness has led over the decades to massive alteration in nature's balance, as well as to many recognizable environmental crises the world is facing today. Yet, Gabor (1963, p. 154) states that "Till now Man has been up against Nature; from now on he will be up against his own nature."

## 2.2. Eco-centrism

On the other hand, Eco-centrism recognizes and respects the intrinsic value of all living things on earth, their value of being alive, regardless of their usefulness to the humans. Eco-centrism as a concept relies on the word *eco* (*oikos*) which means "house" and "home". As such, it includes the message of "taking care of home", but "home" which includes everything that exists, animate and inanimate – not only the human. It presumes a position of respect and concern, protection of everything that is created on our planet. Basically, it equates the value of man with value of other living forms in nature. Eco-centrism, as the opposite of anthropocentrism, represents the attitude of returning to the simplistic manners of managing the nature. Its proponents emphasize the catastrophic impact of industrial civilization on the nature and recommend its abandonment, since all existing types of development unconditionally lead to a reduction of natural resources, leaving environmental problems unsolved. Eco-centrism censures the anthropocentric approach to the environment↔man relationship and, extending morality and justice, proclaims the rights of nature. In fact, it is not only the man that has rights; plants, animals and even inorganic elements have their rights as well (Decleris, 2000, p. 55).

Further on, Decleris (2000, p. 56) argues that Anthropocentrism (the concept that economic growth is a measure of development and progress) and eco-centrism (the concept that the man is the same with other living and inanimate nature) represent extreme concepts due to a simple reason: they are both one-sided, and they both suffer from insufficient logical method. Economic growth, as a theory per se, cannot give the answer to the fundamental question facing the contemporary economic theory and practice: How to create a powerful economy that will not destroy natural resources and environmental systems on which it depends? This theory is purely analytical; it isolates the human from his environment; it examines human economic activities in a relatively short period of time (at most 30 years). On the other hand, the foci of interest of eco-centrism are evolution, ecosystems and conservation of species, without giving at any "specific gravity" to man. It ignores the unique qualities that distinguish man from other living systems. It rejects a priori the possibility of harmonizing ecosystems and man-made systems. However, humans differ from other living systems, and even artificial systems have specific characteristics and potentials that must be considered.

According to the inelastic principles of both anthropocentrism and eco-centrism, the ability to make environmental decisions to satisfy both positions is difficult, if not impossible. Quite candidly, nature and humanity are devastated when anthropocentrism is practiced; and the conversion to eco-centrism overnight is impossible, especially in the developed/industrialized societies because of their heavy reliance on resources and generation of waste (Wapner and Matthew, 2009, p. 212). It seems that people need to reconsider the purpose of their existence on the planet, as well as their role in the material world.

### 3. Sustainability in religions: Stamina of life

*If we each take responsibility in shifting our own behavior, we can trigger the type of change that is necessary to achieve sustainability for our race or this planet. We change our planet, our environment, our humanity every day, every year, every decade, and every millennia.*

Yehuda Berg [III]

People must become aware that “nature does nothing in vain” and that “from all living creatures only man has rationality... It is his rationality that helps him to make difference between useful and harmful, right and wrong. Compared to other animals, only people have sense for good and evil, justice and injustice and other feelings of the same order” (Aristotle, 1984. pp. 8-22). It is only the man who is gifted with “highly developed awareness and ability to be the bearer of moral values. Thus, it is his responsibility to preserve life at all, the life of both animate and inanimate nature” (Djordjević, 2002, p. 235). “Yet the crises are still with us.” (Palmer and Finlay, 2013, p. 4). Consequently, “... It requires a transformation of values and of lifestyle” (Swearer, 1998). It appears that the man is the one who must find a new expression, a new specific perspective, which, as a new quality, will impose, intensify and accelerate the centrifugal forces that would separate him from the abyss that can destroy his civilization. It really appears that “There is no other road open to human progress than the optimum development of all the physiological, intellectual, and spiritual potentialities of the individual.” (Carrel, 1935, p. 4). It is a paramount that man must finally become aware that “We share the earth not only with our fellow human beings, but with all the other creatures.” (The Dalai Lama) [IV]. He must know that “All organisms are evolved from Earth, sustained by Earth. Thus Earth, not organism, is the metaphor for Life. Earth, not humanity, is the Life-center, the creativity-center. Earth is the whole of which we are subservient parts.” (Rowe, S.J.). This is exactly what the main religions teach.

#### 3.1. Sustainability in Buddhism

Buddhism “is a religion that has always embodied the ethics of environmental awareness and protection. The Buddhist sutras, the sacred teachings compiled as far back as 2,500 years ago, implore us not only to love our neighbors, they teach us also to love our environment. The sutras teach us that all living beings have Buddha nature, and that every being, whether sentient or not, has the same inherent perfect wisdom.” (Hsing, 2012, p. 2). “The main concept in Buddhism is that the idea of separateness is an illusion. Consequently, the health of the whole is inseparably linked to the health of the parts, and the health of the parts is inseparably linked

to the health of the whole. Buddhist practice makes one feel one's existence is no more important than anyone else's. If one treats nature as a friend and teacher, one can be in harmony with other creatures and appreciate the interconnectedness of all that lives. Buddha taught people to live simply and appreciate the natural cycle of life. Craving and greed only bring unhappiness, since demands for material possessions can never be satisfied and people will always demand more, so threatening the environment. This is why the real solution to the environmental crisis begins with the individual." [V] As Mahatma Gandhi said "There is a sufficiency in the world for man's need but not for man's greed". [VI]

### 3.2. Sustainability in Hinduism

Hinduism teaches that "Life is sacred, meaning that all living beings are sacred since they are parts of God, and should be treated with respect and compassion. Even trees, rivers and mountains are believed to have souls, and should be honored and cared for. Hindu people believe in reincarnation; they believe that the soul can be reincarnated into any form of life. Most Hindus are vegetarian as they believe in the sanctity of life. In Hindu society, the most highly respected person is the sadhu – who take pride in living simply and consuming as little as possible." [VII]

### 3.3. Sustainability in Judaism

Judaism belongs to the so-called Abraham religions, as Christianity and Islam. "The Jewish attitude to nature is based on the belief that the universe is the work of the Creator. Love of God includes love of all His creations: the inanimate, plants, animals and humans. Nature in all its beauty is created for us, and our connection to nature restores us to our original state of happiness and joy. The Bible informs us that the earth is given to man 'to use and protect'." [VIII] The Old Testament describes how God created man in his own image, to be lord of all other creatures. In the Scripture, specifically, in Genesis 1:26 - Bible's *Locus Classicus*, it is stated: "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth" (Holy Bible, 2011, p.7).

Certainly, the use of the word *dominion* is controversial.

Some mistakenly interpret it as *command* – implying the possession of a power and control, or given permission by God to man to do everything he wants, and relentlessly use the entire creation of God for his own benefit. Dominion, mentioned in the Bible is not the dominion of a tyrant.

### 3.4. Sustainability in Christianity and Islam

However, "Christianity, with its roots in Judaism, was a major factor in the development of the Western worldview... A basic Christian belief was that God gave humans dominion over creation, with the freedom to use the environment as they saw fit...Because this belief tended to devalue the natural world, it fostered attitudes and behaviors that had a negative effect on the environment" (Kaufman and Franz, 1996, p. 19). Another plausible interpretation is that God's primary purpose for creating man is "man in our image, after

our likeness, human "Godlikeness", and human deification i.e. the creation of man with God's characteristics! After all, the "centre of the Christian universe is the God-man." (Zarov, 2003, p. 35).

On the other hand, many interpret dominion as *stewardship*, suggesting that people should take care of the earth and the various forms of life. It indicates that man should behave responsibly towards the environment, that God holds man responsible for the care and fate of all creatures that live on earth. Namely, Genesis 2:15 formulates the responsibility as: "The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it." This particular concern implies taking care for the environment and for the whole material world that surrounds us, without the participation of human labor (with all occurrences, rules and conditions of the organic and inorganic world). In other words, it refers to care for every living creature that exists in the Garden of Eden.

Nonetheless, over the course of time, man repeatedly deviates from this unity with God, failing to resist his own self-centered impulses, enslaves to self-centeredness. Placing his desires before the teachings of the Bible, he departed from God-centeredness and became homo-centered. According to this point of view, this leads to the subjugation and oppression of the various forms of life, heaping material wealth, uncontrolled selfishness and behavior defined as sinful. The man turned away as he became a subject of chrematistics (Aristotle, 1984, p. 12) - servant of that art of trading and enrichment. The accumulation of money itself is an unnatural activity that dehumanizes those who practice it. Unlike the natural managing that strives to obtain whatever is necessary and appropriate for both the individual's and the community's continuance of life, going up to a certain limit placed on fulfilling the needs of the community - chrematistics has no boundaries as its objective is increasing the money to infinity. The man has withdrawn as vain, since he is not human but only an anthropomorphic creature that violates God's commandments and cannot resist the seven deadly sins: wrath, greed, sloth, pride, lust, envy and gluttony. And we know: mortal sin is repugnant rebellion of man against God and this sin turns man away from God's grace and destroys any good in his soul. A mortal sin is believed to destroy the life of charity, as a vital principle, within a person. When speaking about the relationship between the man and everything that surrounds him, it seems that out of the seven sins, pride and greed are of greatest importance. Namely, since the man become prideful and experienced himself as equal to God, he turned away from him. And since the man become greedy he will destroy everything. "The sun, the moon and the stars would have disappeared long ago... If they happened to be within the reach of predatory human hands." (Havelock, 1923, ch.7).

As the man fell into sin, he must now rebuild all spiritual foundations and prosper. "To progress again, man must remake himself. And he cannot remake himself without suffering. For he is both the marble and the sculptor. In order to uncover his true visage, he must shatter his own substance with heavy blows of his hammer." (Carrel, 1935, p.6). In this desire for catharsis, according to the Bible, Jesus Christ helps people saying "Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect" (Matthew 5:48), or as it has been well imagined at the beginning - worship of man and the creation of man in God's characteristics.

The duty of "Guardian of the Earth", was given to the man in the Quran, the Holy book of the second largest religion in the world - Islam. According to some authors (Faruqi, 2007, p. 463), "The purpose for the creation of mankind and Man's role as stated in the Quran is that human beings have been placed on the

earth as God's representative or *Khalifah*". The Quran doctrine of vice-regent or *Khālifah* "placed Man in the role of Amāna or trustee and custodian of the earth, thus responsible for building the earth and utilizing its resources with a sense of justice to oneself and to fellow mankind" (Kamali, 2003, p. 115). The role assigned to Man by the Quran included accountability of the numerous resources given by God or Allah.

Clearly, the holy books of the two largest religions, Christianity and Islam, call upon human duty to protect, nurture, guard, to beware and to nourish God's creation. They both appeal for sustainability as fundamental to survival. With full trust God appoints man as His follower and trustee to keep the garden and to ensure its sustainability. As a gift and responsibility! The dilemma that arises is whether the "caretaker" is willing to fulfill the mission that is given to him, or the caretaking becomes a burden and is rejected and replaced with pursuit for easiness, even at the risk of its own survival. The man withdrew from the original God's conception, becoming his apostate, having no respect for life and creation. He sees the world through a kaleidoscope which portrays all things in order and harmony. Even more, being bloodthirsty and vulturine, he consumes the natural resources with a predatory hunger for the purpose of ruthless economic growth. The truth is that "This is a beautiful planet and not at all fragile. Earth can withstand significant volcanic eruption, tectonic cataclysms, and ice ages. But this canny, intelligent, prolific, and extremely self-centered human creature had proven himself capable of more destruction of life than Mother Nature itself... We've got to be stopped." Nothing legitimizes and justifies human ambition to exploit nature. On the contrary, the main religions teach that man owes his tribute to nature and to her creations, and is obliged to protect and defend her. "I think the environment should be put in the category of our national security. Defense of our resources is just as important as defense abroad. Otherwise what is there to defend?" (Redford, 1985). It is obvious that "The man on this planet can be saved only if he takes care, apart from his own life, for every living thing, respecting his life as much as life around him" (Gruhl, 1989, p. 14). Bacon once said: "We cannot command Nature except by obeying her". Thus, we have to be aware of the task given to us – protecting, maintaining, and nourishing the treasures of the Earth which ensure both our and Earth's survival. We must be aware that what we do to Earth cannot remain *Sub Rosa*. Time has come when we need to get out of the collective catatonia in which we are now, simple because "The earth we abuse and the living things we kill will, in the end, take their revenge; for in exploiting their presence we are diminishing our future." (Mannes, 1958, p. 41). That is why we cannot allow decisions of great importance to be taken without a plan; to leave things to pass by is to commit collective suicide. Therefore, it would be best to try to throwaway *Culpa Levis in Concreto* attitude and to try to respect and live this words "The World is my country, all mankind are my brethren, and to do well is my religion" (Paine, T.). It looks as the man should change his own perspective, since "The world grows smaller and smaller, more and more interdependent...today more than ever before life must be characterized by a sense of Universal Responsibility, not only nation to nation and human to human, but also human to other forms of life." (His Holiness the XIV Dalai Lama). But, how can this be achieved? "Surely the divine source of all life, which most call God, could not have presented us with a more paradoxical challenge." (Strong, 2000, p.15).

The answer is by implementing the concept of sustainable development, defined by the Brundtland Commission as "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs." (UN, 1987). Yet, even though it is accepted as the only one philosophy

of development that can provide survival on long term, there are already not a few who hasten to classify it as yet another human utopia. A few decades there are attempts on global level to revive this concept that sublimates the spiritual ideals of all humanity in one logical entity. Both philosophies, anthropocentrism and eco-centrism went kneeled and lost the battle with ethical concept of the sustainability of development. As supreme values, the sustainable development recognizes equity, justice, ethics and responsibility towards present and future generations. In today's context, sustainability means sustainability of human society that fully depends and remains bonded over time with nature systems. In the dynamic system as the human society is, sustainability is a matter of balance, a balance kept over time and space. Sustainability is dynamic; it is more quality of motion than a fix point. Knowing that more forces can act simultaneously and interrupt the equilibrium, maybe it is better to define sustainability as lack of forces that tend to disrupt the balance over time. Only when the forces that disrupt the balance of the system are removed, only than sustainability can be achieved (Dahl, 1995, p. 1).

Yet, is it enough only to eradicate the forces that disorder the sustainability of the system? Or, there is a need for something else and something more. And finally,

#### 4. Is sustainable development possible?

*"We shall require a substantially new manner of thinking if mankind is to survive",* Albert Einstein [IX]

Sustainable development implies a vision of a prosperous world in which development will continue and last indefinitely, at service not only to the current but also to the future generations. (Matlievska, 2011, p. 8). The carefully selected actions ensuring survival of the environment will be built in the decisions (public or private) related to any development.

But how could we achieve this? In addition, if possible at all, is sustainable development attainable?

To answer this question, we will summarize some facts. The global and interconnected problems that threaten sustainable development are: the lack of resources, environmental degradation, rapid population growth, ethnic and tribal violence, hypocrisy and ethical regression. Common denominator of these conditions is - degradation! Thermodynamic quantity that estimates the degree of degradation and disorder of a process or system is entropy. It is a tendency of the system to slip spontaneously into a state of bigger disorder. Therefore, entropy is a measure of the "disorder" of a system. In this sense, as opposing to degradation, sustainable development is negative entropy (negentropy) mechanism, meaning that it has a power to reduce the entropy and to increase the order, orderliness and arrangement. Processes of global metabolism cause total entropy increase, which implies that sustainable development is threatened. This, in turn, implies that the entropy is the reason that the world metabolism is intrinsically unsustainable. However, despite the finite physical resources and facilities, knowledge and mental capacities have characteristics to enrich rather than deplete over time, thereby creating new reserves of negentropy, making sustainable development attainable. Of course, the knowledge is not enough, ethics are also necessary in practice.

Sustainable development means wise development. Wisdom, however, according to a release of UNESCO is “knowledge plus morality” (Pop-Jordanov, 2000, pp. 148-153). Why? Simply because while “Scientific truth is marvelous, moral truth is divine” (Mann, H.).

To these parameters, Academic Jordan Pop Jordanov adds timeliness as necessary component for achieving sustainable, wise development. “Through a jointed and timely action of morality and knowledge, sustainable development is possible”. (Pop-Jordanov, 2003, pp. 273-278).

## **5. Concluding remarks**

Modern mankind’s ego reaches its climax and he self-admiringly and proudly claims he has a power, and nature is his property, his possession. But, if he does not treat and respect it righteously he risks being confronted with anger, accumulated resentment and negative energy that like an explosion one day may collapse on him. The powerful man then becomes a subordinate convict who struggles to save his own life and salvation. Mindless fixation with his prestige, welfare and hedonistic addiction is the biggest threat upright as a challenge in front of self-awarded human superiority. A man perceives himself as a master of everything that exists, a title that he has boldly given himself, and he tries to carry a burden without having strength to carry it. And he is hypnotized with the pursuit for development. But how to achieve progress without destroying himself and nature that provides resources for his development? Two philosophies, two paradigms, anthropocentrism and eco-centrism, are trying to answer that question. Still, both of them are based on debatable arguments and prejudices making them (to some extent) adamant, uncompromising and delusive. Thus, neither one can offer a clear vision of the way mankind should continue to develop.

Perhaps, the answer to that question should be sought in the teachings contained in the holy books of the major religions. The analysis done resulted in the general conclusion that they call for proper relationship of man to man, and man to nature. All religions preach charity as a vital principle. And exactly that is the message of the holy books: that the power and the strength were not given to man to exploit and underestimate the weaker than himself. On the contrary, the power has been given to man to express his solidarity and charity towards the weaker. The grandiosity of a powerful man emerges from his treatment of his subordinates.

The answer also lies in the fact that man is the only living being having a gift to differentiate good and virtuous from bad and evil. And right here one can see man’s greatness, his mightiness, in consonance with his capability for making distinction between just and unjust, and according to his capacity for being cherish-full and to help the powerless. That is the foundation upon which the concept of sustainable development is built on. So far, there is no other philosophy that can offer clear path for survival of man and nature. So far, there is no alternative. As a philosophy that demands compliance and consistency, the philosophy of sustainable development is undoubtedly complex. That is the reason why many people do not believe in this philosophy.

Yet, there is a growing number of those who offer solutions that consider sustainable development as achievable. There is growing number of those who alert for the necessity of balance and harmonious

relationship between man and nature. There is growing number of those who believe that the formula for survival and further progress and development of man rests on achieving self balance and establishing a mechanism of self-control towards nature. On the one hand, it is possible and attainable through elimination of all forces, of all that tending to deform the meaning of development. On the other hand it is possible and achievable through timely, judicious and ethical application of knowledge. This is the only way of understanding the proper meaning of dominion-neither command, nor control, but watching over, taking care, stewardship, nursing, a way of fusion with nature. This is *modus operandi* that shall become a pedestal and shall result in the releasing energy directed towards higher goals for harmonious balance, overall sustainability thus making the sustainable development reachable.

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