

Environmentalism

- Advocates of social and cultural change
- Success depends on persuading others on their interpretation of reality
- Concern that environment needs to be protected from harmful human activity
- Against the dominant capitalist ethos
- Individual level: certain commitment
- Deals with perception and valuations of nature among different social groups
- Origin: access to and control of resources
- Feature of industrial society
- Expression:
 - ✓ Government policies
 - ✓ Environmental organisations
 - ✓ Political parties, e.g. Green Party, change in land use
 - ✓ Green Consumerism
- Environmentalism in non-industrial societies.

Raymond Dasmann(1976) : Ecosystem people and biosphere people

Ecosystem people	Biosphere people
Live within a single ecosystem or two or three adjacent.	Use resources of whole biosphere, draw on wide range of ecosystems
Traditional , non industrial society, opted out or pushed out of technological society	Modern lifestyles, Urban people
Depend on immediate environment for survival, so feel constraints of their environment	Do not experience constraints of their environment.

- Problem: Ecosystem people transformed to biosphere people for industrial and colonial expansion; unwillingly and also with mutual cooperation(increasing)
- One solution: Transform biosphere to ecosystem

Do traditional/non industrial people live in harmony with nature?

- **Myth of primitive ecological wisdom-** industrial economy is destructive for the environment.
- All people in a society do not share same understanding of nature
- Different cultural traditions: how the environment is defined. e.g. robust, fragile, capricious, with limits
- Cultural perspective: what people do, traditional cultural perspective or oppositional movement
- Not universal or pre-given, location specific study, time and space specific.

- Nature of environmental conflicts in India:
 - ✓ Urban: shortages of water, power, construction material, pollution
 - ✓ Rural: resource access and shortage
 - ✓ Put poor against poor, neighbouring villages fight over forest resources
 - ✓ Put rich against poor, e.g. Dams benefit rich
 - ✓ Put rich against rich, e.g. wealthy farmers over water
- Indian environmental movement: umbrella term, different types of conflicts and struggles, new class struggle.

Question:

Search for some environment movement in India and other parts of the world. Reflect on the origin, participation, demands and outcomes of those movements. Which social groups gained and lost in the struggle?