

AN EVALUATION OF GLOBAL WARMING AND ENVIRONMENTAL ETHICS

Victor Ogheneochuko Jeko., Ph.D

Department of Philosophy, Faculty of Arts, University of Benin

Email: victor.jeko@uniben.edu

And

Odigie Ndid Joseph

Department of Philosophy, Faculty of Arts, University of Benin

Email: joseph.odigie@uniben.edu

Abstract

The phenomenon of global warming has become a concern about the safety of the environment. Global warming has resulted in the destruction of the ozone layer and this is actually caused by environmental degradation. The fundamental problems of environmental degradation have resulted in the prevalence of over flooding and extinction of some plants and animal species. Some of the causes of global warming include industrial pollution, deforestation, overpopulation, industrialization, urbanization, bureaucratization; the use of combustible engines, automobile vehicles and fossil fuels. The solution to the problems of global warming is actually international cooperation by all countries of the world to reduce the usage of gas emission. The objective of this paper is to unveil the potential dangers of environmental degradation to the world's ecosystems and its catastrophic consequences on humanity. Global warming reveals that its impact reflects on a kind of catastrophe. This paper adopts the analytical framework in discussing the ethical implications of global warming and environmental non-sustainability on human existence. Human existence has been bedevilled by certain existential burden due to human deliberate choices and actions. The findings of this paper are that international cooperation is fundamental in mitigating the challenges of global warming; nature is an integral part of human beings and sentient beings. This paper concludes that humanity will be doomed if necessary steps are not taken by countries all over the world in mitigating the menace of global warming. Global warming has resulted in lethal solar radiation.

Keywords: Ecologism, Ecosystem, Environmentalism, Ethics, Global Warming

Introduction

The phenomenon of global warming has become a concern about the safety of the environment. Global warming has resulted in the destruction of the ozone layer and this is actually caused by environmental degradation. The problems of environmental degradation have resulted in the prevalence of over flooding and extinction of some endangered species. Some of the causes of global warming include industrial pollution, deforestation, overpopulation, industrialization, urbanization, bureaucratization; the use of combustible engines, automobile vehicles and fossil fuels. The solution to the problems of global warming is actually international cooperation by all countries of the world to reduce the usage of gas emission. This paper argues that the potential dangers of environmental degradation to the world's ecosystems and its catastrophic consequences on humanity are immense. Global warming reveals that its impact reflects on a kind of catastrophic consequences. This paper discusses the ethical implications of global warming and environmental non-sustainability on human existence. Human existence has

been bedevilled by certain existential burden due to human deliberate choices and actions. The findings of this paper are that international cooperation is fundamental in mitigating the challenges of global warming; nature is an integral part of human and sentient beings.

Furthermore, the interrelatedness between environmentalism, ecologism and global warming has become a critical aspect of environmental ethics. Ethics plays a pivotal role in mitigating the fundamental challenges of global warming. As Hoffman and Graham (2009, 365) rightly observed global warming is acknowledged by most, but not all, scientists as the most serious environmental problem facing the planet—the minority who challenge the consensus do not question the evidence of global warming, but question its causes, arguing that warming is not primarily caused by human activity. In concurrence with Hoffman and Graham (2009), Leon Baradat (2008, 281) asserts that “nature as a whole is central, and the value of all things is measured by their contributions to nature. If humans threaten nature, they reduce their own validity and worth”. Hoffman and Graham (2009, 365-366) argued that apart from global warming, there are other specific environmental problems such as resource depletion, localised pollution, decline in species and nuclear war. For Hoffman and Graham (2009, 366):

Some resources, such as fish, are, with careful stewardship, naturally replenished; other resources, such as coal and gas, are not. Both types of resource are threatened by excessive demand and so overproduction. Localised pollution may not cause a global crisis, but poor air in places such as Mexico City can have a debilitating effect on inhabitants. Decline of species may lead to species loss—or decline in biodiversity—the use of agricultural chemicals and genetic modification of crops are identified by some environmentalists as the cause of the decline in biodiversity. Nuclear war will not, of course, be a direct environmental problem...scientists speculated that the use of intercontinental ballistic missiles could result in a 'nuclear winter': atmospheric pollution caused by dust, soot smoke and ash would prevent the 'sun's rays from penetrating for a period of time long enough to eradicate most plant life and create a new ice age. Since the 1980s there has been a proliferation of states with nuclear weapons. Environmental crisis does raise interesting question about the relationship between science and politics. Ecologists are critical of scientific rationality, and yet employ scientific evidence to support their arguments.

In the light of the above subscription, some group of scholars have argued that “scientific rationality” has paved the way for industrial revolution. Accordingly, Baradat (2008, 277) asserts that the “Industrial Revolution, the fount of modern political ideologies, has, for the first time in history, made it possible for humans to improve their material lives on a vast scale, but at the same time to so influence the natural environment as to actually threaten human existence itself”. Baradat (2008, 266-267) further asserts that:

Focus on this paradox has fuelled the emergence of a new ideology. Known as ecologism in Europe and environmentalism in the United States, it is an idea system demanding fundamental philosophical reorientation demanded and mandating diametric political, economic, and social change; and humans should see themselves as only a part of nature, constituents of a universe that is composed of numerous interactive and interdependent beings, both living and nonliving. This new perspective is not only ethically right but essential for human survival, the ecologists argued.

Nevertheless, human beings, plants, animals, and other living and non-living beings are

actually confronted by the negative consequences of global warming. However, this paper is divided into four sections. Section one is the introductory remarks. Section two is the exposition, analysis and the ethical implications of global warming on human existence. Section three focuses on the evaluation of the catastrophic effects of global warming on humanity. Section four is the concluding considerations. This paper concludes that humanity will be doomed if necessary steps are not taken by countries all over the world in mitigating the menace of global warming. Global warming has resulted in lethal solar radiation.

Expose of Global Warming and Environmental Ethics

The conceptual clarification and contextual analysis of global warming and environmental ethics demonstrates the clarion call for the preservation of the world's environment or ecosystem from abuse and plunder by man. Global warming has come to stay with humanity and it is as real as humanity itself. Humanity is at cross roads due to the abuse and the plundering of the environment. The ethics of global warming showcases the preservation of the world's ecosystem. Worthy of note is that sanctions ought to be melted out to countries that violate international treaties that are aimed at ensuring the preservation of the earth. Human beings in their deliberate choices and actions must exercise caution in the way and manner they treat, manage and handle the environment. However, the ethics of the environment has become one of the most controversial and contemporary issues in the field of philosophy. For Baradat (2008, 282), argues that “concern for the moral aspects of environmental degradation has spawned an entire field of philosophical inquiry called environmental ethics. Broadly speaking, environmental ethics considers biocentric questions”. The ethics of the environment has become a contemporary issue that demands scholarly attention by scholars, researchers and philosophers.

Furthermore, the ethical dilemma that surrounds environmental ethics is that it has become an existential imperative that we cannot do without the natural environment. However, human beings, plants, animals and other living organisms and species depend solely on the environment for their continuous existence and survival. We are all inhabitants of the earth as far as environmental ethics is concerned. The ethics of the environment is actually concerned about the natural environment such as plants, water, sun, land, air, rocks, forests, animals and other inhabitants of the world's ecosystem. The ethics of environment has become a global issue or a universal phenomenon because some plants and animal species are going into extinction because of the evils of deforestation, urbanization, industrialization and other nefarious activities carried out by human deliberate choices and actions. As rightly observed by Phillip Isanbor and Anthony Bature (2018, 5), the quest for ecological or environmental sustainability, especially through its environment friendliness and consciousness is a philosophical engagement. Industrial systems eventually will degrade and deplete the resources upon which its productivity depends, and thus, are not sustainable. Industrialization is the physical manifestation of a specific concept of science, and a specific worldview. Accordingly, Hoffman and Graham (2009, 370) in consonance with Isanbor and Bature (2018) argued that:

Industrialisation has changed the pyramid in a number of ways. First, by reversing evolution: evolutionary change lengthened the food-chain through the emergence of more complex life forms; industrialisation shortens the chain by the elimination of both predators and of seemingly useless organisms. Second, by the exploitation, which puts geological and other formations, to new uses, such as the generations of energy, and removes them from the 'natural chain'. Third, transportation disconnects the chain and introduces forms from one environment

to a new, quite different, one, and with sometimes unintended consequences.

In concurrence with the above theoretical position, Isanbor and Bature (2018, 5-6) argued that “the reflections on the humanity demand to be holistically philosophical, considering the freedom man has to change things around him and situation about him, combating challenges in order to have some comfortable environmental living, necessarily presupposes the employment of some ethical checks on all dealings or activities for environmental sustainability”. Isanbor and Bature (2018, 6) further heightened their theoretical position by asserting that “one of the major causes of global warming is environmental pollution and industrialization”. Accordingly Hoffman and Graham (2009, 364) in consonance with Isanbor and Bature (2018) argued that:

Many people maintain industrialization, urbanization and population growths have either brought about, or threaten to bring about, irreversible changes to the natural environment such that the future of life on earth beyond more than one or two hundred years is in jeopardy. Some writers maintain that the difference between ecologism and environmentalism rests, in part, on attitudes to the seriousness of this crisis, with ecologists being very pessimistic, and environmentalists being very optimistic. There is some validity in this characterisation of the differing attitudes, in that ecologists maintain that the causes of the crisis are not simply scientific-technical; the roots of the crisis lie in human attitudes to nature—we see nature as a resource to be exploited for our benefit. However, a human-centred approach to the environment could also explain the crisis; without condemning human attitudes to nature it could be argued that environmental degradation is the collective consequence of rational human behaviour.

Broadly speaking, apart from the problem of industrialization it has also been argued that overpopulation is one of the major causes of global warming. According to Garrett Hardin cited by Hoffman and Graham (2009, 365), overpopulation will have catastrophic consequences, and that food aid to the developing world should be ended so that population levels can be allowed to fall 'naturally'. Hardin is often thought of as an ecologist, and his misanthropic argument is used against ecologism, but, in fact, Hardin reasons from straightforwardly human-centred premises: human beings will suffer from overpopulation. Baradat (2008, 278-279) in consonance with Garrett Hardin cited by Hoffman and Graham (2009) believe that “the question of overpopulation has long vexed environmentalists. Overpopulation confronts the entire world with panoply of problems”. Accordingly, Baradat (2008, 279-280) argues that:

One wonders what is in store for the world as the process of global warming accelerates over the next half century. One consequence is almost certain, however, as the earth warms, the ability of people in the tropical regions-where the human population is increasing most rapidly- to grow food will be significantly reduced. Thus, famine among large population on earth is virtually inevitable. Ironically, the temperate areas are those that produce the most greenhouse gases, but in the short run, they will suffer from global warming only marginally.

In the light of the above, Baradat (2008, 280) further heightened his theoretical position by asserting that “but global warming is only one important ecological problem. Concentrations of mercury in marine fish from industrial discharges are growing in dangerous proportions. This very toxic metal causes serious and permanent declines in the physical and mental development of children whose mothers eat large quantities of seafood during pregnancy”. It is germane to

note that Hoffman and Graham (2009, 365) identified specific environmental problems such as global warming, resource depletion, localised pollution, decline in species and nuclear war. On the other hand, the ethics of ecological and environmental sustainability demands the need for what Olagunju and Ibiezugbe, (2018, 65) called global “community sustainability”. Global warming has become part and parcel of the contemporary discussion of the ethics of environmentalism. Accordingly, Hoffman and Graham (2009, 365) postulate that, “the most popular discussion of environmentalism and ecologism-takes place within the context of a discussion of the so-called environmental crisis”. Ekwealo (2012, 13) in consonance with Hoffman and Graham (2009) argues that there are certain ethical guidelines provided to ensure normative responses that would best provide a better and safe environment for the existence, survival and living of man. We live in a world full of apparent contradictions and complexities, whose meanings and designs is made impossible by factors of shortness of human life, the linear-mindedness of learning and knowledge. This theoretical discourse advocates the need for caution in the ways and manners we abuse and plunder the environment. The proper treatment of plants, animals and other non-living things should be part and parcel of our ethical behaviours and guidelines. This will bring about proper ecological and environmental sustainability. According to Hoffman and Graham (2009, 496), deep ecology is a form of ecologism, stressing both the interdependence of nature, and the need for fundamental human change; it is contrasted with 'shallow ecology', which is essentially environmentalism. On the other hand, Hoffman and Graham (2009, 496-497) assert that environmentalism refers to a movement which highlights the importance of preserving the earth's natural resources and guaranteeing a fair share of those resources for future generations. Unlike ecologism it can be combined with many different ideologies. Environmentalism and ecologism have become new forms of ideologies and global warming has become a contemporary issue in addressing the challenges of this environmental crisis humanity is currently facing. For Isanbor and Bature (2018, 55-56), respecting the environment as our “Common Home” ought to be one of the objectives of humanity. The environment remains our common heritage and it has to be protected by the rightness of human deliberate choices and actions. Maathai (2009, 233-234) in consonance with Isanbor and Bature (2018), argues that climate change will bring massive ecological and economic challenges. In such a context, therefore, alleviating dehumanizing poverty-and achieving the UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) will become even more difficult. Global warming is leading to food and water shortages. Food security in Africa is also increasingly in danger due to skyrocketing food prices in world markets. Baradat (2008, 281) in consonance with Isanbor, Bature (2018) and Maathai (2009) posits that ecologism and environmentalism are contemporary ideologies that are geared towards “energy conservation”. Hoffman and Graham (2009, 362) in consonance with Baradat (2008) argue that:

The desire to protect the environment is based primarily on concern about the consequences of environmental degradation on human beings, whereas for ecologists, something called 'ecology', or 'nature', is the source of value. It follows from this distinction that whereas environmentalism can be combined with other ideologies, ecologism is distinct. In terms of political practice, politicians from across the political spectrum have embraced the rhetoric, and sometimes the policies, of environmentalism.

Nevertheless, global warming and environmental ethics presuppose the tendency for what Hoffman and Graham (2009, 364) called green movement. Baradat (2008, 281) in consonance with Hoffman and Graham (2009) asserts that many political parties throughout the world associate themselves with the ecology movement and refer to themselves as “Greens”.

Perhaps nowhere has the Green Party become so powerful as in Germany. For Hoffman and Graham (2009, 364):

The differing possibilities of ecologism, environmentalism and green (or Green) thought—carry distinct ideological implications. In the view of those who called themselves ecologists, environmentalism denotes an attitude compatible with almost all the competing ideologies. Environmentalists attach value to the 'environment' or 'nature' but only in relation to human consciousness and human concerns, and as such the environment is slotted in as a subordinate component of alternative ideologies, such as liberalism, socialism, or feminism.

In the light of the above, Hoffman and Graham (2009, 364) argued that “environmentalism is anthropocentric—that is, human-centred. Ecologists, on the other hand, assert that nature has intrinsic value, and that the task of ecologism is to engage in a critique of the anthropocentric worldview, which in socio-economic terms manifest itself as industrialism. Ecologism is “eco-centred”. Baradat (2008, 278) in consonance with Hoffman and Graham (2009) posit that:

Ecologism is a reaction against the predicament we have created through the combination of anthropocentrism and modernization (science, technology, industrialization, materialism). Ecologists believe that humans have wrongfully violated nature by attempting to become its master. Humans, they believe, feel themselves to be separate from nature. They see nature as an economic resource to be harnessed rather than a domicile to be nurtured and accommodated. As a result, humans have created an artificial, anti-natural world, one that fouls the air and water on which every living creature depends. We have accelerated the annual rate of species extinction 200-fold over the preindustrial rate; the great rain forests that do so much to regulate the climate and oxygenate the air are disappearing under the treads of giant earth movers; global warming due to the greenhouse effect caused by gases released into the atmosphere has begun the dangerous melting of glaciers and the polar icecaps; and the ozone layer depletion because of industrial pollution threatens us with lethal solar radiation.

In concurrence with Baradat's above theoretical position, Hoffman and Graham (2009, 363-364) further argued that “whereas environmentalists share a post-Enlightenment belief in the uniqueness of the human perspective on the world—that is, they place human beings above, or outside, nature—ecologists challenge that philosophical position, maintaining that human life only has value insofar as it is a 'knot' in the 'net' of life, a net which connects together not only non-human animals, but non-sentient entities, such as trees, rivers and mountains”. For Hoffman and Graham (2009, 364), “indeed it is the net rather than the knots that is of ultimate value”. Baradat (2008, 280-281) argues that “green spaces are shrinking, endangering unique wildlife like the panda bear. Deep ecologists call upon people to abandon their anthropocentric view of the world and embrace the totality instead. This broader view is called holism”. In this connection, Baradat (2008, 281) postulates that environmental ethics could be regarded as “environmental holism”. Environmental holism is the comprehensive overview of how the environment can be sustained and protected from human abuse and plunder of the environment. As rightly observed by Baradat (2008, 282-283), the British scientist James Lovelock suggested in the late 1970s that earth was not simply an inert host of countless living and non-living things. Instead, it was itself a living organism, with humans little more than certain cells in the earth's body. Accordingly, Hoffman

and Graham (2009, 366-367) rightly observed that ecologism and environmentalism have led to Green Politics; and the possibility of Green politics depends on the generation of surplus goods and therefore, the consumer society of which Greens are so critical. Ecologism is a distinct ideology, whereas environmentalism can be a strand in other ideologies, such as liberalism, conservatism, fascism, feminism, fundamentalism, nationalism, anarchism, multiculturalism, and socialism. As Hoffman and Graham (2009, 367-368) rightly observed:

If we leave the world more degraded than we found it then we are violating the rights of future generations and hence there is the need for conservatism. At a simplistic level conservatives and environmentalists share a belief in conservation. Although conservatives focus on the preservation and transmission of cultural traditions, respects for the environment--- the maintenance of a sense of place --is also important. At a deeper philosophical level conservatives share with many ecologists a scepticism towards rationality.

In the light of the above, Hoffman and Graham (2009, 368) argued that environmentalists oppose the exploitation—in the pejorative sense of the word-- of the natural world. There is more than a metaphysical equivalence between socialist and environmentalist opposition to exploitation; and the people most likely to suffer the consequences of environmental degradation are the poor in society, especially the poor in the developing world. This is often the result of a deliberate policy of 'dumping'. For instance, Nigeria is one of the countries in the African continent that is currently experiencing “a deliberate policy of dumping”. In other words, Nigeria is a dumping ground for all sorts of expired goods and services due to the evils of poverty and hunger in the land. These goods include used kitchen utensils, clothes, shoes, electrical appliances, vehicles, rugs, furniture and other goods. Worthy of note is that the Nigerian government must put up viable economic policies in place to reverse this ugly scenario of dumping of expired goods from Europe, United Kingdom, United States of America and other parts of the world.

Nevertheless, ecologism and environmentalism are concepts that are closely linked with other ideologies. On the other hand, there is a theoretical affinity between feminism and environmentalism. As rightly observed by Hoffman and Graham (2009, 368), the links between feminism and environmentalism (and ecologism) seem more metaphysical than real. The idea of Mother Earth implies the femininity of nature. The ideas of growth and nurturing also summon up notions of motherhood and of the mother-child relationship. For Baradat (2008, 283), the suggestion that women are more in tune with nature and less threatening to it than men has gained resonance among feminists. Women claim that their biological role of giving birth and nurturing is more compatible with Earth Mother than is the male drive to conquer. As Hoffman and Graham (2009, 368-369) rightly observed:

Environmentalists and ecologists value cultural diversity; and so an environmentalist seeks to preserve an endangered species. Environmentalism and ecologism draw a parallel with fundamentalism. If ecologism—rather than environmentalism --is viewed as a religion then it is not difficult to take the next step to describing it as fundamentalist. It is clear that there are links and affinities between these various ideologies- multiculturalism, feminism, nationalism, fundamentalism, fascism, liberalism, socialism, conservatism and both environmentalism and ecologism. There is a distinctive core to ecologism which can be summed in the distinction between an anthropocentric ethic and ecocentric ethic.

In addition, the concepts of anthropocentric ethic and ecocentric ethic identified by Hoffman and Graham (2009) in their theoretical position on ecologism and environmentalism are traceable to Aldo Leopold notion of 'land ethic'. For Leopold (1978, 150) and Hoffman and Graham (2009, 369) the essence of 'land ethic' was that land was an interdependent system, and not a commodity; human beings were part of the 'land community' and not masters of it; for human beings to understand themselves they must grasp the 'whole' of which they are a 'part' and 'a thing is right when it tends to preserve the integrity, stability, and beauty of the biotic community...it is wrong when it tends otherwise. For Hoffman and Graham (2009, 369-370):

What Leopold called 'land' was what later ecologists would call the eco-system, biosphere, Gaia, 'earth' ('Spaceship Earth'), and by 'community' Leopold meant an interdependent whole, the members of which were not simply human beings, or even all sentient beings, but all the life forms. The extension of ethics to land is an 'evolutionary possibility' and an 'ecological necessity'. Certainly, Leopold argues, individual thinkers have condemned the abuse of the land, but 'society' has yet to embrace the land ethic. The conservation movement is the embryo of such social affirmation. Individuals must change their motivations and this is a powerful and central claim of the ecological movement.

Nonetheless, Burr and Goldinger (2008, 232-233) emphasizes that more than forty years ago the American ecologist Aldo Leopold argues for the need for a new ethics; an ethics that deals with man's relations with the environment. Deep ecology ethic will face problems similar to those we identified in considering the idea of the reverence-for-life ethic; and the reverence-for-life ethics with regard to the natural environment is deeply rooted in morally significant interests. Accordingly, Burr and Goldinger (2008, 234) further heightened their theoretical position by asserting that:

We are on surer ground if we confine ourselves to arguments based on the interests of sentient creature, present and future, human and nonhuman...the arguments grounded on the interests of present and future human beings, and on the interests of the sentient nonhumans who inhabit the wilderness, are quite sufficient to show that, at least in society where no one needs to destroy wilderness in order to survive, the value of preserving the remaining significant areas of the wilderness greatly exceeds the values gained by their destruction.

Accordingly, Burr and Goldinger (2008, 233-234) assert that the ecosystems lies some form of holism—some sense that the species or ecosystem is not just a collection of individuals but really an entity in its own right; and to seek intrinsic value in diversity or complexity is a mistake. In a more simplistic term, humans will validate their own existence, survival and worth if they protect and sustain their nature environment.

Evaluation

Having critically examined the challenge of global warming with regard to ecological and environmental sustainability, this paper observed that environmental ethics is the rightness and wrongness of human actions towards the wellbeing of the natural environment; and it demonstrates the need for the normative outcomes of a peaceable and healthy environment. For Ikeke (2013, 404-405):

A clear affirmation of the right to a healthy and safe environment comes in the 1981 African Charter on Human and People' Rights. By placing a duty on sovereign states and persons to conserve and protect the earth, the charter invariably and implicitly affirms a right to environmental wellbeing. The fundamental inalienable right to freedom, equality and adequate conditions of life are not possible outside a safe and healthy environment. This is why the enjoyment of fundamental human rights and liberties imply the right to a healthy environment. Earth's life forms are to be allowed to flourish, the land and water are to be well managed and all of nature is to be used sustainably.

In concurrence with the above assertion, Ikeke (2013, 408-409) further stressed that the right to a safe and healthy environment has evolved from the last quarter of the last century to the present day. It is now well recognized that there is a human right to a safe and healthy environment. Environmental problems certainly affect social order. Deforestation, desertification, soil erosion, oil spillage, and pollutions of the waterways and land of the planet are already impacting negatively on the earth. Accordingly, Ikeke (2013, 403) further argues that environmental ethics deals with contemporary issues of how societies aggregates the interaction among people, social class relation with authority, the consequences of urbanization and industrialization on the cohesion of society, community and social control, the outcome of the disruption of traditional societies and their norms and the general instability that come with rapid social change.

Moreover, global warming is just one of the basic issues in environmental ethics. Worthy of note is that apart from global warming, there are other environmental problems such as decline in species, depletion of natural resources, water shortages, food shortages, desertification, deforestation, urbanization, environmental pollution, industrialization and the proliferations of nuclear weapons by some nation-states. The proliferations of nuclear weapons have caused catastrophic and devastating consequences on humanity and the natural environment. For Ekiyor and Boro (2018, 159), a nuclear weapon is a lot of free energy but in the wrong hands it is a threat to humanity. Accordingly, Ekiyor and Boro (2018, 162) further argued that the negative effect of our actions should be channelled to the attainment of order in the environment. The attainment of order in the environment boils down to the supreme question of man. Global warming has demonstrated a contemporary call for the safety of the environment. The challenge of global warming is a very serious problem that demands concerted effort by humanity in order to mitigate the excessive abuse and plunder of the environment by man. Global warming reveals an anthropocentric conception of man as a paradoxical being. Man is a paradox and he remains a bundle of confusion. According to Mondin (2007, 1) man is the supreme question for man. For Hoffman and Graham (2009, 377) human beings must place value on the environment because value does indeed depend on the human capacity to evaluate, but it does not follow that values are "human-centred". Worthy of note is that technological advancement has contributed to environmental degradation such as the testing of "intercontinental ballistic missiles". We all have fundamental right to the environment both living and sentient beings. According to Ikeke (2013, 404), the human persons have right to a sustainable, peaceful and healthy environment. For Ikeke (2013, 398), the environment refers to the entire natural world, with human persons inclusive. Some scholars have also asserted that technological advancement has also contributed to the degradation of the natural environment. For Hoffman and Graham (2009, 381-382), technology, on the other hand, dates back to the earliest human activity- it is simply the marshalling of natural processes to serve human ends. Of course, advances in scientific understanding have aided technological advance, and many ecologists will argue that neither science nor technology are in

themselves to be rejected, but rather it is the degree of intervention in, and alteration of, natural processes which is at issue. Moreover, Hoffman and Graham (2009, 381) further assert that:

The danger with ecologism is that it fails to distinguish between human enquiries—the drive to understand the world—and human wants, that is, the desire to use the natural world for human ends. Human-centredness is narrowly defined by ecologists as instrumental reason; nature is used as a means, or instrument, for human ends. But you do not need to be an ecologist in order to challenge instrumental reason; you can move completely within a human-centred view of the world and still raise rational objections to the idea that because we have the scientific knowledge to do something, such as clone human beings, then we should do it.

In the light of the above, Hoffman and Graham (2009, 382) aver that ecologism's distinctiveness can be found in its emphasis on the interconnectedness of life on earth, and the demand for fundamental change in human relations to nature--- where nature, of course, is part of humanity, and humanity part of nature. Hoffman and Graham (2009), in their theoretical position identified the inextricable nexus between humanity and nature and that human beings and nature belong to an interdependent whole (part-whole) analysis. We are all part and parcel of nature and our longevity, continuous existence and survival depends on the natural world. Environmental ethics is based on human-centredness. As rightly observed by Ikeke (2013, 405-406), human activities on the planet have altered it greatly, and political institutions are finding it difficult to cope with the rapid changes caused by environmental pollution and exploitation. For Burr and Goldinger (2008, 226-227), thus, a human-centered ethic can be the basis of powerful argument for what we may call “environmental values”. Scholars have also suggested that the need to preserve the natural environment is an existential imperative for the sake of future human beings. The price to be paid by future human beings is too high.

Concluding Considerations

So far, we have made effort to present to our reader(s) the ethical dilemma surrounding the emergence of global warming as a result of the depletion of the ozone layer. It is pertinent to state here that global warming has become an existential burden to our humanity. The whole of humanity will be doomed if the necessary steps are not taken for the preservation of the natural environment. The normative outcome of environmentalism is deeply rooted in respect for nature. There is a serious need for us not to ignore the contemporary call for stemming the tide of global warming because this would spell doom for humanity. There are potential dangers ahead of humanity if the ethical question surrounding ecological and environmental sustainability is not being resolved as quickly as possible.

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