

# 從個體自由主義者與社群主義者的環境觀到整全環境觀模式

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## 摘要

本研究評論個體自由主義者和社群主義者的環境觀，從中建構一個可以永續發展的整全環境模式。透過文獻分析勾勒出自由主義與社群主義的環境觀點及其限制。經由擴展個體自由主義與社群主義的有限視野，研究提出一個更能處理環境危機之整全環境觀。整全環境觀包含：要成為一個明智的消費者以及自願選擇簡單生活是起始策略；理解自然資本主義則為最終的環境安全之經濟系統；追求個人、社群與環境永續發展之較好生活方式則需建立一種永續文化的心態。這些是生態所有成員較佳的生活策略。最後，為追求永續社會，研究者建構出一套整全環境觀模式。

**關鍵詞：**環境危機、個體自由主義、社群主義、整全環境觀模式、永續社會

## Individual-based Liberal's and Communitarian's Environmental Perspectives towards the Holistic Environmental Model

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### Abstract

This research evaluates individual-based liberal's and communitarian's environmental perspectives regarding a holistic environmental vision for a sustainable society. Using the literature review, this study delineates the main points and limitations of liberal and communitarian environmental views. To expand the limited vision of individual-based liberalism and communitarianism, this research explores a more holistic perspective, creating the following new vision for dealing with environmental crises: a) be an informed consumer and voluntarily choose a simpler, less-consumptive living style, b) recognize natural capitalism is most environmentally-safe economic system, c) accept a permaculture mindset as a better way of living to sustain individuals, communities, and the environment. Finally, the researcher creates a holistic environmental model for a sustainability society.

**Keywords:** Environmental Crises, Individual-based Liberalism, Communitarianism, Holistic Environmental Model, Sustainable Society.

## I. Introduction

Today Earth suffers from many natural crises (Arponen, 2018; Hernandez & Johnson, 2011; Kisch, 2012; Shelby & Tredinnick, 1995). Although they lack the immediate shock effect of destructive storms and earthquakes, these are also legitimate natural disasters: increasing water pollution, accelerating the extinction of species, and depletion of natural resources worldwide. Thompson (2010) described, "The problems related to environmental sustainability are in the news almost daily..." (p. 64). Kopnina (2013) mentioned "environmental problem are inherently global" (p. 61) and beyond the nation-states boundaries. In early 1970, Illich (1970) warned, "The physical environment will soon be destroyed by biochemical pollution..." (p. 9). Logue (1996) also said, "Natural and human-made/technological disasters have adversely affected human health..." (p. 1207).

For example, fresh, clean water is one of the most basic needs for all life, yet we continually pollute the world's waterways, lakes, and oceans through improper chemical use by humans, direct release or seepage of toxic substances from industries, and the dumping of sewage and wastewater by cities. In addition to the harm inflicted on the Earth itself, the depletion of natural resources threatens the livelihoods of many fishermen, farmers, and aboriginal tribespeople. The elimination of one of Earth's greatest natural resources, old-growth forests, is one of the main reasons that many species are disappearing around the world.

These crises are truly natural disasters that threaten the Earth and all of us on it in one way or another. Some efforts to alleviate these problems have already begun, primarily through government regulations. Typically, these government-dictated, corporate-influenced solutions are promoted and sold as the most that can be attempted without upsetting the world economic applecart. Gore (2007) concluded, "if the global environmental crisis is rooted in the dysfunctional pattern of our civilization's relationship to the natural world, confronting and fully understanding that pattern..., is the first step toward mourning what we have lost..." (p. 273).

We contend that the root cause of the Earth violations and degradations occurring today is an improper attitude and behavior toward nature by humans in general. An individual's attitude and behavior are governed by a personal mindset and worldview—what the person thinks and believes. To effectively address environmental issues of global concern today, people must consciously and seriously consider: how, then, shall we live in sustainable relationship with all of nature and with each other? Therefore, we propose a re-examination of the two basic behavioral philosophies-of-life that people adopt, typically unconsciously, to govern how they think and act. Individual-based liberalism and communitarianism have stood for decades as strong, competing philosophies. Perhaps the philosophy that guides our future will be some variant mix of the guiding philosophies of our past.

### 1. Individual-based Liberal's vs. Communitarian's Perspective and Their Limits on Environmental Issues

The most common theory, in democratic society, used to explain humans' behavior to each other is liberalism, a popular "ideal" in democratic societies because "liberal ideas spread even further, as liberal democracies found themselves on the winning side in both world wars"(Liberalism, 2014, p. 1). Liberalism is a general concept of family of doctrines, which share some principles such as individual rights and liberty, and the main theorists include John Locke, John Stuart Mill, Isaiah Berlin, John Rawls, Robert Nozick, etc. (Charvet & Kaczynska-Nay, 2008; Haywood, 2017) The contrary viewpoint to liberalism generally known as communitarianism: "The scholarly strand of communitarianism...find fault with liberalism as we have known it" (Stiehm, 1994, p. 87), and these communitarian theorists include Alasdair MacIntyre, Michael Sandel, Charles Taylor, Michael Walzer, etc. (McAfee, 2017) Liberalism emphasizes individual autonomy (Mor, 2018), whereas communitarianism focuses on self in the social context (Taylor, 1992); liberals prefer individual rights, while communitarians cherish the public good; and liberal expects that country acts passive role in public affairs, but communitarian hopes that the country

positive involves in social welfare.

Those who espouse the individual-based liberal ideal emphasize human rights and freedoms, such as J. S. Mill's no harm principle for maximizing individual's freedom: "That the only purpose for which power can be rightfully exercised over any member of a civilized community, against his will, is to prevent harm to others" (Mill, 1859/1975, pp. 10-11). The effects that procuring these rights and freedoms may have on others in the community are irrelevant or, at best, of secondary concern. The communitarian viewpoint, on the other hand, builds from a focus on community good. Communitarians contend that it is only within strong, healthy communities, built around interpersonal relationships and responsibilities that individuals can flourish and be truly free. One of the fundamental questions between liberalism and communitarianism is "whether the right is prior to the good" (Sandel, 1998, p. x). The debate between liberalism and communitarianism lasts all over the world for decades (Pazzanese, 2016). Though the communitarian view broadens individual-based liberalism's narrow focus on the individual right, communitarian focuses on human good more than environmental good as Etzioni (1994) anthropocentric communitarian concern: "our first and foremost purpose is to affirm the moral commitments of parents, young persons, neighbors, and citizens...are transmitted from one generation to the next" (p. 266).

Neither liberal nor communitarian focuses the concern on subjects beyond individual and community such as natural environment, does not support human activities in a sustainable way, and causes many environmental crises above mentioned. Thus, we need a vision that includes environment into our concern. For example, to incorporate individual, community, and environment into a holistic worldview is essential for dealing effectively with the critical environmental issues of our day.

## 2. A New Perspective Needed

This paper intends to investigate a new vision for today—and tomorrow. An expansion of the limited vision inherent in the individual-based liberal and communitarian philosophies will give people a proper basis and holistic mindset from which they can redefine their attitudes and behaviors toward other human beings and the Earth such as Palmer (2003) mentioned, "These holistic approaches to environmental ethics tend to be consequentialist, rather than deontological, aiming at the good for the whole..." (p. 23). Without such a shift in the way we feel, the way we think, and the way we live, our future—and that of our children's children—is no way assured. We live at a uniquely critical time in history when each of us must make a pivotal choice: do I live recklessly (either through conscious choice or, more likely, through unconscious acquiescence) or do I live sustainably (i.e., consciously and deliberately, with concern for the future)?

This research aims to amend the limitations of individual-based liberal and communitarian and to create a holistic environmental model for reducing the emergency environmental crises. This model will broaden people's mind and easier to be followed to support a sustainable society. The holistic environmental perspective is not alone since the United Nation Environment Assembly (2017) proclaims the collaboration among countries to create a pollution-free planet that involves the efforts from individual, country, and environment being a good example.

## II. Individual-based Liberal's and Communitarian's Perspectives to Contemporary Environmental Crises

People's disregard for other people is, in part, a natural consequence of the individual-based liberal tradition. Most people are competing to get to the top, and that is everyone's preeminent, all-consuming quest. We really don't have time to look out for each other. In contrast, the communitarian vision begins with regard for other people and draws the individual back into meaningful relationship and awareness of the responsibility to the

human community. Liberal and communitarian keep debating to each other in 1980 to 1990 as Sandel (1998) described, “The 1980s and 1990s brought an avalanche of books and articles devoted to what now goes by the name of the ‘liberal-communitarian’ debate” (p. ix). We easily get caught up in squabbles about who is right. Meanwhile, outside all of this human activity a lot is happening. The Earth, with all of its amazing natural systems and varieties of life, endures—struggles, perhaps, but endures.

### **1. Individual-based Liberal’s Perspective**

Basing their fundamental claim to individual freedom on the “no harm” principle, liberals proclaim that one can do anything as long as he or she does not harm others. Avid adherents cite this principle as they pursue Berlin (1969) suggested “negative freedoms” (p. 121) and renounce social regulations and responsibilities. Such ultra-liberals want as much “freedom” as possible, and they do things for their own pleasure if doing so does not harm others. They may (sometimes inadvertently) cut off social connections and human relations as Moody (1989) said, “An atomistic self, or what I call a ‘radically detached’ self is one which can be adequately defined without essential reference to others” (p. 94). However, this concept of an isolated, atomic self seems odd, because who could identify oneself without admitting some relationship with one’s heritage (Bird, 1999), other than in contrived fictional accounts such as Robinson Crusoe’s adventure? In a self-centered mindset, rights rule, and the right to pleasure reigns supreme. If one finds no pleasure in being responsible, then responsibility must be sacrificed. It is such extremely liberal attitudes that cause communitarians the most concern and elicit their strongest criticism.

### **2. Communitarian’s Perspective**

In real life, a liberal’s self-indulgent, indifferent attitude toward others can easily cause some social problems. Communitarians suggest that one needs to locate one’s identity in relationship with others, such as being one’s child, being a member of a certain community, or having a connection to others through heritage or identity with a particular country, tradition, or culture (MacIntyre, 1984). Moreover, in the communitarian view, being a qualified citizen in modern society means that to enjoy one’s rights, one must perform one’s duties as well (Phillips & Moroney, 2017). Everyone is a critical, functioning member of an interwoven community, not an atomic self exists in an abstract virtual space. The debate between liberals and communitarians focuses on “the competing conceptions of the person” (Sandel, 1998, p. 186), but could this anthropocentric argument between liberalism and communitarianism lights on the dark age of environmental crises? It needs further clarification.

### **3. Contemporary Environmental Crises**

The world has faced more environmental and natural crises in the last few years of the 20th century and the first decade of the 21st century than at any other comparable time period in history (Bala, 2017). These catastrophes have jolted us from our delusions of being all-powerful. We have come to see clearly that if humans consider only their technological achievements and capabilities—i.e., what we can do (and profit from)—with little or no regard for Nature and the well-being of the Earth—i.e., what we should do—then increasingly destructive natural disasters and environmental catastrophes will continue and the human tragedy will play on.

Human beings are simply one component of the web of life on Earth. Many traditional societies view the Earth as the mother of all life. From this viewpoint of inter-relatedness, it is clear that we share the same fate as all other beings and natural things. We are not isolated and insulated from the consequences of our actions. In fact, our hasty actions often cause a chain of effects that links to other beings and natural things and, eventually, back to us. To be more fully human and more responsible for the power we yield, we must revise our social rules and behavioral theories to bring other beings and natural things into our realm of concern and action.

### **III. Expand Individual-based Liberal's and Communitarian's Vision toward the Environment Holistic Vision**

The traditional debate between individual-based liberalism and communitarianism, while presenting two conflicting views of inter-human relationship and responsibility, fails to engage contemporary environmental issues. This exemplifies the limited vision in both the individual-based liberal and communitarian philosophies. How we act toward each other is not independent of how we act toward the broader natural world around us. This perspective is similar to perspectives of some liberals who expect a sound government to protect their rights; however, the liberals should extend this perspective to form a sound eco-friendly society to promise everyone has sound environmental condition. Otherwise, you and I will struggle to play our roles—whatever those proper roles might be—if we do not tend to our “stage”—the setting within which we interact. Individual human rights are important—so is human community welfare—and so is the health and well-being of our environment, i.e., the totality of “our community.” We must bring into the picture all the legitimate concerns related to living the ideal life, and we must work toward achieving the proper balance that enables us to be fully human. We need a wider vision that enriches our individual-based liberal's and communitarian's viewpoints.

#### **1. Individual-based Liberal's Limited Vision on Environmental Issues**

The Individual-based liberal focus on individual freedom can easily foster indifference toward other citizens, neighbors, and even relatives. It can lead to disregard for (or worse, passive acceptance of) people living in inhuman conditions, the expanding gap between rich and poor, and other social injustices. Liberals regard individual as non-related objects as long as an individual does not harm others. This holds true in defending individual rights as well as in excusing irresponsibility for the plight of others. As long as others can be seen as “getting what they deserve,” the individual can claim to have no personal connection or obligation. Once other humans are marginalized in this way, it is easy to hold a total disregard for and disrespect of other, non-human elements of our natural surroundings. Crude, inhumane treatment of other species, wasteful use of natural resources, and careless use of man-made things become vague, meaningless issues to people whose sole focus is on whether their behaviors harm other human beings. In such a self-focused world, even when individuals feel some concern for any of these issues, they are free to choose their level of response. Concern, and personal contributions of time and/or money, are options, not obligations. In the liberal view, an individual's freedom of choice is an inviolate right; engaging with environmental crises will be only liberal's one of options. No doubt Etzioni (2009) could ask, “Do human rights and liberty provide a sufficient moral foundation for a good society?” (p. 113) Kaul (2018) provided a negative perspective to the answer since environmental crisis has become a global phenomenon above the vision of individual right.

#### **2. Communitarian's Limited Vision on Environmental Issues**

Communitarianism does not deny human rights but alters the liberal slant toward “individual rights above all” to acknowledge and emphasize human community responsibilities. In certain conditions, they claim, individuals must be ready and willing to sacrifice their rights when there is an overriding community need. Although this viewpoint brings a broader view of life into focus and acknowledges greater personal responsibility, it still concentrates solely on the welfare of human beings; it does not yet require that individuals extend their concern to other species or natural things. If we want to play a role in solving contemporary environmental issues, we need to expand the communitarian philosophy to incorporate an individual's responsibility to care for all members of eco-system.

So, we can see that the individual-based liberal focus on the “no-harm” principle that leads to a lack of

concern for others can hardly support a proper engagement with today's environmental crises. At the same time, we must admit that the communitarian focus on the welfare of the human community is also deficient in this respect. The world situation today calls for bold, imaginative, yet deliberate action that acknowledges our interconnections with all things. Thus, both of these established political philosophies need a tie-in with the whole eco-community to have any true relevance for today—and the future. Working from a deep awareness of the intricate inter-dependence of the total world community, we must imagine the future we want and develop the guiding philosophy that helps us realize it.

### 3. Toward Holistic Environmental Vision

The imagination we need today will enrich the individual-based liberal and communitarian philosophies and reveal a holistic vision that embraces the individual, the human community, and all other aspects of our Earth community. Each individual must come to recognize “the commons” as a space where everyone can share resources and ideas, be neighborly to one another, and share the responsibility of taking care of one another and the environment. The age-old concepts of sharing resources and looking out for one another have disappeared for the most part in our pursuit of hyper-individualism. We are literally in competition with each other for the endless seizing. There truly are losers in this “race,” and because the winners take so much more than they need, the losers, including the environment, are left with less than they need. In reality, cooperation is much more effective than competition in securing a better future for the earth and everyone in it (Nowak, 2006; Vogel, 2004; Boyd, 2007). Everyone is only a part of community, and we need to find ways to weave each and every one of us into the whole “fabric” to create a sustainable society (Jackson, 2005).

To make the necessary shift from liberal-style competitive consumption or freedom for hyper-consumption to eco-friendly living style requires that we practice voluntary simplicity. This scaling down will make the attainment of true happiness possible and reduce the consumption of natural resources. Leonardo da Vinci believed that “simplicity is the ultimate sophistication” (Gharbi, 2014, p. 26), an idea rich with implications not just in art, but in life in general. The American philosopher Henry David Thoreau had it right over 150 years ago when he counseled his readers to “simplify, simplify” (Thoreau, 1854/2006, p. 98). The beauty of this philosophy is that it fosters the attainment of a more-sustainable society under eco-friendly system. We will never get there by mindlessly consuming more and more, but we can by consciously choosing to do with less.

Some forward-thinking businesspeople today believe that our current economic system of perpetual-growth capitalism in liberal society must be replaced by the sustainable system of natural capitalism (Hawken, Lovins, & Lovins, 2000). Instead of self-serving, short-term goals measured solely by the narrow gauge of economic profits, perpetual-growth capitalism introduces a more-inclusive communal philosophy that brings the well-being of non-human organisms and other natural resources and materials into the realm of concern. Traditionally capitalism in liberal society exploits natural resources and humans. Profits can be gained through exploitation, and when the goal is to maximize profits, then exploitation necessity is maximized also. To be sustainable, we desperately need to develop an economy based on true costs and stewardship of resources—an economy that promotes the health of our earth and individuals instead of thriving at their expense. In short, we need a system that recognizes the triple-P bottom line (People, Planet, and Profit)—a business model wise to the fact that the health of people and the planet are of equal or greater concern than monetary profit (Elkington, 1998). We can benefit from the earth and its rich resources, but not without recognizing a responsibility to nature's wellbeing. The challenge of establishing a mutually beneficial relationship with the earth and all aspects of our environment is what Thomas Berry calls *The Great Work* (Berry, 1999). Thus, natural capitalism concerns all perspectives of resources where eco-system will never be excluded.

Finally, to “develop” sustainably and to prosper in triple-P fashion, we must follow the concepts of permaculture (Holmgren, 2003; Lebo, Eames, Coll, & Otrell-Cass, 2013; *The Permaculture Journey*, 2011), a philosophy of growth and development that not only defies the liberal pre-eminence of human rights and expands the communitarian anthropocentric focus into a holistic concern for the healthy functioning of all aspects of our environment, but also supports a long-term sustainable human prosperity under an eco-friendly development. Built into the philosophy of permaculture and the permanence that its name implies, is attention to detail, research and planning, and deliberation, concepts that receive scant attention in our race-to-market, race-to-riches society. An essential element of creating a sustainable reality will be focusing on finding secondary uses for things that have outlived their original purpose—and, ultimately, designing longevity and multi-functional, perpetual use into products. We need to reclaim the wisdom of “built to last” and renounce our title of “the throw-away society” (McDonough & Braungart, 2002; Clift, 2006).

We are at a critical time in earth’s history when, both as individuals and as community, we must make important decisions about the way we live. Certain aspects of the traditional philosophies of both individual-based liberalism and communitarianism are needed—neither is wholly adequate. Melding these two streams of thought into a coherent, holistic reality that promotes sustainable living and the good of all requires that we give attention to these critical pieces of the puzzle: the informed consumer, the practice of voluntary simplicity, natural capitalism, and permaculture. We will now explore each of these concepts in more detail.

## IV. Holistic Environmental Vision

Three key concepts are provided to amend the individual-based liberal and communitarian limited vision.

### 1. Informed Consumer and Voluntary Simplicity

In so many ways, the world today is complicated. However, the role of humans in the dominant free market economy that dictates much of our daily lives is clear: We are duly assigned the roles of producers and consumers—mere cogs in the free-market machine in liberal society. The more unthinking and uncaring we are, the better for the smooth operation of “the machine.” This neoliberal philosophy relies heavily on the individual-based liberal “do no harm” principle—and it also depends heavily on turning a blind eye to the harm that is pervasive in our current global economy—pervasive, yet for the most part obscured. Whereas it was once fairly easy to determine whether your actions harmed anyone else, it is now often difficult to know for sure—and the default setting today is “don’t worry—be happy—entertain yourself—consume!” The over-consumption has become the main source of environmental crises (Maniates, 2001).

Our image-conscious society challenges us to “keep up with the Joneses” while “besting the Smiths.” So we try, and in our crazy, schizoid effort to conform and blend in and yet appear uniquely “better off,” we literally buy the line that “we are what we consume.” We consume—and we consume—and we over-consume. In a poignant comment on where our hyper-individualistic consumptive behavior has taken us, British economist and visionary thinker Tim Jackson (2010) stated, “to spend money we don’t have on things we don’t need to create impressions that won’t last on people we don’t care about” (para. 5). Put in those terms, our behavior is clearly out of control—it sounds insane—in a way, even inhuman.

When we act fully human, we are capable of thought, consideration, and control. As he compiled a list of essential ethics for the new millennium, His Holiness the Dalai Lama (1999) pinpointed the ethics of restraint as a critical quality for human advancement. In particular, he warns that we must restrain ourselves from those impulses and actions that render us less concerned about our world and less compassionate toward other living beings. The cycle of production and consumption in which we play such critical roles has been creatively

documented in Annie Dillard's *Story of Stuff* (Dillard, 2011).

In reality, humans are complicated beings, so much more than totally self-interested, consumptive beasts. We are innately social, and the communities we form are held together by intricate networks of mutual consideration and association. Some behavioral research in the new millennium has begun to explore the human propensity for cooperation (Nowak, 2006; Vogel, 2004). It appears that along with the unquestioned evolutionary principle of "survival of the fittest" we must give equal consideration to the concept of "survival of the most supportive and cooperative." This thinking aligns nicely with the traditional communitarian concept of our inter-connectedness with each other and beyond that we need include the other species and natural things in—we are all one in eco-system.

Although people have right to consume as many as he or she wants, we need to concern over consumption's negative effect on our eco-system. If over-consumption is part of the disease we are inflicting on liberal society, then we must learn to get by, and be happy, with less. This idea surely does not fit into the traditional, narrow-minded market-driven paradigm in which happiness is closely associated with shopping and making purchases. Nonetheless, from a holistic point of view, it may make complete sense. It is no longer a novel idea that we may actually be better off—and even happier—when we are "consuming less" (Jackson, 2005, pp. 32-33). An economy allowed to develop organically out of broad, ecologically-focused human community would necessarily be much simpler and more just than the contrived, corporate-profit-driven system that we have become accustomed to—that we have become slaves to. As we break our old habits of over-consumption and constant competition, we will be free to establish systems more in tune with our innate tendencies to be compassionate to each other and supportive of each other. We will create the economic system that makes sense for a sustainable future, what some call a cooperative economy (Stiglitz et al., 2009). Indeed, this is happening on the local level all around the world.

In a refreshingly bold move, a number of municipalities and a few countries as well have begun assessing their economic health, at least in part, using the Happy Planet Index that was developed by the New Economics Foundation in London. This derived value is based on the objective measure of life expectancy, the subjective measure of life satisfaction, and the city's or country's ecological footprint. The Kingdom of Bhutan in Central Asia now uses gross national happiness (GNH) as its economic indicator. "The objective, 'Gross National Happiness' was introduced in the 1980s as a means of achieving a better society" (Denman & Namgyel, 2008, p. 479). All of these efforts are in line with the thinking of leading economists, who say, "The pursuit of self-interest, profit, old-fashioned greed, did not lead to societal well-being" (Stiglitz, 2009, p. 352). They are also corroborated by a report from the World Health Organization's Commission on Social Determinants of Health (World Health Organization, 2008). As well as restraint, discernment is required for us to be responsible, ecologically conscious consumers, and to be discerning, we must be informed. We may all theoretically adhere to the traditional, liberalist no-harm principle, but as we consume products today, it is increasingly difficult to know whether the item we pull from the shelf and drop in our shopping cart is entirely "innocent," whether no harm was done during any stage of its production and marketing.

We should be informed consumers and choose to enjoy the simplicity because this mindset and living approach will reduce the unnecessary consumption of natural resources and protect an eco-friendly society.

## 2. Natural Capitalism

In addition to its inclusion of human rights and happiness in the general equation of prosperity, the new paradigm also acknowledges rights of animals (Singer, 1990), plants, and the land itself, this view approaches to near the holistic perspective, an expansion of the human-only communitarian focus. The ancient cultures are accumulated wisdom with sustainable living approach; we can learn much from them (Wills-Johnson, 2010).



The way we have lived our lives in recent history has been detrimental to the earth's living systems and many species of life on this planet for our concern only on human rights or human community. Although it is no longer shocking, that statement should still be sobering. The evidence is everywhere and causes huge damage (Reuters, 2011). Deforestation, extinction of species, depletion of mineral resources, contamination of our fresh water supply, overflowing landfills, destroyed mountains, cities smothered in smog, the rising incidence of birth defects with suspected environmental causes..., the list goes on.

Fortunately, we are not predestined to continue on our present destructive course. In fact, there are those who have the vision to see in our current worldwide economic downturn a tremendous opportunity for systemic change (Hollender et al., 2010). Instead of narrow-minded, perpetual-growth capitalism that exploits natural resources (through slash-and-burn extraction and wanton end-of-pipe pollution) and humans (in almost countless ways), we need to establish a way of doing business that is based on true costs and stewardship of resources—an economy that promotes the health of our earth and individuals instead of thriving at their expense. We need to practice what has been termed “natural capitalism” (Hawken, Lovins, & Lovins, 2000).

In business terms, natural capitalism relates to fully accounting for the costs of all inputs, individual rights, human community well-being, other species survival, and all members' values. It is based on the awareness that nothing is “free”—everything comes at a cost, even when there is no individual to hand a payment to. In order to implement this vision of sustainable, full-accounting business, we need to do more than simply value (i.e., appreciate) our environment. We must also establish a mechanism for valuating (i.e., appraising, setting a true price on) our environment—the ecological resources that surround us and enrich us. The objective of pricing a natural resource is not to commoditize it but rather to come to a true understanding of our wealth, much of which resides in things just as they are in their natural state, unprocessed, unpackaged, and not on the shelf. One such valuation tool was conceived in 2007 at a meeting of environment ministers from various nations. This tool, The Economics of Eco-systems and Biodiversity (TEEB) was designed “to help stakeholders and beneficiaries recognize the value of eco-system services and to reward responsible custodians of Earth's living fabric, its eco-systems and biodiversity” (Sukhdev, 2011, p. 35).

Armed with tools such as TEEB, forward-thinking businesspersons are establishing a more holistic view of what it means to run a profitable business. A huge piece of the new awareness is acknowledging and embracing Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). This is the concept that to be fully successful, a business has to not only reward its owners and investors with return on their investment but also be of benefit to the surrounding community. That does not mean simply doing no harm, but, rather, actively seeking ways to do well. Those who have adopted this forward-looking mindset pay attention to their “triple-P bottom line,” in which outcomes on people and the planet carry at least as much weight as profitability in determining whether or not their enterprise is successful. This concept is really little more than a business-oriented take on the core belief behind the Good Work Project being conducted at Harvard University: work cannot be good (i.e., successful) unless it is also both morally and socially responsible (Damon, 2004; Gardner, Csikszentmihalyi, & Damon, 2002).

Ray Anderson, CEO of Interface, Inc., an international carpet-manufacturing business headquartered in Georgia, USA, is a global leader in this transformational thinking. Upon reading Paul Hawken's vision of the future from a business perspective, *The Ecology of Commerce* (Hawken, 1994), Anderson realized that the way he was running his business was killing the surrounding environment and possibly harming people. He performed a complete re-assessment of his business practices and processes, from suppliers to customers, and totally revamped the chain of production. His goal is to be non-polluting and carbon-neutral within a few years. Anderson (2009) stated, “We at interface have committed ourselves to bringing sustainability fully into existence...” (pp. 5-6). Anderson has become an outspoken, globetrotting proponent of the “triple-P bottom line.” His most recent

book tells his story of awakening and transformation and destroys the myth that profitability and ecological/social responsibility are mutually exclusive.

To sum up, businesses that make the transition to a full cost accounting system that fairly values the natural resource inputs to their product streams will be leading the way to a brighter, more-sustainable future and amend the limits of liberalism and communitarianism. Thus, the concept of natural capitalism provides a thought to include the concerns on all subjects in eco-system and avoids the narrow mind-sets concerns on economic, individual, or human community only.

### 3. Permaculture

Just as businesses often have a narrow-minded focus on maximizing profit in the short term and government agencies can be overly concerned with cost savings in the short term, these are both limitations either indulging in pleasure of rights or covering by anthropocentric community mask. These facts stem partly from our inability or reluctance rather, to practice patience and to project into the future and base current decisions on those future projections. We have become so blindly entrenched in our “have now, pay later, forget planning” lifestyle that fuels the credit economy that we can’t grasp the wisdom of planning ahead and paying now so we can have something later. Such a holistic, sustainable vision seems more fictional than possible to many today.

Consequently, we often end up with greater expense in the long run. There are thousands of examples, from deteriorating infrastructure in our cities to cost overruns in most major construction efforts today. The most critical effects, however, are related to the weakening and depletion of many of our natural resources, especially the world’s forests. The narrow-minded, shortsighted practice of clear-cutting old-growth forests to use the wood as a commodity has left us grappling with numerous global environmental problems. As the primary producers of oxygen, healthy mature forests, along with the sunlight and water with which they interact, are the ultimate basis of our life here on earth. Bill Mollison began to document the foundational element of forests over 30 years ago when he laid out the grounding principles of permaculture (*The Permaculture Journey*, 2011).

Permaculture is the harmonious integration of landscape and people providing their food, energy, shelter, and other material and non-material needs in a sustainable way. Since the forests help sustain us, it is critically important that we develop a way of living that values and sustains the world’s forests resources. Without forests, we have no soil suitable for growing the food we need—without forests, we don’t have an adequate supply of oxygen on earth—without forests, we lose an essential piece of earth’s natural temperature-regulation system—without forests, the water cycle cannot function completely and efficiently—without forests, many species, both plants and animals, lose their natural life-supporting habitat (Clift, 2006).

Quite another aspect of permaculture, in addition to the concept of living and working in harmony with the land and the natural resources of an ecological community, is the idea of designing manufactured things intelligently. To be truly sustainable, we must design longevity and multi-functionality into the products our society produces. Everything that we manufacture should be designed and constructed in a way that maximizes its durability. Only in this way will we be able to cast off our well-earned nickname, the throw-away society (McDonough & Braungart, 2002). What’s more, we must fully adopt the practice of the second of the Three R’s (Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle)—Reuse! If simplicity and multi-functionality are designed into products, then our imagination can take over and help us identify secondary and tertiary uses for things—if we are imaginative!

Human imagination is actually a key aspect of the permaculture philosophy. We must strive to solve life’s problems in creative, sustainable ways—and these ways may not necessarily be quick, and easy, and cheap. However, in the end, they will be the best for all concerned. The philosophy behind permaculture is one of working with, rather than against, nature; of protracted and thoughtful observation rather than protracted and thoughtless

action; of looking at systems in all their functions, rather than asking only one yield of them; and allowing systems to demonstrate their own evolutions (The Permaculture Research Institute of Australia, 2011).

In short, bringing the concept of permanence and sustainability into the way we interact with the world around us through the tenets of permaculture will help guard against the environment-destroying hyper-individualism. Permaculture also carries the promise of broadening the concept of community and expanding the traditional communitarian viewpoint to a more-holistic, total-environment perspective.

## V. Holistic Environmental Model

Three environmental models are discussed and compared.

### 1. Individual-based Liberal Environmental Model

The individual-based liberal focuses on his or her own rights or freedom. The society is individually based and neglects the others, other people, other species, or natural resources. For individual rights as trumps (Dworkin, 1984), liberal may leave the community and environment as one's preference. It is hard to push everyone engages with environment in seriously attitudes and actions. The figure 1 describes the position which liberal, symbols with I--the individual, community, and environment. In liberal model, every individual keeps in his or her own circle and it is hard to predict what they will do for the community or environment because the relation to other individual, community, or environment is one's option but not obligatoriness. This model obviously could not promise us everyone will participate with environmental protection. The model needs to pay attention to the other people in some ways and concerns our only Earth voluntarily.

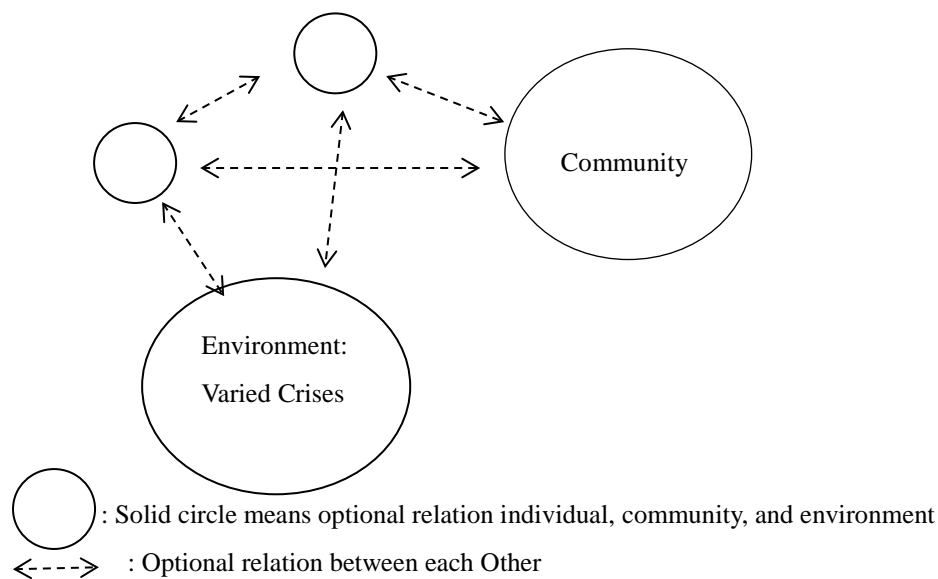
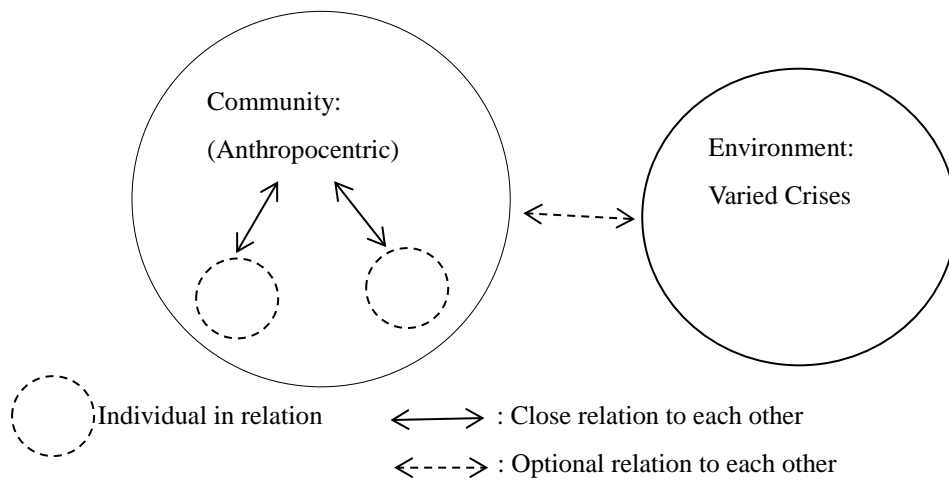


Fig. 1 Individual-based liberal environmental model

### 2. Communitarian Environmental Model

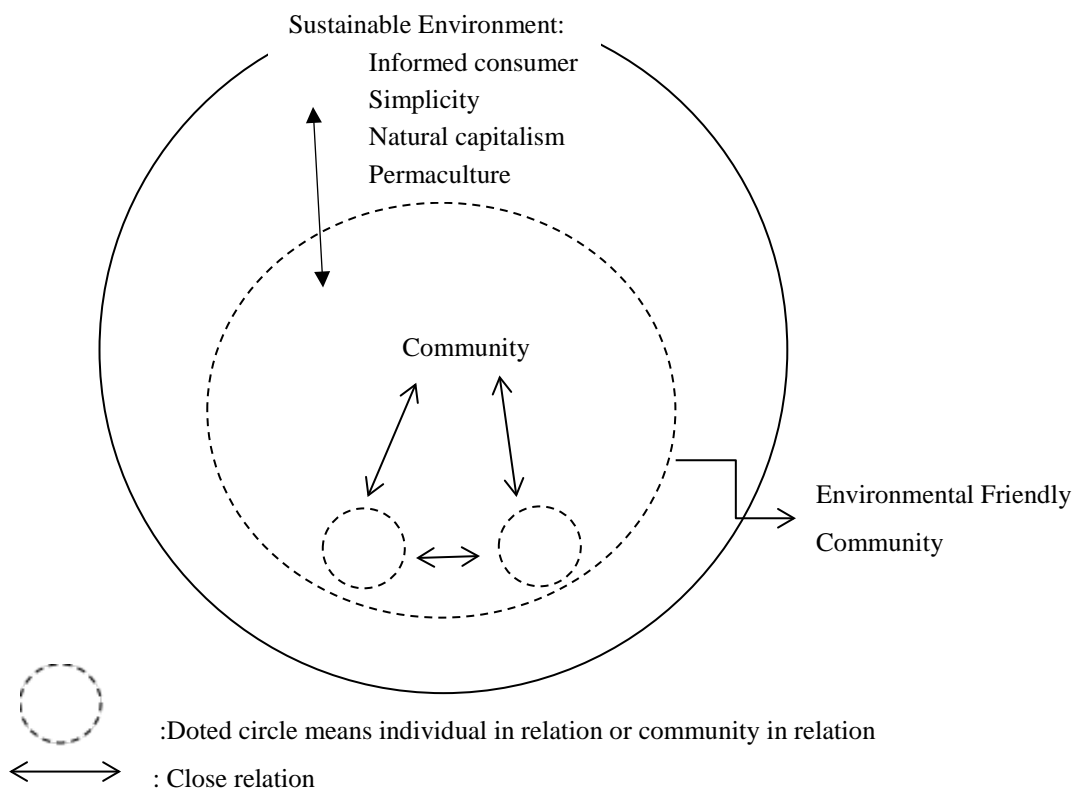
Communitarian tries to fix the problem of liberal. They demand every individual having the responsibility about the community. Every individual inheres the relation with the others, culture, tradition, and community; therefore, individual is part of the whole community and has close relation to each other. However, communitarian focuses on the human being's tradition or culture and not focuses on non-human being or nature things. This anthropocentric approach could not give us too much suggestions about environmental crises. We need step out the human beings limited circle and care our earth mother more (see figure 2. below).



**Fig. 2 Communitarian environmental model**

### 3. Holistic Environmental Model

No matter individual-based liberal or communitarian, both do not pay much attention to our environmental crises and a new vision for sustainable living is needed. If we can go out of liberal’s individual narrow vision and volunteer to live simplicity or take account all the natural capitalism, go beyond communitarian’s anthropocentric and focus on environmental issues and permaculture, we will be more possible to create a sustainable future life. This holistic environmental vision model (see figure 3 below) will be more comprehensible for everyone to follow because it includes the environmental issues into its model and solves environmental crises by way of strategies of informed consumer, volunteer simplicity, natural capitalism, and permaculture. This model could fix the limitations of liberal model and communitarian model with environment.



**Fig. 3 Holistic environmental model**

## VI. Conclusion

We are sharing the same earth mother and fates together in this destination. The individual-based liberal attitude persuades individual rights which be used by free market tricks to lure majority over consumption and regardless other beings that could not promise us a safe future. However, the anthropocentric communitarian has not full attention on all members of eco-system, which could not have chance to create a sustainable culture. We need to go beyond the limitations of individual-based liberalism and communitarianism's limited vision of environmental protections. Only surpass the individual-based liberal and communitarian limited vision and toward a holistic environmental vision is a better way to live. Proclaim an informed consumer, to live in volunteer simplicity, to be the natural capitalism, and to form a permaculture are wise ways for a living. These holistic living styles amend human's improper attitude and behavior and lead us into a sustainable society. After this research, we suggest the informed consumer should investigate deeply in order to give an insight into liberal's harm principle, which is one of the most important rules for democracy living guide nowadays. Moreover, the educational practitioners could take the advantages from this holistic environmental model to develop a relevant teaching program to complete the ideal of environmental education.

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