

The death of environmentalism environmental sciences essay



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Chapter 1

On the global scale, the planet's natural ecosystems and regenerating bio-capacity are being severely degraded and, as a result, this compromises the ability of the planet to sustain life. Forests, fisheries, oceans, rangeland, fresh water systems (lakes, wetlands, rivers) and other natural ecosystems are all threatened while many are on the verge of collapse. Water, land and air are getting increasingly polluted, water tables are falling, soil erosion is leading to desertification, global warming is well underway, and species are dying out 1000 times faster than their natural rate of extinction. In 2007 first quarter data from the National Solid Waste Management Commission shows that there are 677 open dumpsites, 343 controlled dumps, and 21 landfills in the country. An additional 307 dump sites are subject for closure or rehabilitation plans but without definite schedules for enforcement. About 215 additional landfills are being proposed to be set up nationwide.

Environmentalists stress that Republic Act 9003 calls for the adoption of the best environmental practices in ecological waste management and explicitly excludes waste incineration as an ecological option. These polluting disposal facilities are major sources of greenhouse gas emissions to the atmosphere which adds to global warming. Landfills and open dumps, according to studies, account for 34 percent of human-related methane emissions to the atmosphere, a global warming gas that has 23 times more heat-trapping power than carbon dioxide. These landfills and open dumps are illegal under RA 9003. Incinerators, on the other hand, have significantly higher levels of greenhouse gas emissions (per kilowatt) than a coal-fired power plant when all of the carbon coming out of an incinerator stacks is measured. Such

emissions are banned by the country's Clean Air Act. Inaction on garbage contributes to the death of at least two persons every minute due to complications from environmental problems, which could be prevented if the country only developed a more efficient environmental management program. Mismanagement of waste has serious environmental consequences: ground and surface water contamination, local flooding, air pollution, exposure to toxins, and spread of disease. Many of the disposal sites contain infectious material, thus threatening sanitation workers and waste-pickers. Annual waste generation in the Philippines is expected to grow 40 percent by 2010. Improvements in recycling, collection, and disposal will become even more critical as garbage production continues to increase with population growth and economic development. The Philippines is suffering from degradation of the natural environment. It has fifty major rivers now polluted due to abuse and neglect. Approximately two-thirds of the country's original mangroves have been lost. A hundred years ago, the Philippines had close to 22 million hectares of old growth forest. At the start of 2000, we had less than 600, 000 hectares of old-growth forest left. In one century, we had cut down close to 97 percent of our original forest. A study by the Environmental Scientists for Social Change (ESSC) reveals that we have systematically cut this forest down and that we have not stopped its destruction and that of its core biodiversity. The International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) estimates that it takes over 4, 000 liters of water to produce one kilo of rice. Because of the loss of forests, we have less water since most of our freshwater comes from watersheds found in forests. Therefore, loss of forests means loss of food. More than 400 plant and animal species found in the Philippines are currently threatened with extinction, including the

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Philippine eagle, the tamaraw, and the dugong. In 2001, 49 of the nation's mammal species, 86 bird species, and 320 plant species were threatened with extinction. Endangered species in the Philippines include the monkey-eating eagle, Philippine tarsier, tamaraw, four species of turtle (green sea, hawksbill, olive ridley, and leatherback), Philippines crocodile, sinarapan, and two species of butterflies. The Cebu warty pig, Panay flying fox, and Chapman's fruit bat have become extinct. Behaviour is a key cultural aspect that is embedded in people's way of life. Studying a community's behavior and introducing new ones requires intensive, long-term, and creative social marketing. This can be done by studying the demographic and cultural fiber of the community through immersions and capacity building activities. The Resources, Environment and Economics Center for Studies, Inc.'s (REECS) 2002 study on household waste management systems and the attitudes and behavior of the communities in two barangays in Metro Manila (Bennagen, Nepomuceno, Covar, 2002) showed that: 1. Waste management is still perceived by many as the responsibility of government. 2. Public participation in waste management, especially in segregation at source, remains limited. 3. More extensive awareness- raising activities and training on ecological waste management are needed, together with stricter enforcement of the Law and local ordinances must be observed. 4. There is lack of community empowerment and political will to resolve the problem. Recognizing the importance of the environment's immediate recovery and effects of improper waste management to the Philippines, there is a need for understanding and reformation of attitudes and concern towards the protection of environment. The concerns on the environment has reached global attention, this had lead to various international conventions, <https://assignbuster.com/the-death-of-environmentalism-environmental-sciences-essay/>

meetings, treaties and on the local level laws and ordinances. All sectors whether private or public are concerned about the condition of our environment and takes action to address the same. This includes the business sector as part of their so called " corporate social responsibility". The paradigm shift in marketing and advertising had taken place, many businesses focus on environmental issues and concerns which lead to the development of a concept so called " Green Marketing". According to the American Marketing Association (1970):" Green marketing is the marketing of products that are presumed to be environmentally safe. Thus, green marketing incorporates a broad range of activities, including product modification, changes to the production process, packaging changes, as well as modifying advertising". Other similar terms used are Environmental Marketing and Ecological Marketing. Green Marketing has a rich historical basis. In the 1960s proved to be the origins of the Green Movement, from Rachel Carson's Silent Spring which is exposed the hazards of the pesticide DDT (dichlorodiphenyltrichloroethane) to Ralph Nader's Unsafe At Any Speed which details resistance by car manufacturers to the introduce safety features, like seat belts, and their general reluctance to spend money on improving safety. In the 1970's the Clean Air Act empowered the environmental protection act to develop and enforce regulations aimed at controlling air pollution. The 1980's is the decade that started with Volkswagen testing solar-powered vehicles, and U. S. congress enacting laws for the safe disposal of nuclear waste. The decade ends with environmental disasters including Chernobyl (1986) and the Exxon Valdez (1989). Around 1990, American consumers were busy supersizing their fast food, bulk-shopping at Costco and Target, and purchasing SUVs in ever-increasing

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numbers. The result a " trash" problem. 172 governments participated, with 108 sending their heads of state or government, 50, 000 representatives of non-governmental organizations and 17, 000 people at the parallel NGO " Global Forum". For 11 Days the consortium addressed issues of production, alternative energy, investments in public transportation and the scarcity of clean water. 5 million pairs of athletic shoes and contributed to more than 250 sport surfaces to provide access to places to play for kids as part of Nike's global community investment program. The last half of the 1990s saw a host of governmental interventions attempting to reduce soot, auto emissions, and carbon dioxide, even as trucks and SUVs got larger and larger. The Honda Insight became the first hybrid available in North America, beating Toyota's Prius by 7 months. Featuring optimized aerodynamics and a lightweight aluminum structure to maximize fuel efficiency and minimize emissions. In the 2000's, " Green" becomes a consumer marketing push for the likes of Vanity Fair and NBC's Green Week. Yet the period between 2004-2006 was marked with events beyond human control including the Indian Ocean Tsunami and Hurricane Katrina. Shellenberger and Nordhaus argue that environmentalism as a concept is incapable of dealing with climate change and should " die" so that a new politics can be born. After much debate, they followed up with a more positive essay, " Break Through: From the Death of Environmentalism to the Politics of Possibility." Individuals worldwide are becoming increasingly savvy about the environment, and basing their purchasing decisions on a product's environmental attributes (Darnall, 2008a; Perrini, Castaldo, Misani & Tencati, 2009). For instance, within the United States (US), approximately 15 percent of consumers routinely pay more for green products, and another 15 percent seek green

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products if they do not cost more (Ginsberg & Bloom, 2004). Similarly, consumers in Costa Rica are willing to pay price premiums of \$30 per night for hotel services that have certain eco-labels (Rivera, 2002). Consumers have also revealed a willingness to spend 20-50 percent more for organically labeled food (Barkley, 2002). In spite of their greater cost differentials, by the end of 2007 international sales of UK organic products climbed to €33.7 billion, which represents a 10% increase from the prior year (Perrini, Castaldo, Misani & Tencati, 2009). As a consequence, there is a compelling reason for companies and governments to understand more about why consumers buy green. Previous research on the topic has generally examined green consumption related to a single product label. In particular, earlier scholarship has considered consumer purchasing decisions related to organic certified products (Perrini, Castaldo, Misani & Tencati, 2009; Loureiro, McCluskey & Mittelhammer, 2001), eco-labeled food (Loureiro, McCluskey & Mittelhammer, 2001), sustainable forest products (Teisl, Peavey, Newman, Buono & Hermann, 2002) and energy label ed electrical appliances (Sammer & Wüstenhagen, 2006 ; Mills & Schleich, 2009). These studies illustrate that there are numerous types of labels that might influence consumers' shopping decisions. However, as yet researchers have little sense regarding factors that are related to consumers' overall use of eco-labels in their purchasing decisions (Galarraga Gallastegui, 2002). Even less is known about individuals who acknowledge that they do not utilize eco-labels in their purchasing decisions, but would if presented with the right circumstances or information. Perhaps more importantly, many green consumption decisions do not involve an eco-label at all. As such, numerous

questions remain about the overall factors that underpin why consumers buy green (Galarraga Gallastegui, 2002).