

# **Sustainability Ethics:**

*Common Good Values for a Better World*

By

**Marco Tavanti**

# **Sustainability Ethics: Common Good Values for a Better World**

**By Marco Tavanti**

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# Dedication

To the Earth, our irreplaceable home, and all its living inhabitants.

This book is dedicated to all the tireless champions of sustainability, the individuals, communities, and organizations who strive to protect the well-being of present and future generations in our common home.

We honor those who have come before us, the Indigenous peoples and ancient civilizations who lived in harmony with nature, and who understood the deep interconnectedness of all living beings. May their wisdom guide us as we work towards a sustainable future.

To the scientists, researchers, educators, and activists who have dedicated their lives to understanding and addressing the complex challenges of environmental degradation, climate change, and social injustice. Your hard work, passion, and perseverance provide the foundation for a better world.

And finally, to our children, and their children, and all the generations to come: May this book serve as a testament to our unwavering commitment to a more sustainable, just, and compassionate world. May the principles and practices outlined within these pages inspire us all to take action, to make the necessary changes in our own lives, and to unite in our collective efforts towards a brighter future for all.

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# Foreword

As we arrive at the crossroads of our future, it is incumbent upon us - as management students, practitioners, and leaders - to take a stand for the common good, our common home, and our common future. As you open the pages of "Sustainability Ethics: Common Good Values for a Better World," you are invited to embark on a transformative journey - one that challenges you to reevaluate your values, broaden your perspectives, and develop innovative solutions for the most pressing global challenges of our time.

In a world increasingly driven by short-term gains and shareholder value, it is essential that we shift our focus to embrace a more comprehensive value perspective - one that transcends the narrow confines of profit maximization and embraces our shared responsibility for the well-being of our planet and its inhabitants. This book presents an invaluable resource for those seeking to redefine the role of business and management in the pursuit of a more sustainable, equitable, and just world.

As you engage with the principles of sustainability ethics, you will also confront the ethical implications of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 SDGs. These include addressing the sustainability ethical values and challenges of inclusiveness and participation, intergenerational equity, transparency and accountability, and global justice.

As you delve into these pages, you will discover thought-provoking discussions on the ethical foundations of sustainability, the interconnectedness of our global community, and the necessity of collaboration to address the complex challenges we face. This book serves as a clarion call for management students and practitioners to embrace the principles of sustainability ethics in order to advance



the common good, and in so doing, to transform our world for the better.

Our common home, our common purpose, and our common future are all inextricably linked. We share a moral obligation to safeguard our planet and ensure that future generations inherit a world in which they can thrive. As you explore the ideas and insights presented in this book, you will be inspired to develop new strategies, cultivate empathy, and foster a sense of global citizenship - qualities that are essential for the leaders of tomorrow.

In addition, this book emphasizes the importance of integrating sustainability ethics into our common practices. You will recognize, reflect, and act on challenging topics and shared responsibilities that illustrate how businesses and organizations can lead the way in creating a more sustainable future. As you reflect on these issues, examples, and solutions, you will be equipped with the tools and knowledge to meaningfully contribute to this global movement for sustainable values.

The challenges we face are immense, and the need for action is urgent. Now, more than ever we need ethical leaders with the mindsets and competencies necessary to address the current and future global challenges - the wicked problems as the book says. As management students and practitioners, you are uniquely positioned to drive change and shape the future. By embracing the principles of sustainability ethics, you have the power to redefine the role of business in society, of public institutions and nonprofits in communities, and in doing so, to create a better world for all.

So, as you begin your journey through the pages remember that the responsibility lies in our hands, and the time for change is now. Let us come together to create a brighter, more sustainable future - a

future built on the foundations of our common values and shared purpose.

I invite you to join us in embracing our common responsibility to discern and build the future we desire.

**Dr. Larry Brewster**  
**Public Policy and Ethics Professor Emeritus, former Dean,**  
**University of San Francisco Masagung School of Management**



## Preface

In an age defined by rapid technological advances and growing interconnectedness, the need for a collective understanding and commitment to sustainability ethics has become an imperative. As we strive to safeguard our common good, common home, and common future, the importance of embedding ethical decision-making in our education and formation cannot be overstated. This book serves as a timely and vital resource for those seeking to navigate the complexities of sustainability ethics in the pursuit of a just and equitable world.

Throughout my years of teaching, I have witnessed first-hand the devastation wrought by unethical corporate practices on human rights, labor rights, and marginalized communities across the globe. My earlier skepticism of corporate ethics stems from the recurring instances of exploitation and abuse that plague our world. Throughout the collaborations I have with corporate leaders and social entrepreneurs engaged in the United Nations Global Compact and other socially engaged forums, my perspectives changed, and I began admiring the positive and systemic contributions that business with purpose and policies with principles can have. These experiences have only strengthened my conviction that fostering a deep understanding of sustainability ethics is critical to addressing the systemic issues that perpetuate these injustices.

The "see-reflect-act" framework has been a cornerstone of my teaching methodology, allowing students to analyze complex situations through personal, organizational, and systemic lenses. By first observing the reality of a given context (see), we can then engage in critical reflection (reflect) to discern the underlying factors that contribute to the challenges at hand. This process equips us with

the tools to make informed decisions and take meaningful action (act) that supports sustainable and ethical outcomes.

It is disheartening to witness the shortcomings in the way ethics courses are often taught. The disconnect between philosophical abstract concepts and their real-world applications, as well as the failure to adequately address the principles and frameworks that underpin ethical decision-making, can hinder students' understanding of the subject. Furthermore, the focus on individual ethical issues without due consideration for the collective and systemic implications only serves to limit the impact and relevance of these courses.

To remedy this, it is essential that we adopt a more comprehensive and integrated approach to teaching ethics. This approach should seamlessly blend philosophical foundations with real-world applications, while simultaneously providing students with the tools to critically examine specific issues within the broader context of social, economic, and environmental well-being.

To achieve this, educators must strike a delicate balance between theory and practice, ensuring that students are exposed to both the philosophical underpinnings of ethics and their practical implications. By grounding ethical principles in tangible examples and real-life situations, students can better understand the importance of ethical decision-making in shaping our world.

Additionally, it is crucial that ethics courses emphasize the interconnectedness of individual, organizational, and systemic ethical issues. A thorough exploration of these relationships will enable students to grasp the complexities of sustainability ethics and foster a more holistic understanding of the subject matter. By examining the collective and systemic implications of ethical

decisions, students can develop the ability to evaluate the social, economic, and environmental consequences of their actions.

It is of paramount importance that educators adopt a more comprehensive and integrated approach to teaching ethics. Sustainability ethics is such an urgently needed comprehensive paradigm. By ensuring that students are well-versed in both theoretical concepts and their real-world applications, we can inspire a new generation of ethically aware individuals who are equipped to tackle the complex challenges that face our global society. Moreover, fostering a deeper understanding of the interconnectedness of individual, organizational, and systemic ethical issues will enable students to appreciate the far-reaching implications of their decisions and contribute to a more just, equitable, and sustainable world.

In this book, you will find an exploration of sustainability ethics grounded in these very frameworks and perspectives, offering valuable insights into the multidimensional nature of ethical decision-making. Through a series of references to urgent issues, core principles, real-world case studies, and thought-provoking discussions, the reader is invited to engage with the complexities of sustainability ethics and develop the skills needed to address the challenges that arise at the personal, organizational, and systemic levels.

As we collectively confront the urgency of fostering a sustainable and ethical world, it is crucial that we prioritize the cultivation of a new generation of leaders who are guided by a strong moral compass. The lessons and wisdom shared in this book is to start these conversions and make us more conscious of the interconnectedness of our world, actions, and consequences. These lessons are a testament to the power of education and formation in

shaping such leaders, and I am confident that it will inspire readers to embrace the call to action for the sake of our shared future.

In the pursuit of a more just and sustainable world, let us not shy away from the difficult conversations and decisions that lie ahead. Instead, let us rise to the challenge, equipped with the knowledge and understanding imparted by this invaluable resource. For it is only through the unwavering commitment to sustainability ethics that we can truly hope to secure the common good, our common home, our common future, our common peace, and our common destiny.

**Dr Marco Tavanti**  
**Ethical Leadership Professor, University of San Francisco**  
**Masagung School of Management**

# Chapter 1

## Introduction - Contexts for Sustainability Ethics

*"There can be no clearer illustration of the need for human beings to act globally than the issues raised by the impact of human activity on our atmosphere. [...] All of this forces us to think differently about our ethics. Our value system evolved in circumstances in which the atmosphere, like the oceans, seemed an unlimited resource, and responsibilities and harms were generally clear and well defined. If someone hit someone else, it was clear who had done what. Now the twin problems of the ozone hole and of climate change have revealed bizarre new ways of killing people."* - Peter Singer (2002)

*"Of course every nation and every state has its own ethical ideas, its own value system and religious convictions, but not even such recognized principles as those of human rights will be adequate as a basis for the achievement of effective cooperation. We need to develop a new value system which takes global environmental problems into account and which provides the whole of humanity - states as well as individuals - with a guideline for action."* - Mikhail Gorbachev (2006)

*"It isn't surprising that ethical leadership is inherently multidimensional. It is an interdisciplinary topic at the intersection of a collection of fields of study that are usually discussed separately. These include leadership, human growth and development, moral development, applied business ethics, learning and performance improvement, psychology, systems thinking, sustainability, corporate social responsibility, global business, and the list goes on."* - Linda Fisher Thornton, CEO of Leading in Context (2013).



## Overview

This introductory chapter sets the stage for understanding and contextualizing ethics and sustainability in relation to our common goals. It explains why context matters in sustainability ethics and sustainable ethical decision making. It clarifies related terms such as ethics, values, and morality in relation to sustainability and sustainable development. It reviews sustainability ethical practices in relation to concepts such as stewardship and social responsibility. It introduces the main pillars of sustainability expanded by the 5P model of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals. We introduce sustainability values and sustainability ethical perspectives through the lenses of diverse normative ethical frameworks. We also introduce the organization of the book and the sections of each chapter following the See-Reflect-Act Model.

## Sustainability as a Challenge and Opportunity

Our planet faces unprecedented challenges such as climate change, resource depletion, and environmental degradation. On the human side, our globally interconnected society has been experiencing both new and enduring forms of discrimination and inequities. It has become clear that our current way of living is unsustainable and may undermine our very existence as human beings. To ensure the survival of our planet and the well-being of future generations, we need to adopt a new ethical framework which recognizes the interconnectedness of well-being and sustainability. These challenges require a new way of thinking about ethics, one that recognizes the interdependence of human well-being and environmental sustainability. These urgent challenges require a broader, more integrated approach to ethics that takes into account the interconnectedness of social, economic, and environmental systems.

Sustainability ethics provides this framework by offering a holistic and integrated approach to addressing the complex challenges of sustainability. Through the sustainability ethics view point, we are able to focus on the principles of common good, people and rights, planet and well-being, prosperity and responsibility, sustainability and service, and other related concepts that offer a more comprehensive and holistic framework for ethical decision-making in the context of sustainability. By combining ethics and sustainability, we can better facilitate understanding of the complex and interrelated issues of sustainability, and develop more effective and equitable solutions that promote the long-term well-being of both people and the planet..

Using ethics in sustainability means recognizing that human actions have consequences for both current and future generations, and that these actions must be guided by ethical principles that promote the well-being of all beings and the planet. This involves identifying and prioritizing basic human needs, such as access to clean water, food, shelter, and healthcare, as well as considering the needs and interests of non-human beings and the natural environment. Ultimately, it requires balancing these needs and interests in a way that promotes sustainability and ensures that future generations can meet their own needs.

Sustainability cannot be achieved solely through technical or economic solutions but also requires ethical reflection and decision-making. This is because sustainability involves making choices and trade-offs among competing values, such as environmental protection, economic growth, and social justice. Ethics provides a framework for evaluating and prioritizing these values and making decisions that are consistent with sustainability principles. Ethical reflection and decision-making can also help ensure that the pursuit of sustainability is inclusive and respectful of diverse perspectives and values. Therefore, integrating sustainability into practice and

management situations requires a comprehensive and ethically-grounded approach that considers the broader implications and consequences of our actions for present and future generations.

## **Contexts Matters in Sustainability Ethics**

Contexts matter in sustainability ethics because they play a crucial role in shaping the ethical implications and consequences of our actions related to the environment, society, and economy. The Ignatian Pedagogical Paradigm (IPP), a teaching and learning model rooted in the Jesuit tradition, emphasizes the importance of considering the context to gain a better understanding of any given situation. According to the IPP, the process of See-Judge (Reflect)-Act and Evaluate/Discern is preceded by an analysis of the context.

The IPP emphasizes the significance of contexts that shape our understanding of reality and influence our decision making. For instance, different cultural, social, and economic contexts frame our perceptions, values, and priorities. By considering these contexts, we can better appreciate the complexity of sustainability challenges and develop more relevant and effective solutions. Ethical decision-making is deeply influenced by the context in which decisions are made. Social norms, political structures, economic systems, and available resources are all part of the context that shapes our ethical choices related to sustainability. A clear example of this is the diverse responsibilities of countries in relation to climate change. Developed countries have historically contributed more to greenhouse gas emissions. However, developing countries, which often have limited resources to mitigate climate change, are disproportionately affected by its consequences. Understanding this context can help in crafting more equitable and ethical policies and agreements for addressing climate change.

Different countries and societies have varying priorities and concerns regarding sustainability. For example, a developed country might prioritize reducing carbon emissions, while a developing country might focus on providing basic necessities like clean water and sanitation. Cultural values and beliefs also play a critical role in shaping ethical perspectives on sustainability. What might be considered ethical in one culture might not be seen the same way in another. By recognizing these differences, we can develop a more nuanced understanding of sustainability ethics. In addition, different economic contexts greatly impact a country's ability to implement sustainable practices. Developing countries often face resource constraints, making it challenging to invest in sustainable infrastructure or technology. Conversely, developed countries might have more resources but also face issues like consumerism and excessive resource consumption.

Contexts matter particularly with diverse populations and situations. For instance, environmental conservation may be different in the context of Indigenous communities. Efforts to conserve ecosystems and biodiversity often intersect with the rights and traditions of Indigenous communities. By understanding the cultural and socio-economic context of these communities, we can develop conservation strategies that are both ethically and culturally sensitive. In other words, understanding the importance of context in sustainability ethics enables us to develop more effective, equitable, and culturally sensitive solutions to the pressing challenges of our time. Ultimately, the IPP offers a framework for becoming reflective practitioners for action (“praxis” and “refraction”) and for making sense of the world through experience (learning-centered), reflections (meaning-making), and practices (action-oriented) (Go & Atienza, 2019). In other words, the IPP offers a valuable framework for considering contexts, ultimately contributing to a more comprehensive understanding of sustainability ethics.

## Clarifying the Terms

First we need to clarify some terms related to sustainability ethics.

1. **Ethics: What do we mean by ethics?** Ethics refers to a set of moral principles or values that govern an individual or group's behavior and decision-making. It is concerned with determining what is right or wrong, good or bad, and just or unjust. Ethics is closely related to values and morality, as it involves making judgments about what is morally right or wrong based on a set of core values. While ethics and morality share many similarities, there are some key differences between them. Ethics is often focused on principles and rules that apply to a specific context, such as a profession or institution, while morality is often more broadly applicable to all individuals in a society. Ethics may also be more concerned with the practical implications of moral principles, while morality may be more concerned with the philosophical or religious underpinnings of those principles. In sum, ethics is a more formalized and structured approach to ethical-decision-making. It is often associated with professional or institutional contexts, while morality is a more personal or cultural approach to moral decision-making that is based on individual or societal values.
2. **Sustainability: What do we mean by sustainability?** Sustainability refers to the ability of a system, society, or ecosystem to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. It involves balancing economic, social, and environmental considerations in a way that promotes long-term well-being and resilience. Sustainability is often explained in relation to sustainable development and resilience. Sustainable development (WCED, 1987) refers to

the development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. It is a holistic approach to development that seeks to balance economic, social, and environmental considerations. Resilience (Salt & Walker, 2012), in the context of sustainability, refers to the ability of a system or society to adapt and recover from environmental, social, or economic shocks or disruptions. It is a key component of sustainability, as it involves building systems that can withstand and recover from adversity.

Ethics has been explored in numerous studies that reviews aspects of sustainability. For example, the field of environmental ethics has been influenced by several major thinkers, including Aldo Leopold, Rachel Carson, Arne Naess, J. Baird Callicott, Paul W. Taylor, and Val Plumwood. Leopold (2020) is considered the father of environmental ethics. He uses the term "land ethics" where he argues that humans have a moral obligation to care for the land and its inhabitants. Carson's book *Silent Spring* (2002) is credited with launching the modern environmental movement and emphasizes the interconnectedness of nature. Naess (2010) developed the concept of "deep ecology," which emphasizes the intrinsic value of nature and interdependence of living things. Callicott (1989) and Taylor (2011) have contributed to the ethics of animal rights and biocentrism, respectively, while Plumwood's (2002) ecofeminism connects the domination of nature and the oppression of women. These thinkers and others continue to shape the understanding of ethical responsibilities to the environment. Similarly, there have been countless studies that have explored the social and economic aspects of sustainability ethics. For example, *The Ethics of Care* by Virginia Held (2006) emphasizes empathy, compassion, and responsibility for others as core aspects of social sustainability. *The Common Good* by Robert Reich (2019) argues that a fundamental ethical principle for promoting social sustainability is reducing

inequality. Similarly, Wilkinson and Pickett (2010), in *The Spirit Level* presents compelling evidence that more equal societies are not only more just but also healthier, happier, and more sustainable. Nobel Prize Laureate Amartya Sen (2011) in his well-known book *Development as Freedom* argues that social sustainability requires expanding individual capabilities to living fulfilling lives. Robeyns (2017) offers perspectives about social justice, well-being and human rights which provided the foundation for the ethical arguments made in this book. These publications are just a sample of how sustainability values have been studied from environmental, social and economic perspectives. They have provided the theoretical foundation for sustainability ethics which integrates the promotion of social justice, equality, and human flourishing, while also protecting the environment and ensuring the well-being of future generations.

### **Stewardship Ethics Alternative**

Ethics in relation to sustainability is usually interpreted as anthropocentric ethic, which focuses on the well-being and interests of humans, or biocentric ethic which recognizes the intrinsic value of all life and ecosystems, not just humans. For example, an advocate for conserving oil resources could take an anthropocentric perspective by arguing that oil resources are the property of humans and seek to use them wisely for the benefit of future generations of humans. However, a biocentric perspective would recognize the importance of oil and other resources for the health and well-being of all life and ecosystems, and would seek to conserve them for their own intrinsic value, not just for human use. More specifically, the duality of these two perspectives are bypassed by a stewardship approach which sees humans as responsible and at the service of natural equilibrium.

1. **Anthropocentric ethics:** Anthropocentric ethics is a view that places human interests and values at the center of ethical consideration. It is a human-centered approach that prioritizes human needs, desires, and well-being above all other forms of life on earth. This perspective sees nature as a resource for human use and exploitation. For example, some people may argue that it is ethical to cut wood in the forest as people need firewood for heating, cooking and other aspects of life that benefit humans.
2. **Biocentric ethics:** On the other hand, biocentric ethics is a view that sees all forms of life as having inherent value and deserving ethical consideration. It is a life-centered approach that recognizes the interconnectedness and interdependence of all living beings. This perspective sees nature as having intrinsic value and worthy of protection in its own right, not just as a resource for human use. For example, some people may argue that it is unethical to destroy a forest to build a shopping center because it harms the ecosystem and all the organisms that live there.
3. **Stewardship ethics:** The perspective of stewardship, also known as Seva in Sanskrit, in sustainability ethics represents an alternative beyond the anthropocentric and biocentric ethics. Stewardship refers to the responsibility of humans to care for and protect the environment and all living beings, not only for the benefit of humans but for the benefit of all life on Earth. Unlike anthropocentric ethics, which prioritize human interests above all else, and biocentric ethics, which prioritize the intrinsic value of all life, stewardship ethics emphasize the interconnectedness and interdependence of all life and ecosystems. It recognizes that humans are part of the web of life and have a responsibility to act as stewards or caretakers of the natural world.



Stewardship ethics promotes the idea of "caretakership" rather than ownership. This means that humans do not own the Earth and its resources but rather are responsible for their care and protection. Stewardship ethics emphasizes the importance of respecting the Earth and all its inhabitants, including humans, animals, and plants, and treating them all with care and compassion.

Stewardship ethics also emphasizes the importance of sustainability, recognizing that humans must live in harmony with the natural world and use resources in a responsible and sustainable manner to ensure the well-being of future generations. This involves promoting sustainable practices such as reducing waste, conserving resources, and using renewable energy sources.

Overall, the perspective of stewardship in sustainability ethics represents an alternative to anthropocentric and biocentric ethics by emphasizing the interconnectedness and interdependence of all life and ecosystems, promoting the idea of caretakership, and prioritizing sustainability for the well-being of future generations.

## **Sustainability Ethical Lenses**

In this book, we explore the principle-based notions of sustainability ethics and the moral-behavioral implications of issues in ethics of sustainability. While the terms "sustainability ethics" and "ethics of sustainability" may seem interchangeable, there is a subtle difference between the two of them.

1. **Sustainability Ethics:** "Sustainability ethics" refers to the ethical principles and values that guide our efforts to promote sustainability. It encompasses a wide range of ethical considerations, such as environmental stewardship, social justice, and economic equity, all of which are aimed at ensuring that we can meet the needs of the present without

compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

2. **Ethics of Sustainability:** On the other hand, "ethics of sustainability" refers to the ethical issues and challenges that arise in the context of sustainability. This includes questions such as: What is our moral responsibility to protect the environment and conserve resources? How should we balance the needs of the present with the needs of the future? How can we ensure that sustainability efforts are equitable and just?

Therefore, sustainability ethics provides the normative framework for guiding sustainability efforts, while the ethics of sustainability deals with the ethical challenges and dilemmas that arise in the process of implementing sustainability initiatives. Both concepts are important for understanding and promoting sustainability, as they provide guidance for how we should approach sustainability and how we can navigate the ethical complexities that arise in the process. Ultimately, by integrating both sustainability ethics and ethics of sustainability into our decision-making processes and practices, we can create a more just and sustainable future for all.

Sustainability ethics is a lens for seeing the world because it provides a framework for understanding the interconnectedness of social, natural, and global systems. By recognizing that everything is connected and that our actions have consequences for the world around us, sustainability ethics helps us to see the world in a more holistic and integrated way. For example, when we adopt a sustainability ethics lens, we begin to see that environmental issues are not just about protecting natural resources, but also about promoting social justice and economic equity. We begin to see how issues such as climate change, pollution, and resource depletion are

not just environmental problems, but also social and economic problems that affect people's health, livelihoods, and well-being.

Sustainability ethics also helps us to frame our decision-making by providing a set of principles and values that guide our actions. For example, the principle of intergenerational equity, which is a core tenet of sustainability ethics, requires us to consider the needs of future generations when making decisions today. This means that we must take a long-term view and consider the potential impacts of our actions on the environment and society in the future. Similarly, the principle of social justice requires us to consider the impacts of our actions on marginalized and vulnerable communities. This means that we must ensure that our decisions promote equity and fairness, and that we do not create or exacerbate social inequalities.

By framing our decision-making in this way, sustainability ethics helps us to make more informed and responsible choices that take into account the complex and interconnected nature of the world we live in. It allows us to consider the long-term impacts of our actions, and to ensure that our decisions are not just good for us, but for all members of society, as well as the natural world.

## **Values and Principles in Sustainability Ethics**

Values are important in sustainability ethics because they help us to determine what is morally right and wrong in our interactions with the environment and society. They provide a framework for decision-making, guiding our choices and actions towards more sustainable outcomes. For example, if we value biodiversity, we are more likely to take actions to protect and preserve it. If we value social justice, we are more likely to consider the needs and well-being of marginalized communities when making decisions that affect them.

Values also play a role in shaping our personal and collective identities, which in turn influence our behaviors and actions. By promoting values such as responsibility, compassion, and respect for nature, we can create a culture of sustainability that supports and reinforces sustainable behaviors and practices. In other words, values are important in sustainability ethics because they provide a guiding framework for decision-making, help to shape our identities and behaviors, and promote a culture of sustainability that supports long-term well-being for people and the planet.

Sustainability values are the foundation of principles and practices that reflect a moral and ethical responsibility to protect and preserve the environment, promote social justice, and ensure economic equity for present and future generations.

1. **Sustainability Values:** Sustainability values are the principles and beliefs that guide our actions towards achieving a sustainable future. These values are based on the recognition of the interconnectedness of social, economic, and environmental systems and the need to balance them for the well-being of current and future generations. Examples of sustainability values include stewardship, intergenerational equity, social justice, ecological integrity, and respect for diversity. These values provide a framework for decision-making and action towards sustainable development.
2. **Sustainability Principles:** Sustainability ethical principles are guidelines that direct ethical decision-making in sustainability to ensure environmental soundness, social justice, and economic feasibility for long-term sustainability. These principles include the Precautionary Principle, the Polluter Pays Principle, the Intergenerational Equity Principle, the Common Property Principle, and the Equity Principle. They serve as a framework to evaluate the ethical

implications of sustainability decisions and promote sustainable practices that prioritize the health and well-being of both people and the planet.

3. **Sustainability Morality:** Sustainability morality is concerned with defining what is right and wrong in relation to sustainability. It provides a basis for determining the ethical implications of human actions on the environment, social equity, and economic viability. Sustainability morality refers to the moral principles and values that underpin sustainable development and environmental stewardship. It involves recognizing the interconnectedness of human society and the natural environment and acknowledging our responsibility to protect and preserve the planet's resources and ecosystems for future generations. Sustainability morality includes ethical considerations such as the promotion of social justice, the preservation of biodiversity and ecosystems, and the responsible use of natural resources. It also involves recognizing the impact of human activities on the environment and taking responsibility for mitigating and adapting to the effects of climate change. For example, it may be deemed morally wrong to engage in practices that lead to deforestation or pollute water sources.
4. **Sustainability Ethics:** Sustainability ethics is a broader concept that encompasses both moral values and ethical principles that guide human behavior towards sustainable practices. It is concerned with the moral and ethical obligations and responsibilities that individuals and institutions have towards the environment, society, and the economy. While sustainability morality is more individual-focused and may vary from person to person, sustainability ethics provides a universal framework that guides behavior and decision-making towards sustainability. Sustainability

ethics takes into account the larger social, economic, and environmental context and requires consideration of the impacts and consequences of our actions on the world around us.

These concepts are interconnected, and they share their meanings and applications but they also reflect different aspects of sustainability ethics. For example, a sustainability value that is consistent with both sustainability morality and sustainability ethics is the principle of intergenerational equity. This principle suggests that we have a responsibility to ensure that our actions do not compromise the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. It is morally wrong to engage in practices that lead to the degradation of natural resources and ecosystems, as this can undermine the well-being of future generations. Similarly, sustainability ethics requires individuals and organizations to make decisions and take actions that promote intergenerational equity, such as investing in renewable energy sources and reducing waste and resource consumption.

## **Mutually Reinforcing Ethics**

In recent years, sustainability has become an increasingly important issue in the world, as we confront the reality of climate change, environmental degradation, and social inequality. As a result, many companies and organizations have begun to incorporate sustainability into their business strategies and decision-making processes. There are three main approaches to sustainability in relation to business and organizations: business ethics, corporate social responsibility (CSR), and sustainability ethics.

1. **Business Ethics:** The first approach is represented by the emergence of business ethics as primary elements in organizational behaviors and business education. Business