

Traditional Ecological Knowledge in Sanskrit Literature and its Relevance to Global Sustainability..

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Abstract

Traditional ecological knowledge embedded in Sanskrit literature represents one of the earliest intellectual traditions emphasizing harmony between human beings and the natural world. Ancient Indian texts such as the Vedas, Upaniṣads, Rāmāyaṇa, Mahābhārata, Purāṇas, and classical śāstric literature articulate a holistic worldview in which nature is revered as sacred and ecological balance is considered essential for sustaining life. Philosophical concepts such as ṛta (cosmic order), dharma (ethical duty), and ahimsā (non-violence) form the foundation of environmental ethics within the Sanskrit intellectual tradition. These texts promote reverence for the earth, forests, rivers, animals, and biodiversity. In the modern era, however, climate change, biodiversity loss, and environmental degradation have become major global challenges. The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), adopted in 2015, aim to address these challenges through integrated strategies for sustainable development. These goals emphasize environmental protection, social equity, and economic sustainability.

This paper examines ecological perspectives found in Sanskrit literature and analyzes their relevance for contemporary global sustainability frameworks. It argues that traditional ecological knowledge preserved in Sanskrit texts offers valuable insights for modern environmental ethics and policy. By integrating ancient ecological wisdom with contemporary sustainability discourse, a more holistic and ethically grounded approach to environmental stewardship may be developed....

Keywords: Sanskrit literature, ecological ethics, traditional ecological knowledge, sustainability, dharma, SDGs etc..

Introduction

The contemporary world is confronted with an unprecedented ecological crisis marked by climate change, biodiversity loss, deforestation, and environmental degradation. In the search for sustainable solutions, there is a growing recognition of the value of Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK)—a cumulative body of wisdom, practices, and beliefs developed by indigenous cultures through long interaction with nature. In the Indian context, Sanskrit literature constitutes one of the richest repositories of such ecological knowledge, reflecting a holistic worldview that emphasizes harmony between human beings and the natural environment.

Sanskrit texts, ranging from the *Vedas*, *Upaniṣads*, *Purāṇas*, and *Itihāsas* to classical kāvya and scientific treatises like the *Arthaśāstra*, *Vṛkṣāyurveda*, and *Bṛhat Saṃhitā*, embody a deep ecological consciousness. Nature is not viewed merely as a resource to be exploited but as a living, sacred entity worthy of reverence and protection. The famous Vedic expression -

*“mātā bhūmih putro ’haṃ pṛthivyāḥ”*¹

¹.Atharvaveda 12.1.12

‘The Earth is my mother, and I am her son’ - captures the essence of this intimate relationship between humans and nature.

Similarly, the concept of *ṛta* (cosmic order) in the Vedas highlights the intrinsic balance governing the universe, while the idea of *dharma* extends beyond human ethics to include ecological responsibility. The *Rgveda* frequently invokes natural elements such as rivers, mountains, forests, wind, and fire as deities, suggesting a worldview rooted in respect, reciprocity, and sustainability. For instance:

“vanaspatayaḥ śāntiḥ”²

“May there be peace among the vegetation” - reflects an early articulation of ecological harmony.

Traditional ecological practices described in Sanskrit literature include sustainable agriculture, water conservation, forest management, biodiversity protection, and seasonal living. Texts like the *Ṛkṣāyurveda* provide detailed knowledge about plant life, soil quality, irrigation techniques, and conservation methods, demonstrating a scientific understanding of ecology long before the emergence of modern environmental science.

Another significant expression reflecting ecological balance is found in the peace invocation:

“dyauḥ śāntir antarikṣam śāntiḥ

prthivī śāntir āpaḥ śāntir oṣadhayaḥ śāntiḥ |

vanaspatayaḥ śāntir viśve devāḥ śāntiḥ

brahma śāntiḥ sarvaṁ śāntiḥ

śāntir eva śāntiḥ sā mā śāntir edhi ||”³

This mantra envisions peace not only for humans but for the entire cosmos—sky, atmosphere, earth, waters, plants, and all beings—revealing a comprehensive ecological vision rooted in interconnectedness.

In the present era of global sustainability discourse, these ancient insights are increasingly relevant. Modern frameworks such as sustainable development, environmental ethics, and climate resilience echo many principles already embedded in Sanskrit traditions—such as moderation (*saṁyama*), non-violence (*ahiṁsā*), and coexistence (*sahajīvana*). The integration of Traditional Ecological Knowledge with contemporary scientific approaches offers a more inclusive and culturally grounded pathway toward sustainability.

This study seeks to explore the ecological dimensions embedded in Sanskrit literature and to critically examine their relevance in addressing current global environmental challenges. By revisiting these ancient texts through an interdisciplinary lens, it aims to highlight how traditional wisdom can contribute to sustainable practices, environmental awareness, and policy-making in the modern world.

Concept of Ecology in Sanskrit Thought

The concept of ecology in Sanskrit thought is deeply rooted in a holistic and interconnected vision of the universe, where human beings, nature, and the cosmos are bound together through a harmonious relationship. Unlike the modern anthropocentric approach, Sanskrit literature presents an eco-centric worldview, emphasizing balance (*saṁatā*), interdependence (*parasparatā*), and moral responsibility (*dharma*) toward all living and non-living entities.

At the foundation of this ecological vision lies the Vedic concept of *ṛta*—the cosmic order that governs the harmony of the universe. This principle ensures that all natural processes function in balance, and any disruption leads to disorder and suffering. The following Vedic mantra highlights this universal harmony:

ṛtaṁ ca satyaṁ cābhīddhāt tapaso ’dhy ajāyata |

tato rātry ajāyata tataḥ samudro arṇavaḥ ||”⁴

². *Yajurveda* 36.17

³. *Yajurveda* 36.17

⁴. *Rgveda* 10.190.1

This verse indicates that the universe emerges from a fundamental order (*ṛta*) and truth (*satya*), suggesting that ecological balance is intrinsic to creation itself.

Another key aspect of Sanskrit ecological thought is the perception of the Earth as a living, nurturing mother. This establishes an ethical relationship between humans and nature:

“mātā bhūmih putro ’haṁ pṛthivyāḥ”⁵

This declaration from the *Atharvaveda* reflects a profound ecological identity, where human beings are not separate from nature but are its integral part, thereby implying responsibility for its protection.

The idea of universal interconnectedness is further reinforced in the *Īśāvāsya Upaniṣad*, which advocates a sustainable and non-exploitative mode of living:

“Īśāvāsyam idaṁ sarvaṁ yat kiñca jagatyāṁ jagat |

tena tyaktena bhuñjīthā mā gṛdhaḥ kasya svid dhanam ||”⁶

This verse teaches that the entire universe is pervaded by the divine, and therefore, one should consume resources with restraint and without greed—an idea closely aligned with modern sustainability ethics.

Sanskrit literature also emphasizes the sanctity of flora and fauna. Plants and trees are regarded as living entities deserving care and reverence:

“vanaspateḥ śatavalśo vi rohā sahasravalśā vi vayan ruhema”⁷

This prayer expresses a wish for the flourishing of vegetation, symbolizing the importance of biodiversity and ecological regeneration.

In classical Sanskrit texts, ecological awareness is also reflected in practical domains such as agriculture, water management, and urban planning. Works like the *Ṛkṣāyurveda* and *Arthaśāstra* prescribe methods for sustainable use of natural resources, conservation of forests, and protection of wildlife. These texts reveal that ecological knowledge in Sanskrit tradition is not merely philosophical but also practical and scientific.

So the concept of ecology in Sanskrit thought is characterized by a deep sense of unity between humans and nature, governed by ethical principles and cosmic order. It promotes a sustainable lifestyle based on moderation, reverence, and responsibility. In the present context of environmental crisis, these ancient insights offer valuable guidance for developing a balanced and sustainable relationship with the natural world.

Environmental Ethics in the Vedas

Environmental ethics in the Vedas is founded upon a deep spiritual awareness of the unity between human beings and the natural world. The Vedic sages perceived the environment not as an object of exploitation but as a sacred, living system governed by cosmic order (*ṛta*). This ethical vision promotes harmony, restraint, and reverence for all forms of existence.

A key feature of Vedic environmental ethics is the recognition of the Earth as a sacred and sustaining force. The following mantra expresses respect and responsibility toward the Earth:

“pṛthivīm dhṛtām dhārayantīm pṛthivīm mā hiṁsīḥ”⁸

“Do not harm the Earth, which sustains and supports all.”

This reflects an early ecological principle of non-violence (*ahiṁsā*) toward nature and emphasizes conservation.

The Vedas also highlight the life-giving and purifying nature of water, urging its respectful use and preservation:

⁵.Atharvaveda 12.1.12

⁶.Īśāvāsya Upaniṣad -1

⁷.Ṛgveda 10.97.5

⁸.Yajurveda 13.49 (conceptual rendering emphasizing non-injury to Earth)

“āpo hi śṭhā mayobhuvah tā na ūrje dadhātana |

maheraṇāya cakṣase ||”⁹

This mantra praises water as a source of energy, well-being, and clarity, indicating its central role in sustaining life and ecological balance.

Air (*vāyu*) is similarly revered as essential for life and cosmic harmony:

“vāta ā vātu bheṣajam śambhu mayobhu no hrde |

pra na āyūmṣi tārīṣat ||”¹⁰

This verse recognizes air as a healing and life-sustaining force, highlighting the importance of maintaining its purity.

The ethical relationship with plants and vegetation is also strongly emphasized:

“yā oṣadhīḥ pūrvā jātā devebhyah tri yugam purā |

manuṣyebhyah pari dadus tā no muñcantu āghasaḥ ||”¹¹

This mantra venerates medicinal plants as divine gifts that sustain human life, implying a duty to protect and preserve biodiversity.

Another important aspect of Vedic environmental ethics is the concept of restraint and balanced living. Humans are advised to take from nature only what is necessary and in a responsible manner. The idea of cosmic order (*ṛta*) ensures that all natural elements function in harmony, and human beings must align their actions accordingly.

The Vedas also emphasize a cooperative relationship between humans and nature, as seen in sacrificial practices (*yajña*), which symbolize reciprocity rather than exploitation. Nature provides resources, and humans, in return, express gratitude and maintain balance through ethical conduct.

In conclusion, environmental ethics in the Vedas is characterized by reverence for natural elements, non-violence toward the Earth, conservation of resources, and alignment with cosmic order. These principles offer a timeless ecological philosophy that is highly relevant in addressing contemporary environmental challenges and promoting sustainable living.

Reverence for Earth

Reverence for the Earth (*Prthivī*) occupies a central place in Sanskrit literature, especially in the Vedas, where the Earth is not merely a physical entity but a sacred, life-sustaining mother deserving respect, gratitude, and protection. This ecological sensitivity reflects an early form of environmental ethics grounded in spiritual consciousness and moral responsibility.

In Vedic thought, the Earth is revered as a nurturing mother who supports all beings—humans, animals, plants, and ecosystems. This intimate and filial relationship is beautifully expressed in the following mantra:

“prthivī naḥ prthivīm dhāraya prajābhyah”¹²

“O Earth, sustain us and all living beings.”

This verse conveys the idea that the Earth is the foundation of life and must be preserved for the well-being of all creatures.

The *Atharvaveda*’s *Prthivī Sūkta* offers one of the most detailed and profound ecological hymns, portraying the Earth as a patient, generous, and sacred entity:

⁹.Ṛgveda 10.9.1

¹⁰.Ṛgveda 10.186.1

¹¹.Ṛgveda 10.97.1

¹².Atharvaveda (contextual reference to Earth as sustainer of beings)

“yasyām samudra uta sindhur āpo yasyām annam kṛṣṭayaḥ sambabhūvuḥ |

yasyām idam jīvati prāṇad ejaṭ sā no bhūmiḥ pūrvapeyāya dadhātu ||”¹³

“On whom rest the oceans, rivers, and waters; on whom food and all beings arise; in whom life breathes and moves—may that Earth grant us nourishment.”

This mantra highlights the Earth’s role as the source of water, food, and life itself, reinforcing the need for its protection and sustainable use.

The Vedas also emphasize non-violence toward the Earth and warn against its exploitation. Humans are urged to act responsibly and avoid actions that disturb ecological balance:

“mā hiṁsīḥ pṛthivīm mā hiṁsīr antarikṣam”¹⁴

“Do not harm the Earth; do not harm the atmosphere.”

This injunction reflects a clear ecological ethic that discourages environmental destruction and promotes conservation.

Furthermore, the Earth is described as rich in biodiversity and natural resources, which must be used wisely and respectfully:

“bhūmir bhūmnā dhṛtā lokā devī dhārayati prajāḥ”¹⁵

“The divine Earth, vast and mahan, sustains all worlds and living beings.”

Such descriptions reinforce the idea that the Earth is not an inert object but a dynamic, sustaining force that deserves reverence.

In addition to philosophical reverence, Sanskrit texts also prescribe practical ways of honoring the Earth—such as sustainable agriculture, protection of forests, and mindful consumption. The ethical principles of *ahiṁsā* (non-violence), *saṁyama* (restraint), and *dharma* (duty) guide human interaction with the environment.

Thus, reverence for the Earth in Sanskrit tradition reflects a deeply rooted ecological consciousness that recognizes the Earth as sacred, nurturing, and deserving of protection. This ancient perspective offers valuable insights for modern environmental ethics, encouraging a shift from exploitation to respect and sustainability in our relationship with nature.

Water Conservation

Water (*āpaḥ*) occupies a sacred and indispensable place in Sanskrit literature, particularly in the Vedas, where it is revered as the source of life, purity, and prosperity. The ancient Indian sages recognized the ecological importance of water conservation and developed an ethical and practical framework to ensure its sustainable use. Water is not treated merely as a physical resource but as a divine entity that must be respected, protected, and preserved.

The **R̥gveda** glorifies water as life-sustaining and beneficial to all beings:

āpo devīr upa hi śṭhā mayobhavaḥ tā na ūrje dadhātana |

maheṇāya cakṣase ||”¹⁶

“O divine waters, you are the source of happiness; grant us strength and nourishment, and bestow upon us clarity of vision.”

¹³.Atharvaveda 12.1.12 (Pṛthivī Sūkta)

¹⁴.Yajurveda (general injunction against harming Earth and atmosphere)

¹⁵.Atharvaveda (conceptual reference to Earth sustaining all beings)

¹⁶.R̥gveda 10.9.1

This mantra emphasizes the nourishing and energizing qualities of water, indicating its central role in sustaining both physical and spiritual well-being.

Water is also associated with purification and healing in Vedic thought:

“āpah punantu pṛthivīm pṛthivī pūtā punātu mām |

punantu brahmaṇas patih brahma pūtā punātu mām ||”¹⁷

“May the waters purify the Earth; may the purified Earth purify me; may the lord of sacred knowledge purify me.”

This reflects the belief that water has cleansing properties, reinforcing the need to keep it unpolluted.

The Atharvaveda further highlights the medicinal and life-supporting aspects of water:

“śam no devīr abhiṣṭaya āpo bhavantu pītaye |

śam yor abhi sravantu naḥ ||”¹⁸

“May the divine waters be auspicious for our drinking; may they flow for our well-being and happiness.”

This verse underscores the importance of clean and safe drinking water, a concern that resonates strongly with modern environmental challenges.

Sanskrit texts also imply the importance of water conservation through responsible usage and respect for natural water bodies such as rivers, lakes, and wells. Rivers like the Gaṅgā and Yamunā are revered as goddesses, which naturally fosters an attitude of protection and conservation.

In classical literature and treatises like the *Arthaśāstra*, there are references to the construction of reservoirs, irrigation systems, and water management techniques, demonstrating a scientific approach to water conservation. These practices ensured efficient use of water resources while maintaining ecological balance.

Moreover, the cyclical understanding of nature in Vedic thought - such as the water cycle involving evaporation, clouds, and rainfall - reflects an advanced ecological awareness. Humans are expected to participate in this cycle responsibly, without causing imbalance or depletion.

So, water conservation in Sanskrit literature is deeply embedded in a spiritual, ethical, and practical framework. It emphasizes purity, sustainability, and reverence for water as a life-giving force. These ancient insights provide valuable guidance for addressing contemporary global water crises and promoting sustainable water management practices.

Ecological Vision in the Epics

The Indian epics the *Rāmāyaṇa* and the *Mahābhārata* present a rich and nuanced ecological vision that integrates ethical, spiritual, and practical dimensions of human interaction with nature. Unlike purely philosophical texts, these epics depict ecology through lived experiences, narratives, and characters, thereby making environmental values accessible and relatable. Nature in the epics is not a passive backdrop but an active participant in human life, deserving reverence, protection, and coexistence.

A prominent feature of the ecological vision in the epics is the harmonious coexistence between humans and the natural world. In the *Rāmāyaṇa*, forests such as *Daṇḍakāranya*, *Citrakūṭa*, and *Pañcavaṭī* are depicted as sacred spaces of peace, biodiversity, and spiritual practice. The exile of Śrī Rāma is not portrayed merely as hardship but as an immersion into nature, where he lives in harmony with trees, animals, and sages.

ramaṇīyāni paśyāmi girīṇām śikharāṇi ca |

nadīs ca vimalāḥ śīghrāḥ sarāṁsi ca manoramāḥ ||”¹⁹

¹⁷.Atharvaveda 19.39.1 (purification hymn context)

¹⁸.Rgveda 10.9.4

¹⁹.Rāmāyaṇa, Ayodhyākāṇḍa, Sarga 95, Śloka 7

“I behold delightful mountain peaks, pure and swiftly flowing rivers, and charming lakes.”

This verse reflects the aesthetic appreciation and ecological sensitivity present in the epic, where nature is admired and respected.

The epics also emphasize the sanctity of forests and the duty to protect them. Forests are described as abodes of sages (*rṣis*) and centers of biodiversity, where ecological balance is maintained. Any disturbance to this balance is viewed as *adharma* (unrighteousness).

In the *Mahābhārata*, ecological ethics are closely tied to moral conduct. The text repeatedly emphasizes non-violence (*ahiṃsā*) toward all living beings:

“ahiṃsā paramo dharmah”²⁰

“Non-violence is the highest dharmah.”

This principle extends beyond human relationships to include animals, plants, and the entire ecosystem, advocating a compassionate and sustainable way of life.

The *Mahābhārata* also highlights the interdependence between humans and nature:

“annūd bhavanti bhūtāni parjanyaḥ anna-sambhavaḥ |

yajñād bhavati parjanyo yajñaḥ karma-samudbhavaḥ ||”²¹

“All beings arise from food; food is produced from rain; rain arises from sacrifice (yajña), and yajña from action.”

This verse presents a cyclical ecological model, illustrating the interconnectedness of natural processes and human responsibilities. It emphasizes that human actions directly influence environmental balance.

Rivers, mountains, and animals are treated with deep respect in both epics. Rivers like Gaṅgā are personified as divine mothers, and animals are often portrayed as companions and protectors. For instance, Jaṭāyu in the *Rāmāyaṇa* exemplifies the noble role of animals in upholding dharma.

Furthermore, the epics warn against ecological imbalance caused by greed, violence, and exploitation. The destruction of forests or harm to living beings is often associated with negative consequences, both moral and environmental.

Thus, the ecological vision in the epics is characterized by harmony, reverence, non-violence, and interdependence. Through narrative and ethical teachings, the *Rāmāyaṇa* and *Mahābhārata* promote a sustainable way of life that respects the natural world. These insights remain highly relevant today, offering valuable guidance for addressing modern environmental challenges and fostering a balanced relationship between humanity and nature.

Forest Ecology in the *Rāmāyaṇa*

Large portions of the *Rāmāyaṇa* occur in forests, portraying forests as sacred ecological spaces. Rāma’s reverence for nature is evident in the narrative descriptions of forests such as Daṇḍakāraṇya and Citrakūṭa. A verse describing forest harmony states:

nānāvṛkṣa-samākīrṇaṁ nānā-mṛga-gaṇāyutam P²²

(The forest was filled with various trees and animals.)

This reflects biodiversity awareness.

Environmental Ethics in the *Mahābhārata*

²⁰.Mahābhārata, Anuśāsanaparva, Adhyāya 116, Śloka 38

²¹.Bhagavad Gītā, Adhyāya 3, Śloka 14

²².Rāmāyaṇa, Araṇyakāṇḍa, Sarga 15, Śloka 12

The *Mahābhārata* presents a profound vision of environmental ethics rooted in the principles of dharma, compassion, and the interconnectedness of all life. Nature is not viewed as a mere resource but as a sacred and living system in which humans are an integral part. The text emphasizes harmony between human conduct and the natural world, highlighting that ethical living includes responsibility toward all beings—animals, plants, and the environment. This idea is beautifully expressed in the verse:

“sarvabhūteṣu yaḥ paśyed ātmānaṁ sarvabhūtāni cātmani”²³

which teaches that one who sees oneself in all beings and all beings in oneself develops a sense of universal empathy and ecological sensitivity. Similarly, the cyclical relationship between humans and nature is explained in:

“annād bhavanti bhūtāni parjanyaād anna-sambhavaḥ”²⁴

indicating that all life depends on food, which in turn depends on natural processes like rain, ultimately influenced by righteous human actions. Such teachings reflect an early understanding of ecological balance and sustainability. The *Mahābhārata* thus integrates moral duty with environmental responsibility, suggesting that any disruption of this balance leads to both ecological and ethical decline.

Ecological Symbolism in Purāṇic Literature

Purāṇas highlight sacred geography and ecological awareness. Rivers such as the Ganga are revered as divine. Mountains and forests are depicted as sacred. Tree worship became widespread:

“aśvatthaḥ sarvavrkṣāṇām”²⁵

In the *Bhagavad-Gītā*, Krishna declares: "Among trees I am the sacred *Aśvattha*."

Traditional Ecological Practices

Traditional ecological practices in ancient Indian society reflect a deep-rooted commitment to sustainability and harmonious living with nature. Practices such as the preservation of sacred groves ensured the protection of forests as biodiversity-rich zones, where human interference was minimal due to religious reverence. Similarly, traditional water harvesting systems—such as tanks, wells, and irrigation channels—demonstrate an advanced understanding of sustainable resource management, enabling agricultural stability without exhausting natural reserves. Ethical treatment of animals was also a significant aspect of this ecological consciousness, as reflected in the injunction-

“na hiṁsyāt sarvabhūtāni”²⁶

which emphasizes non-violence toward all living beings. Such principles indicate that environmental protection was not merely a practical necessity but an integral part of moral and cultural life.

Sanskrit Ecology and Sustainable Development Goals

The concept of ecological sustainability embedded in Sanskrit literature resonates strongly with the modern framework of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which emphasize integrated approaches to address global challenges such as climate change, environmental degradation, poverty, and inequality. In relation to **SDG-13 (Climate Action)**, Sanskrit texts advocate ecological restraint and balance, as seen in the principle of moderation and harmony with nature:

“mātā bhūmiḥ putro’haṁ pṛthivyāḥ”²⁷

²³.Bhagavad Gītā 6.29

²⁴.Bhagavad Gītā 3.14

²⁵.Bhagavad-Gītā 10.26

²⁶.Manusmriti, Adhyāya 4, Śloka 138

²⁷.Atharvaveda 12.1.12

which reflects a sense of responsibility toward the Earth as a mother. Similarly, **SDG-15 (Life on Land)** emphasizes the protection of forests and biodiversity, a value deeply rooted in Sanskrit tradition, where forests are regarded as life-supporting systems:

“vanāni jīvitaṃ loke vanāni paramaṃ sukham”²⁸

In the context of **SDG-14 (Life Below Water)**, ancient reverence for rivers and water bodies highlights sustainable water ethics, as expressed in Vedic literature praising the purity and sanctity of waters:

“āpo hi śthā mayobhavaḥ”²⁹

Furthermore, **SDG-17 (Global Partnerships)** underscores the necessity of collective efforts for sustainability, which finds a parallel in the Indian philosophical ideal of universal cooperation:

“saṅgacchadhvaṃ saṃvadadhvaṃ saṃ vo manāmsi jānatām”³⁰

encouraging unity and shared responsibility. Thus, Sanskrit ecological wisdom provides a holistic ethical foundation that aligns closely with the goals of sustainable development in the contemporary world.

Discussion

Traditional ecological knowledge found in Sanskrit literature provides a holistic and integrated model for environmental ethics. Unlike modern industrial paradigms, which often emphasize resource extraction and exploitation, Sanskrit philosophy promotes harmony between humans and nature. It views the natural world as a sacred and interconnected system, where all forms of life are mutually dependent. The key principles underlying this ecological vision include the interdependence of life, ethical responsibility toward nature, and the sustainable use of natural resources. These principles closely align with contemporary sustainability frameworks, highlighting the relevance of ancient wisdom in addressing modern environmental challenges.

Conclusion

Traditional Ecological Knowledge embedded in Sanskrit literature offers a holistic and enduring framework for environmental sustainability by integrating ethical, spiritual, and practical dimensions of life. It promotes a vision of harmony between humans and nature, where the natural world is regarded as sacred and intrinsically valuable. This perspective is reflected in the idea of universal interconnectedness, as expressed in

“vidyā-vinaya-sampanne brāhmaṇe gavi hastini |

śuni caiva śvapāke ca paṇḍitāḥ sama-darśinaḥ ||”³¹

which emphasizes equality and respect for all forms of life. Furthermore, the ecological balance and mutual dependence of all beings are highlighted in *“parasparaṃ bhāvayantaḥ śreyaḥ param avāpsyatha”³²*

suggesting that cooperation and mutual nourishment lead to the highest good. These teachings underline that sustainable living requires ethical responsibility, restraint, and a sense of unity with the environment. In the context of modern global sustainability challenges, such insights from Sanskrit literature remain highly relevant, offering valuable guidance for fostering ecological balance and a sustainable future..

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²⁸.Mahābhārata, Vanaparva 12.39

²⁹.Rgveda 10.9.1

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³¹.Bhagavad Gītā 5.18

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