

## **Introduction to No. 1, Part one: Ecophilosophical and Biopolitical Challenges. Past and Future**

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Since at least the 1960s, the problem of environmental destruction has become more visible for politicians and the public. The pioneers of these discussions have to deal with prevailing doubts about the destruction of nature and humanity's influence on the environment. Presently, humanity's influence is so clear that some scientists have proclaimed this the Anthropocene age, the geological era when the human being has become the dominant influence on climate, the environment, and Earth's systems. Thus, as in the dusk of the Holocene age, the editors of *Ethics in Progress* have raised the question about the moral and political aspects of our influence on the natural environment. More than five decades after the first questions about humanity's influence on nature and its moral aspect, we ask questions concerning past concepts and future directions of ecophilosophy and biopolitics.

One of the crucial aspects of our relation to nature is overexploitation of its resources and frivolous use of natural goods for satisfaction beyond basic needs, including the most sophisticated whims and desires. Iwona Stachowska has raised this question, proposing a very unpopular idea for Western societies, namely constraint as an ethical postulate. Even though it may be a very effective way of ending overexploitation, it is quite unpopular in our consumption-oriented society. Constraint or self-constraint may be a very needed virtue for the Anthropocene age. In this issue, we also address the issue of environmental virtues and environmental character. In Geoffrey Frasz's article, the question of environmental character is rising. The author tries to fill the gap in previous environmental virtue ethics (EVE) that lacks connection to moral feelings and sentiments. Thus, the paper is an introduction to including moral feelings or sentiments regarding EVE, thereby combining them with environmental virtues. This special issue also addresses EVE from the perspective of Catholic teaching; Joshtrom Isaac Kureethadam focuses on ecological virtues present in the encyclical *Laudato Si'*. The encyclical is an important voice in environmental discussion. For Christians, it is a roadmap on the way to improve their moral behaviour towards the environment and our planet. Virtues included there are the signposts showing the way and Kureethadam focuses on seven ecological virtues: praise, gratitude, care, justice, work, sobriety, and humility.

One of the burning issues that must be addressed in terms of our care for Earth is climate change, which has become the subject of reflection of Piotr Rosół. He claims we need more philosophical justification in our approach to climate change. He applies Thomas Nagel's typology of the good, moral, and rational life to the problem of climate change, arguing that all these qualities are necessary for dealing with environmental threats we are facing. Even though we have much information about climate change, we still cannot solve the problem. Moreover, it cannot be solved without philosophical reflection serving as the ground for the further political and social action. While Piotr Rosół searches for the provisions of answers in philosophy, Ruud Otten and Bart Gremmen analyse the influence of politicians on environmental protection, especially on improving the wellbeing of animals. In their paper, they introduce the Dutch Party for Animals (Partij voor de Dieren). The Partij voor de Dieren was founded in 2002 and is the only political party in the world that advocates for animals. It is very inclusive in its focus, since it does not divide animals into wild and domestic, as is usually done in ethical discussions. It advocates for all the animal kingdom. The authors addresses the problems that arise from the ethical perspective of such a wide range of moral dependents.

The question about animals and human-animal relations is one of the most burning issues in contemporary philosophy and ethics. Of the many problems that emerge in this discourse, one is raised in the paper by Krzysztof Kuśnierz regarding palliative care in veterinary medicine. The author disputes whether our care for animals is just a legitimization of speciesism and examines difficult issue of the exclusion of certain animals from the advantages of technology and veterinary medicine. The paper presents how broadening our moral inclusion to animals and covering them with proper palliative care can stimulate growth of our moral horizons through developing empathy, fellow feeling, responsibility, solidarity, readiness to care, and help. He opens the possibility of expressing these virtues towards non-human beings, thereby constituting meaningful relations, understanding, and love encompassing the entire universe human beings share with non-human beings.

However, non-human beings are not the only ones to deal with exclusion from ethics. In some traditions, the treatment of some human beings do not incorporate unity and equality. Ewa Nowak in her article presents how the *halachic* rules *Niddah* were influenced by the Jewish ideal of integral perfectibility and how Western eugenics and race doctors manipulated them for their ideological and political goals in 1850–1945.

The papers in the issue raise questions about our moral obligations towards the environment, environmental virtues and character, human-animal relations, and human-nature relations. It examines important issues regarding the destruction of nature from moral and philosophical perspectives, trying to analyse the root cause of the problems. I want to thank Ewa Nowak, not only

for enabling the publication of these discussions, but also for the tremendous work she has put into this issue of *Ethics in Progress*. Without her work and the efforts of her team, this issue would not appear. Thank you Ewa for your dedication to exploring new areas in ethics and for asking important questions. Editing this issue would be impossible without significant contributions of Joanna Dutka and Filip Bardziński.

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