

True Process: Ecological Way of Life in First Nature

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According to process philosophy, process is essential, relevancy is ubiquitous, and entities in the universe are not limited (closed systems), so our universe is not a composite of isolated systems.¹ In an isolated system entropy is always increasing by second thermodynamic law. Since entities are not isolated systems in the universe, the character of the universe is not isolated system, entropy is not always increasing, and entropy is in equilibrium in the whole universe. On Earth, however, technology and economy bring about high organization for human life, and result in increasing entropy in nature. This increasing entropy is what constitutes the environmental crisis that we human beings have to confront now. From the perspective of process philosophy, perhaps we could find better ways to resolve the problem of environment and development. Ecological way of life will be the true process in nature for human beings as they enter the Ecozoic Era.

Ecological industry is the best way to resolve environment and development. It learns from ecological process in nature to work hard eliminating the increasing entropy of technology. Based on Newton's science, modern technology is of mechanics and is linear. After *mechanical* technology satisfies human need, its process ends, and it is hard to return to the natural process. So between human beings and nature, limit (a closed system) is the result because of current technology. With progress of technology and development of economy, this limit is becoming stronger and stronger. The more technology advances, the more economy develops, the better human beings live, but this kind of limit between human beings and

¹ **Editors Note:** "Process is essential" is related to Berry and Swimme's concept of "self-organization"; "relevancy is ubiquitous" is related to "communion"; and "entity" is related to "differentiation." To say entities are not limited or isolated is to say they exist in communion with other beings. To say that process is essential means that entities have an adventurous or questing nature and that the static connotation of speaking of equilibrium states in the universe is misleading. The universe is dynamic and the dispersed or high entropy states of energy are always being overcome by the self-organizing, non-closed aspects of entities existing in relatedness (communion).

nature sets up an isolated system. Since entropy is always increasing in an isolated system, environment crisis is hard to avoid. However, in *ecological* industry different technologies connect, every technological process ended may continue and form an ecological technology system. So, no process ends, no limit exists, especially, no entropy increases. This is a hope for resolving environmental crisis that result from modern technology. Your wastes is my material, my wastes is its material. This is unbroken process. The definition of “resource” indeed has a new meaning by process philosophy, that is, resource is only energy form existing for different subjects; environment is an inter-dependent life community exactly.

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Ecological economy helps us understand the environmental issue from perspective of the relationships between ecosystems and economic systems. Economy sets up its value because of limitation. Human need is not limited and since it is hard to satisfy human need, limitation exists. For satisfying human need of value, human technology puts forward (imposes) economical process on nature. Ecological economy is one that uses economic ways to analyze natural value in ecological system and brings forward the ecological process into economic system. In this continued process, human sustainable development is researched by studying ecological economy.

Human ecology reminds us that human beings belong to ecological system and should return to ecological process. Originally, human beings resulted from the ecological system in nature. Technology is the means by which human beings connect with nature. With development, technology provides a home for human beings, this home becomes bigger and bigger and comes into being “the second nature,” that is technical sphere which is made by human beings. Although this big home is very comfortable, it cuts off linkages between human beings and nature, and makes human beings alienating from nature, so there is the environmental crisis. We human beings should follow human ecology, to live by ecological ways, to produce by ecological technique, to develop society by ecological economy. Returning to first nature, returning to ecological process, this is sustainable development for us human beings.