A PRAGMATIC ANALYSIS OF PAUL TAYLOR'S BIOCENTRISM

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Abstract  
Contemporary societies in Africa (like the rest of the world) are increasingly facing drastic environmental problems which, in most cases, are a direct consequence of man's anthropocentric attitudes toward nature. Since the dawn of the twentieth century, multidisciplinary efforts to articulate a universal praxis for the environment have become frantic. In Philosophy, arguments in support of a paradigm shift led to the emergence of non-anthropocentric thoughts like Paul Taylor's respect to nature. He rejects anthropocentrism and advocates for equality and moral significance among different life forms irrespective of different interests. Thus his biocentrism is egalitarian, and essentially, an extension of inherent worth from humans to other life forms. He thinks this paradigm shift in the way man views and treats nature can solve the crises. The main objective of this paper was to ascertain the applicability of Taylor's theory. In this direction, a pragmatic approach was adopted. This methodology was preferred for its tendency of evaluating everything based on practicability. It was found that there were links between Taylor's thought and Kant's notion of respect for persons; and that biocentric egalitarianism marked a major shift from traditional ethics. Furthermore, the theory was found tenable in areas like strategic planning for attitudinal change, policy design, law, administration, environmental remediation, reparations and environmental justice; which are practical ways of quelling environmental crises. However, there were some conceptual, exegetical, and existential weaknesses within biocentric egalitarianism. The study concluded that biocentric egalitarianism is, in several ways, tenable in tackling contemporary environmental problems.

Key Words: Biocentrism, Egalitarianism, Environmental Ethics, Paul Taylor, Pragmatism, Pollution, Non-anthropocentrism

Introduction  
Much of human civilization and its amazing improvements in living conditions would not have been possible without reliance on the Earth's resources. Obviously, everything has come at a great environmental cost. All along, mankind has operated on the anthropocentric notion that nature's resources are only useful to the extent that they satisfy his desires; and the consequences have been devastating: an alarming rate of environmental pollution, degradation, species extinction, and depletion of nonrenewable resources. Most of these negative effects of man's environmental exploitation were evident at the turn of the 20th century; it became obvious that if nothing was done, humankind would drive the world to a catastrophic end. This realization marked the emergence of several and various efforts to remedy the damage; involving experts in areas like sociology, politics, geography, ecology, ethnobotany, and philosophy. Particularly, philosophers found that anthropocentric attitudes and praxis toward the natural environment were largely to blame for the teeming environmental challenges. Thus they set out to unearth alternative ethical paradigms by which to reshape man's attitude and behaviour toward the environment (Minster 185). This period marked the birth of non-anthropocentrism which, generally, extends inherent worth to non-human life forms (in the case of biocentrism) and to every component of the ecosystem (in case of ecocentrism). It maintains that justice is not whatever man deems fit, rather it is what nature ought to have. Through non-anthropocentrism, "philosophers were hoping to
advance a persuasive moral justification for a robust environmental policy and a general rationalization of proenvironmental [sic] practices” (Minster 185).

In line with this movement Paul Taylor proposes his theory known as biocentric egalitarianism, by which he argues that anthropocentric attitudes and ways of exploiting the natural environment are responsible for the problems we have. He maintains that humans must adopt the attitude of respect for nature by which all living things would be valued, not in an instrumental way anymore, but to accord them respect as ends-in-themselves. This is where the problem for this paper finds its root; an examination of Taylor's critics revealed that they have been mostly focused on its theoretical ramifications. Many scholars and researchers have questioned the extent to which man can be equated with nature; the dynamics of power that would emanate if such an egalitarian notion were possible; the individuality of species which Taylor proposes; and the implications of harnessing this thought for the development of an environmental praxis. Thus, scholars have almost completely covered the theoretical implications (Inja 4). In the light of the above, this researcher has focused on the practical tenability of Taylor's viewpoint. More so, while Taylor himself has shied away from propounding an empirical modus operandi, he has admitted to proposing “a philosophical worldview” (“The Ethics of Respect for Nature” 205). And since every worldview is supposed to have a practical impact, the researcher has decided to undertake a pragmatic analysis with emphasis on the practicality of the theory. Thus the extent to which such an egalitarian ethos is useful in curbing environmental problems is the thrust of this paper.

Conceptual Clarifications
The following terms have been clarified to enhance the understanding of this discourse:

Biocentrism
Environmental thoughts are generally categorised into two intellectual camps: those that are anthropocentric (or 'human-centred') and those that are non-anthropocentric (''life-centred' and/or 'eco-centred'). This typology has been described in other terminology as 'shallow' ecology and 'deep' ecology respectively. Biocentrism falls under nonanthropocentrism; Robin Attfield defines it as "a life-centred outlook that rejects the view that humanity alone matters in ethics and accepts the moral standing of (at least) all living creatures" (97). In the same vein, Lorraine Elliott defines biocentrism as a theory which holds that nature has an intrinsic moral worth which does not depend on its usefulness to human beings; and that this intrinsic worth should define human obligations to the environment (“Biocentrism” n.p.). Etymologically, the term biocentrism is traceable to two Greek words, βιός (pronounced 'bio' meaning 'life') and κέντρον, (pronounced 'kentron' meaning 'centre'). Put together, both terms form the English 'biocentrism' which connotes a 'life-centred' environmentalism (Mouchang and Lei 423). Biocentrism, in the light of the above amounts to moral extensionism; that is, an extension of moral worth from humans to non-human animals and plants.

Pragmatism
There are many ideas about the meaning of pragmatism; in a general sense, the term refers to any "straightforward or practical way of thinking about things or dealing with problems, [to be] concerned with results rather than with theories and principles" (Encarta Dictionary n.p.). Philosophically, the term pragmatism represents a philosophical tradition which (is quite traceable to antiquity but) manifested most strongly in the 1870s America through the pioneering work of Charles Sanders Pierce (1839-1914) and his followers William James (1842-1910) and John Dewey (18591952) (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy n.p.). According to James, pragmatism rejects the notion that the function of human thinking is to describe, represent, or mirror reality (n.p). Rather, pragmatists view thought as an instrument or tool for prediction, problem solving and action. They contend that most philosophical topics
(such as the nature of knowledge, language, concepts, meaning, belief, and science) should be considered more in terms of their practical uses and successes. The philosophy of pragmatism “emphasizes the practical application of ideas by acting on them to actually test them in human experiences” (Gutk 76-100). Also the Encarta Dictionary reports that is a philosophical method of evaluating theories which holds, “a theory or concept should be evaluated in terms of how it works and its consequences as the standard for action and thought” (n.p). Within this paper, the pragmatic method of is understood and applied in this sense; thus it is the practical applicability of Taylor's biocentrism that has been subjected to the court of reason.

Paul Taylor's Biocentric Egalitarianism

Paul Warren Taylor was born in Philadelphia on 19th November 1923. He is specialized in normative and applied ethics, and is best known for his work in environmental ethics. He is emeritus professor of philosophy at Brooklyn College, City University of New York; where he studied normative and applied ethics (“Paul Taylor” web). He has authored several articles, essays and books. Among his most popular books are, Normative Discourse (1961), Principles of Ethics (1975), and Respect for Nature: A Theory of Environmental Ethics (1986). He has also edited two books of readings: The Moral Judgement: Readings in Contemporary Meta-Ethics (1963); and Problems of Moral Philosophy; 3rd Ed. (1971). Oakley acknowledges that Taylor is a renowned Kantian scholar (257). Taylor's biocentric egalitarianism is taught in many university courses on environmental ethics today. An examination of his theory shows various links to other philosophers who may have influenced his biocentric thought; key among which is Immanuel Kant (via the principle of respect for persons). Also easily traced are the thoughts of Arne Naess (deep and shallow ecology), Kenneth Goodpaster (moral considerability), Albert Schweitzer (reverence for life), Peter Singer (sentience and equality), and Mahatma Ghandi (ahimsa or non-violence).

Biocentric Egalitarianism

Taylor's theory of Biocentric Egalitarianism, widely known as the ethics of Respect for Nature, is a complicated but compelling thought on the environment which was first announced in his article titled “The Ethics of Respect for Nature” that was published in the year 1981 (197-218). Another of his articles “Are Humans Superior to Animals and Plants?” published in summer of 1984 also contains elements of the biocentric outlook on life. This initial effort found expression in several of his works and culminated in his 1986 book with the title, Respect for Nature: A Theory of Environmental Ethics. Taylor's biocentrism synthesizes Classical and Kantian virtue ethics, with elements of Albert Schweitzer's ethics of reverence for life, Peter Singer's egalitarianism, and Kenneth Goodpaster's account of moral considerability. He begins with the view that all living things have inherent value, and so are deserving of moral respect, equally. For Taylor, all that is required to have inherent value is to be alive – essentially, striving towards staying alive. He grounds his view on the idea of Respect for Nature, which is an extension of the Kantian principle of Respect for Persons.

Taylor clarifies his position by distinguishing it from an ecocentric view – namely, it is not fundamentally holistic. To him the balance of nature does not lead us to any moral principles; rather, the good or well-being of all individual living things is of primary concern (so it is not anthropocentric either). There are many duties which require us to protect ecological systems, but these are only indirect duties to the individual living things that inhabit the ecological system. He argues further that one who adopts the ultimate moral attitude of respect for nature will become an environmentally virtuous person. He identifies environmental ethical conduct with conduct motivated by respect for nature. Such environmentally virtuous conduct seeks to promote the flourishing of all living organisms. In his Respect for Nature: A Theory of Environmental Ethics, he states, “ethical action and
goodness of character naturally flow from the attitude [of respect for nature], and the attitude is made manifest in how one acts and in what sort of person one is” (80). He maintains that a biocentric ethic can be established (justified) if people adopt a new kind of moral attitude; the attitude that all living things, and not only humans, have inherent worth; that is, the attitude of respect for nature. But he acknowledges that a lot of work needs to be done to establish that we ought to take on the new attitude. Two things need to be made clear, first. These are: (a) All living things have a good of their own - that is, they can be benefited or harmed. This is reflected in the idea that all living things have the potential to grow and develop according to their biological natures. So, things can either go well or not with respect to this potential. This idea is not grounded, according to Taylor, in the ideas of having interests, or having an interest in something; and it is not conditional upon being sentient, or having consciousness (199). Taylor thinks it is an open question whether a machine might have a good of its own in the relevant sense; (b) The attitude of respect for nature requires that we accept that all living things possess inherent worth. This would be reflected in us - were we to take on the attitude of respect for nature - adopting certain dispositions of behaviour, namely, in general, to act so as to show equal respect for all living things good of their own (199).

According to him this does not justify the claim that all living things do have inherent worth, though. So, more needs to be done to show this. His strategy is to argue that living things possess inherent worth, and that this can be justified by showing that we are capable of adopting the attitude of respect for nature. Presumably, he thinks that a “biocentric outlook on nature”, that is respecting nature, directly implies the regard of living things as having some inherent worth. This is essentially an ecological outlook, with the key idea being the interdependence of living things. Taylor concedes that, “we cannot see the point of taking the attitude of respect” until we understand and accept the biocentric outlook. However, he insists, “... once we do grasp it and shape our world outlook in accordance with it, we immediately understand how and why a person should adopt that attitude [of respect] as the only appropriate one to have toward nature” (Respect for Nature... 99). The biocentric outlook, as Taylor conceives it, consists of four core beliefs: (a) The belief that humans are members of the Earth’s Community of Life in the same sense and on the same terms in which other living things are members of that Community; (b) The belief that the human species, along with all other species, are integral elements in a system of interdependence such that the survival of each living thing, as well as its chances of faring well or poorly, is determined not only by the physical conditions of its environment but also by its relations to other living things; (c) The belief that all organisms are teleological centers [sic] of life in the sense that each is a unique individual pursuing its own good in its own way; (d) The belief that humans are not inherently superior to other living things (100). Taylor thinks that when we accept the first three beliefs of the biocentric outlook the denial of human superiority will make meaning to us. In turn, the acknowledgment of the groundlessness of the claim of human superiority will enable us to justify the first three elements of the biocentric outlook.

He argues that if we accept all four beliefs, then we have a coherent outlook on the natural word and the place of humans in it; it is the acceptance of the fact that humans and nonhuman life forms should relate in a certain way; such a world view is then to be seen as the only suitable, fitting, or appropriate moral attitude to take toward the natural world and its living inhabitants (“The Ethics of Respect for Nature” 206). Essentially, this outlook sees living things “...as the appropriate objects of the attitude of respect and are accordingly regarded as entities possessing inherent worth.” Taylor suggests that adoption of the biocentric outlook leads us to adoption of the attitude of respect for nature, with the implication that we now have a non-anthropocentric environmental ethic (“The Ethics of Respect for Nature” 100). According to Adplanalp, Taylor moves from here to deny human superiority. He does this by presenting counter arguments against four of the most common advanced arguments for human superiority: (i) Classical Greek Humanism (which purports that rationality makes
humans superior to other life forms); (ii) The Great Chain of Being (an axiological paradigm which conceives of beings in a hierarchical rank that places man above other life forms); (iii) Cartesian Dualism (which claims that non-human life forms are mere matter without soul (mind) and as such have less worth than humans); (iv) Louis Lombardi's argument for human superiority which goes that even though all living things have inherent worth, animals have less inherent worth than humans –because human's have more capacities (262).

On the question of why moral agents should accept the four beliefs that make up the biocentric outlook, Taylor is certain that the biocentric outlook is supported by biology and ecology, and it also meets the criteria upon which all philosophical world views have been judged and accepted throughout the history of philosophy; these are: (a) Comprehensiveness and completeness; (b) Systematic order, coherence, and internal consistency; (c) Freedom from obscurity, conceptual confusion, and semantic vacuity; (d) Consistency with all known empirical truths. He goes on to express confidence in the validity of his arguments, “these criteria have served as tests for the overall adequacy and satisfactoriness of a world view. When we apply them to the biocentric outlook, I submit, we find them to be fully met” (Respect for Nature… 206).

**Criticism of Taylor's Biocentric Egalitarianism**

Taylor's egalitarian biocentrism has attracted a lot of criticism from diverse scholars and philosophers. Peter Singer, in his *Animal Liberation*, rejects Taylor's argument that *all* living things have moral significance. Instead he argues that only sentient beings should be accorded any consideration (8 – 9). But Taylor argues that it is arbitrary to restrict the class of morally considerable beings to sentient beings. Since all living organisms can be harmed or benefited and what benefits them promotes their good, Taylor insists that there is no non-arbitrary reason that prevents us from extending moral consideration to all living organisms. Some biocentrists take issue with Taylor's egalitarianism; that is his view that all living things are equal and humans are on par with non-human life forms. For instance both Kenneth Goodpaster (“On Being Morally Considerable” 308 – 325) and Gary Varner (*In Nature's Interest*) agree that all living organisms deserve moral consideration, but deny that being morally considerable entails having equal moral significance. These critics reject Taylor's egalitarianism in favour of a hierarchical account of moral significance. Particularly, Varner argues that some interests take priority over others and that only recognition of this inequality will provide viable support for environmental goals. In essence, Varner's argument is that it is impossible to derive practical principles from a non-hierarchical system of interests like Taylor's.

Taylor's individualism has attracted another criticism; he holds that “it is the good (wellbeing, welfare) of individual organisms […] that determines our moral relations with the Earth’s wild communities of life” (“The Ethics of Respect for Nature” 198). Critics contend that Taylor's focus on individual welfare fails to address the actual concerns of environmentalists. Most environmentalists are concerned not with the welfare of individual mosquitoes, dandelions, and microbes, but rather with species preservation, ecological integrity, and pollution. These critics insist that only a holistic ethic can better address these environmental concerns (Williams n.p). Taylor's rejection of human superiority has also been challenged. Critics think that the idea of extending equal moral consideration to every living organism, is not only too demanding, but outright absurd and impracticable (Atfield is among those who hold this view). Taylor tries to mitigate this objection by formulating a complex set of principles (self-defence, proportionality, minimum harm, distributive justice, and restitutive justice) for fairly resolving the conflicts that inevitably arise between humans and other equally considerable organisms. Even with these principles in place, Taylor's biocentric ethic remains extremely demanding, since the principle of proportionality dictates that the basic interests of plants trump the non-basic interests of humans (Williams n.p). Louis Lombardi
also contested Taylor's rejection of human superiority by arguing that even though all living things have inherent worth, animals have less inherent worth than humans (because human's have more capacities) and that in the event of a clash of interests, human interests would trump that of other life forms (qtd in Adplanalp 264).

Taylor retorted by arguing that while humans have capacities that non-humans have, the reverse is the case too; thus there is ground to argue (from the perspective of nonhumans) that in their own ways there are also superior. Hence the key issue whether the capacities in question are needed to function (264). For instance, it is not proper to expect animals to be rational since rationality is not needed to function in their world; just like it is wrong to expect humans to possess the superior climbing ability of monkeys. Thus Taylor believes that no particular organism should be seen as inferior on the grounds of capacities. Taylor's demarcation of living things and his use of terms is another source of concern to critics. Megan Wade takes issue with the basic premise of Taylor's analysis. Particularly, she disagrees with the way Taylor has, "drawn stark lines between humans and nature, between moral and non-moral agents, and in so doing fails [sic] to adequately consider those issues that would complicate this picture: non-human species with highly developed social lives and potential species-specific codes of conduct, for instance" (Wade n.p).

In other words, Wade finds it difficult to accept the demarcation of living things while at the same time proposing equality. It appears the demarcation itself indicates a serious divergence of interests which is irreconcilable ab initio. She also has a problem with Taylor's use of the term 'nature'. In her opinion it is "slippery; really, he appears to mean 'wild', which is actually quite different in meaning from 'natural'. Much of his argument seems unselfconsciously premised on the value of 'wild' things, without exploration of the source of that value" (Wade n.p). It has been argued that generally, all non-anthropocentric theories of the man-nature relationship have failed to ascertain a true non-anthropocentric worldview because at the end, everything boils down to the benefits of man on planet. Bryan Norton has particularly argued that non-anthropocentric theories such as biocentrism are redundant because sophisticated anthropocentrism supports the same policies. However, biocentrists counter that the recognition of nonhuman interests lends stronger support for policies of humaneness, compassion and preservation, and also shows why it is necessary to preserve those species that are not currently the concern of humans –for instance those that are not yet discovered (Norton qtd in Attfield 99). Closely related to this is another general objection to biocentrism (and other nonanthropocentric theories) which was advanced by J. Baird Callicot who avers that all judgements of value, however non-anthropocentric in content, are still anthropogenic ("Rolston on Intrinsic Value: A Deconstruction" 129 – 143). With a similar view, Attfield explains that "they are dependent on human valuation, and there can be no value in the absence of valuers" ("Biocentrism" 100). However Attfield contends that even if such an argument is granted, it would affect biocentrism only at the level of human judgements and not at the normative level; since what is valuable does not mean "valued" but applies to where there is reason to value –whether or not anyone values it.

He maintains that it is implausible to think that nothing that exists had value until humans first appeared and began making judgements. Normative biocentrism defends an intrinsic value which is beyond mere human judgements of morals and values. He concludes that "biocentrists can consistently and reasonably be resolute metaethical realists, even though their normative stance (biocentrism) does not hang upon affiliation to realism (100)." Taylor's biocentrism, by virtue of its nonanthropocentrism, is also affected by these general objections. However, as already pointed out by Attfield, biocentrism at its normative level remains a strong argument. In the final analysis, whether these objections to Taylor's biocentric egalitarianism prove insuperable remains to be seen. However, regardless of whether his ethic prevails in the end or ultimately forces us to look elsewhere for an adequate
environmental ethic, Taylor’s biocentric outlook helps those who tolerate it to have a greater appreciation and respect for nature (Williams n.p).

The Pragmatics of Paul Taylor’s Biocentric Egalitarianism
Taylor’s biocentrism, as demonstrated above, has some objections levelled against it, but its supporters believe it is a viable theory of environmental ethics that could be used to change the world. When it comes to its practical relevance, even Taylor, concedes that the biocentric outlook “is not wholly analyzable [sic] into empirically confirmable assertions” and thus should be viewed as “a philosophical world-view” (“The Ethics of Respect for Nature” 205). Moreover, he never attempts to derive an ought from an is; rather, he seeks to provide us with a rational, coherent perspective on nature that will allow us to accurately perceive (not deduce) the inherent worth of all living beings (Williams n.p). In any case it is the opinion of this researcher that, neither Taylor’s employment of a purely descriptive approach to explain the biocentric outlook, nor his expressed aim, which is to provide a “world-view” rather than “wholly empirically confirmable assertions”; should deter anyone from exploring the possibility of applying this theory in practical situations. The first justification for this opinion is that every philosophical worldview can have an impact on man’s actions; so the issue should not be whether this theory is applicable, rather it should be to what extent and in which particular area it can be applied. Secondly, Taylor’s egalitarian biocentrism, as largely descriptive as it may be, is an indepth re-examination of anthropocentrism, the basic paradigm upon which humans have acted out the relationship between them and non-human life forms. It must be recalled that Taylor has led us on a rediscovery journey that necessarily ends in a reassessment and readjustment of the way we have been taught by tradition to conceive, perceive, and treat nature. And such a path, to be meaningful, must also lead to the drawing up of practical ways to deal with our ever-increasing environmental problems. Therefore, this researcher submits that biocentrism is applicable in practical ways. A detailed demonstration of this possibility is contained in the following sections.

Biocentric Egalitarianism as Relevant in Formulation of Laws/Policies/Strategies
Anthropocentric ways of interacting with nature have led to such the numerous environmental problems that we have today. Back in the early 1970s, this was what prompted the need for a rethink of an environmental ethic in the first instance; and evidence abounds to show that things are getting worse today because mankind has stubbornly refused to out-rightly condemn the trend of thought behind activities that are destructive to the environment; the idea that nature is only useful to the extent that it satisfies man’s needs and wants. It is however not very easy for man to discontinue his exploration of the earth’s resources. Man is faced with a moral dilemma; to stop and watch the whole of civilization crumble or to go on and still drive the whole earth and its inhabitants to extinction! Thus the middle ground is preservation and conservation rather than wanton destruction. We have reached the point where, to survive, man must curtail his wants and conquer his greed. This is the exact point where Taylor’s egalitarian biocentrism comes in handy. Now that policy makers and other stakeholders have realized the imperative for saving the earth, one of the most viable options is to adopt Taylor’s world-view, the view that man should treat nature as an equal; with respect. This ideal will become manifest when our laws, policies and strategies are structured to safeguard rather than destroy, to conserve rather than consume, and to preserve rather than plunder. As Taylor himself has stated:

There is no reason, moreover, why plants and animals, including whole species populations and life communities, cannot be accorded legal rights under my theory. To grant them legal protection could be interpreted as giving them legal entitlement to be protected, and this, in fact, would be a means by which
Thus in the areas of law, policy, and strategy formulation, this is how Taylor's biocentrism can be made to work.

**Biocentrism Egalitarianism as a Rational Basis for Environmental Remediation**

Environmental remediation refers to the various scientific techniques of repairing or restoring destroyed or badly polluted environmental media such as soil, groundwater, sediment, or surface water. One of these methods is Bio-Remediation by which plants and animals are used to resuscitate, detoxify, and restore ecosystems that have been damaged through environmental degradation or pollution. Deforestation can also be effectively checked by this means (“Bioremediation” n.p). As a rational principle, such remediation is only possible when those who engage in practices that destroy the environment adopt the attitude of respect for nature. Particularly applicable in this area is Taylor's third thesis which is the realization that “...all organisms are teleological centers [sic] of life in the sense that each is a unique individual pursuing its own good in its own way." This principle provides a solid rational foundation for all activities that reflect a duty of care rather than crass arrogance towards nature and its resources; it supports the notion that it is possible for man to relate with nature in a manner of respect rather than abuse.

**Biocentric Egalitarianism as a Ground for Reparation**

Reparation refers to “the making of amends for wrong or injury done" “Reparation” n.p). Within the context of environmental justice, reparation usually takes the form of pecuniary compensation which is paid to an individual, a group, or members of a host community where environmental exploration has been carried out with harmful consequences. Often than not, trans-national companies who explore natural resources tend to be grossly anthropocentric, thereby destroying the habitats that have been home to both human and non-human life forms for thousands of years. Again, some exploration companies are ethnocentric and show disregard to the welfare of the local community. The end result is usually a state of environmental injustice by which the host community bears the heavier burden of the exploration (particularly the harmful effects) while the exploration companies bear the (economic) benefits. But justice demands that the burdens and benefits be shared equitably, so when this is not the case; a moral paradigm is needed to conscientise the offending party. This is where Taylor's biocentric egalitarianism again proves handy. The fourth thesis which rejects superiority of human beings can be extended to cover two relationships: that between man and nature; and that between a trans-national company and a host community on whose grounds resource exploration is taking place. When this is applied as a principle, corporate policies, strategies, and techniques will be put in place to prevent wanton and unwarranted destruction of the host community's habitats. Also the duty to pay adequate reparations when gross harm is caused becomes easier to comprehend and practice.

**Conclusion**

The above discussion has been preoccupied with an analysis of Taylor's biocentric egalitarianism using a pragmatic perspective. The philosophical tradition behind the theory, its key arguments, its impact in the field of environmental ethics, the criticisms leveled against it, and the various ways by which it could be applied in practice have been exposed. We must recall that biocentrism stands in stark opposition to anthropocentrism and that Taylor's theory has only added fuel to efforts that were made to produce a non-anthropocentric ethic. While it is impossible to satisfactorily answer all criticisms against this theory, one thing that can be known for certain is, Taylor's biocentric egalitarianism has provided us with a rational,
methodic, systematic, and viable alternative to ponder over and even act on the various environmental problems we face today. Therefore, to embrace the attitude of respect to nature is to join the army of those warring against wanton destruction of the limited resources that Mother Nature has so generously bestowed on us. Thus for the good of nature, humans, and that of future generations, we must not fail to act now.

**Works Cited**


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