

Shallow Ecology

The defining feature of shallow ecology is the view that nature has instrumental value. In other words, nature is valuable only as a means to an end.

Kantian inspired shallow ecology

1. Only humans (rational beings) have intrinsic value
2. Humans need the environment for many reasons (e.g. survival, leisure, aesthetic fulfilment, spiritual fulfilment)
3. To harm the environment is to deprive humans of a means to satisfy these needs.
4. Harming the environment therefore harms humans.

Conclusion: **Because harming the environment harms humans it is morally wrong.**

Utilitarian inspired shallow ecology

1. Only the interests of sentient beings should be taken into account
2. Sentient beings derive pleasure from the environment in various ways (e.g. survival, leisure, aesthetic fulfilment, spiritual fulfilment)
3. To harm the environment is to deprive sentient beings of a means of experiencing pleasure.
4. Harming the environment therefore reduces the amount of pleasure in the world.

Conclusion: **Harming the environment is morally wrong.**

Shallow ecologists believe therefore that a radical shift towards deep ecology is unnecessary in order for the environment to be protected.

Deep ecologists disagree! The instrumental view of nature is, they believe, the cause of environmental problems in the first place.