



The Pollution-Sphere – a Creation of Men. An Essay

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The pollution-sphere is growing thicker as humankind fails to achieve or postpone the environmental protection targets previously established. The inability of humans to acknowledge the urgency of mitigating pollution is making all the elements of environmental degradation a permanent matter and a part of the planet. This way, a new, human-related sphere arises besides the traditional ones: the pollution-sphere. Previous studies demonstrated how anthropic activities affect natural equilibrium and produce, and some scholars say, more waste and toxic emissions than the Earth can bear. Humans are present by their impact in all four Earth spheres: lithosphere, hydrosphere, biosphere, and atmosphere.

Even if humans are a part of the biosphere, their anthroposphere is in a critical conflict with the first and seems more than ever out of the planetary boundaries. Biodiversity loss is not just about endangered species that vanish worldwide but also creating vital risks for the human communities that depend on these species. Humans altered the ecosystems for their seeming benefit. However, as a part of the biosphere, they suffer due to the environmental degradation they create. Most of the progress was about making the people life easier, raising the wellbeing level. The first industrial revolution was based on fueling the economic activity by burning coal and other fossil sources of energy. Intensive agriculture increased the output by incorporating chemicals and accelerated deforestation.

More recently, plastics have been a tremendous engineering breakthrough, creating opportunities unavailable before it. However, the environmental impact was huge, affecting the planetary ocean and creating impressive amounts of solid wastes and particulate air pollution. All this created a lot of ecological pressure and health issues for the people.

We all looked up at night and enjoyed the Milky Way and the starry night. It could become impossible for our descendants, as in 20 years, the light pollution brightness produced by greener (such an irony) electric solutions, namely LED lighting, will make the stars invisible (McKie, 2023). Besides its romance, many wild species, such as the Sea turtle, depend on the night's darkness.

What makes environmental degradation a permanent issue and builds the pollution-sphere is that even greener solutions do not eliminate the environmental impact and only move issues between different regions or close some pollution producers only to open others. Many environmental-friendly solutions relate to a long, dirty supply chain that adds an ecological footprint.

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Discussing net-zero carbon emissions supposes a certain emissions level implied by human activity. That makes pollution an omnipresent issue, while environmental degradation is permanent. Decision makers project environmental degradation mitigation policies and resilience strategies designed to adapt communities to a sustainable change in planetary life conditions. The three significant dimensions of pollution-sphere, namely the environmental impact, the effects of it, and the resilience of humankind in front of the planet's response, are vital challenges.

Greenhouse gas emissions that affect the climate, explosive urbanization that affects wild habitats, all kinds of wastes that suffocate the waters and the lands, light and noise pollution that affects biodiversity, and cosmic wastes tighten around the Earth are part of this pollution-sphere we, humans create as a part of our seeming progress.

The unequal thickness of the pollution-sphere reflects the asymmetries between regions and countries. COP26 recognized the fact that climate change is affecting us all. At the same time, it emphasized that some countries and regions are more vulnerable to climate change's effects. Many of these national economies or regions agreed upon their impossibility to fight alone against the environmental degradation effects or to diminish the ecological footprint without altering their economic and social growth perspectives. Remains to be seen how world countries will work together not only for immediate benefits but also for the supreme good which is the health of the planet.

References

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