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THE CONCEPT OF ENVIRONMENT AND ITS IMPACT WITH RELATION TO MEN

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Introduction:

The surrounding or external conditions influencing the development and growth of mankind, animals, plants and living organisms may be defined as environments. The Webster's Universal College Dictionary (2000) defines the environment as "the air, water, minerals, organisms, and all other external factors surrounding and affecting a given organism at any time". The term Environment is understood not as an area surrounding a small place but as one that affects the existence and survival of the organisms it surrounds¹.

The term environment comes from the French word „environner“ which means to encircle or to surround. In common sense parlance, environment means the surroundings. However, in size and spread it could differ widely from species to species. Therefore, what constitute environment for man could be quite different for anaerobic bacteria. Moreover, the meaning of environment will widely in its connotation in the micro-scale or in the macro-scale. For example, the micro-environment of man could constitute his home, the food he takes or the air he breaths from the immediate surroundings, whereas the macro-environment would mean the general climatic conditions he lives in or the general rise in world temperature conditions that is likely to affect him etc².

Geographers have inherited the idea of environmentalism from Greek philosophers that nature is all-powerful and not only directed but determined all the human activities. With this background, the concept of „determinism“ or „environmentalism“ has been developed in geography.

Environment becomes clear from the stanza in *Isho-Upanishad* which states:

“Esh Vasyamidang Sarba Yat Kiyacha Jagatyang Jagat I
Tena Tayktena Bhujjiya Ma Gridha Kasya Sviddhanam II” 1/1 (Eshopanishad)

¹ Eugene .T. *Environmental Economics*, Vrinda Publications (P) LTD, Delhi,91, P.19

² A.C.Mohapatra, S.K.Barik, C.S. Rao, *Man and Environment*, Star Publishing House Shilong, P-1