

Ubuntu/Botho as Ecophilosophy and Ecosophy

Lesley Le Grange

*Faculty of Education, Stellenbosch University, Private Bag XI, Matieland 7602
Telephone: +27218082280, Cell: +27827792864, Fax: +27218082020,
E-mail: llg@sun.ac.za*

KEYWORDS Environmental Problems. Deep Ecology. Ecosophy. *Ubuntu*. Southern Africa

ABSTRACT Environmental problems facing humanity in the 21st century require a reexamination of the beliefs and values that produced them in the first place. In this paper the researcher discusses some of the key environmental challenges facing the southern African region. The researcher point out that, if responses to local environmental problems and the global ecological crisis are to be meaningful (make possible a more sustainable future), then it will require a collective effort on the part of society and at the same time connect to individual's values or the values of particular groups. The Norwegian philosopher Arne Naess argued that there can be agreement on environmental principles across cultures, regions and nations and that these principles can be supported by a range of ecophilosophies that are aligned to agreed principles. Naess referred to philosophies that support deep ecology principles as ecophilosophies or ecosophies. Informed by Naess's views, in this paper the researcher argues that *ubuntu/botho* is an ecosophy that is aligned with the principles of the deep ecology movement (DEM). Moreover, that *ubuntu* can serve as the ecophilosophy/ecosophy that informs policies and practices responsive to the pressing environmental problems facing the southern African region.