

Buddhist Way of Life and Environment

It is a well-known fact that the modern world is facing a large number of environmental problems which will determine the very existence of beings on earth. These serious problems have arisen not naturally but due to the way of life of the people based on selfishness. Selfishness is a mental factor related to craving (**ta%h@**) which is the main cause of suffering and unsatisfactoriness (**dukkha**) as explained in the teachings of four noble truths (**catnsacca**). Suffering (**dukkha**), cause of suffering (**ta%h@**), cessation of suffering (**nibb@%a**) and path leading to the cessation of suffering (**ariya-a{ha<gika-magga**). The path leading to the cessation of suffering consists of three main aspects as moral behavior (**s\$la**), concentration (**sam@dhi**) and wisdom (**pa~~@**).

Now we can conclude that the problems of environment arise due to the selfish behavior of people motivated by craving. The main purpose of Buddhist path is aimed at reducing and almost completely eliminating craving.

In this context we have to understand what is craving related to the selfish behavior of man. Craving and all related defilements (**kilesa**) of man arise in mind due to misunderstanding and wrong concepts developed on craving. Therefore, in order to preserve environment and eliminate its pollution one has to eliminate his or her wrong concepts regarding the nature of life. The Dhammapada includes a very important stanza regarding the eliminating of wrong concepts in order to preserve environment.