

# Ecocriticism of the Global South: An Overview of Environmental Justice Narratives from India

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Cheryll Glotfelty famously defined ecocriticism as “a study of the relationship between literature and the physical environment” that has “one foot in literature and the other on land” (xviii-xix). However the legitimate objects of the practice of ecocriticism and the categories of ecocritical practice have proliferated beyond nature appreciation and culture-nature relationship as the site of poetic creativity. Ursula Heise points out that ecocriticism’s agenda is challenging and complex on account of its “triple allegiance” to: the scientific study of nature, the role of literary imagination in conceiving cultural-ecological concepts of texts and environmental justice issues involving sustainable worldviews for the disenfranchised to inhabit the earth (506).

The field’s development over the last two decades has constantly redefined the definition of ‘environment’ and the role of the human in it. The first wave of ecocriticism defined nature as “natural environment” (Buell 21) and dichotomized the human/nature relationship by foregrounding the ‘intrinsic’ value of nature and passionately arguing for the protection and preservation of the natural environment from marauding humans. The second wave of ecocriticism in the 1990s moved away from dichotomized discourses of “nature writing” to a more inclusive dialogue, which included humans and urban