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Original Article

# Eco-Buddhism and Social Work Intervention: Integrating Buddhist Environmental Ethics into Practice

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***Abstract***

*This study explores the intersection of Eco-Buddhism and Social Work and proposes an integrated framework to address ecological crises through socially engaged and environmentally conscious practices. As change and environmental degradation exacerbate social vulnerabilities, social workers increasingly encounter communities affected by ecological disasters, resource scarcity, and displacement. The study argues that Buddhist ecological principles, such as interdependence (pratītyasamutpāda), compassion (karuṇā), and mindful consumption, can enrich the ethical foundations of social work, offering a holistic approach to sustainability and well-being. This study examines how eco-Buddhist philosophy aligns with core social work values, including social justice, human dignity, and community resilience. By incorporating Buddhist teachings on interconnectedness, practitioners can foster deeper ecological awareness and encourage clients and communities to recognize their relationship with nature. Additionally, mindful consumption challenges unsustainable economic models that advocate equitable resource distribution. This study also highlighted the practical applications of eco-Buddhist social work in community development, disaster response, and eco-therapy. This further demonstrates that eco-Buddhist ethics can bridge the gap between social work and environmental activism, promoting solutions that address both human suffering and ecological harm. By adopting this framework, social workers can cultivate more sustainable, compassionate, and systems-oriented practices, contributing to a more resilient future.*

***Keywords:*** *Buddhist environmental ethics, social work, sustainability, interdependence, mindful consumption, eco-Buddhism*

## Introduction

Interdisciplinary approaches incorporating ecological sustainability and social justice are required to address the global environmental catastrophe of climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution (IPCC 12). As a profession dedicated to human well-being and systemic change, social work must widen its anthropocentric focus to confront environmental degradation and social inequality (Dominelli, 45). Ecological devastation disproportionately affects low-income indigenous communities and exacerbates poverty and displacement (Bullard 8). The convergence of environmental and socioeconomic crises requires a paradigm shift in social work that embraces ecological ethics with conventional solutions. Buddhist environmental philosophy, particularly eco-Buddhism, provides an ethical foundation for integration. Buddhism, based on interdependence, compassion, and mindful consumerism, offers a spiritual and philosophical underpinning for sustainable living (Loy, 56). The notion of pratītyasamutpāda, which recognizes the interconnectedness of all phenomena, contradicts the exploitative human-nature divide in industrial capitalism (Kaza 23).



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According to the National Association of Social Workers (NASW 4), Buddhist teachings on non-harm and right livelihoods match the ethical goals of social work: promoting justice and reducing suffering. These concepts allow social workers to create treatments that meet the human and environmental requirements.

Despite increased interest in eco-social work and environmental justice, conventional social work literature rarely incorporates Buddhist environmental ethics (Besthorn 112). Although Dominelli, Canda, and Furman have studied green and spiritually sensitive social work, few have integrated Buddhist ecological ethics into social work solutions. This gap allows for contemplative, system-based, and ecocentric social work. This study combines Buddhist environmental ethics with social work methods to promote more holistic, justice-oriented, and ecologically concerned professions.

**Research objectives**

1. Exploring Buddhist environmental ethics for Social Work.
2. Comparing Buddhist ecological concepts to Social Work values.
3. Exploring the practical application of Eco-Buddhism in social work.

**Methodology**

1. This study adopts an explorative analysis of the theoretical framework of eco-Buddhism and its practical application in the Social Work Profession.
2. Social work Eco-Buddhist case studies.
3. Comparative analysis of Western and Buddhist ecological concepts.

**Core values of Buddhist Environmental Ethics**

**1. Pratyasamutpāda (Interdependence)**

The Buddhist notion of pratītyasamutpāda (interdependence) transforms social work practices by rethinking the links among individuals, communities, and their environments. This principle challenges the Western paradigm of separate and independent individuals by stating that all phenomena depend on several causes and conditions (Loy 56). In social work, this refers to the ecological-systemic awareness that client issues are interconnected to social, economic, and environmental factors (Besthorn 112). Instead of focusing on individual case management, a social worker tackling urban poverty through interdependence would explore how housing insecurity affects environmental racism, economic policies, and climate migration patterns (Dominelli, 34). This perspective emphasizes the reciprocity of all relationships—human and non-human—and expands the person-in-environment framework of social work.

Pratītyasamutpāda guides interventions to promote social and ecological well-being. Community social workers can use this idea to create urban gardening initiatives that fight food insecurity and regenerate local ecosystems, recognizing the link between community and environmental health (Kaza 45). Ecotherapy can assist clients in appreciating their connections with natural systems as part of their healing. Organizations can promote related policies, such as opposing development projects that displace vulnerable communities and harm local ecosystems. To fully realize interdependence-informed practice, social workers must critically examine how the neoliberal ideologies of individualism and anthropocentrism permeate current practice models, suggesting paradigm shifts in social work education and institutional structures.

**2. Compassion (Karuṇā) and Non-Harm (Ahiṃsā)**

The Buddhist principle of karuṇā (compassion) underpins social work ethics and prioritizes alleviating suffering in all forms (Keefe, 128). In Buddhist philosophy, karuṇā encompasses all sentient beings and ecosystems, requiring social workers to adopt an ecologically sensitive approach to aid (Macy and Brown 56). This enlarged notion of compassion supports social work's underlying ideal of human dignity and worth, while forcing the field to address how environmental degradation perpetuates systemic suffering (Dominelli 72).

The principle of ahiṃsā (non-harm) is closely related to karuṇā and provides a crucial ethical framework for sustained social work interventions (Kaza, 112). In Ahiṃsā, social workers must consider how conventional approaches may prolong harm, such as resource-intensive social service models that destroy local ecosystems or interventions that disregard indigenous ecological knowledge (Coates, 89).

**3. Consuming Mindfully**

The Buddhist principle of mindful consumption, derived from the Right Livelihood in the Noble Eightfold Path, challenges unsustainable consumption patterns that perpetuate ecological degradation and social inequality and transform social work practices (Hanh 112). Consumer societies often link excessive materialism and resource exploitation to poverty, addiction, and mental health problems linked to compulsive purchasing, which social workers face daily (Schor, 45). Mindful consumption-informed social work interventions can assist clients in understanding their consumption patterns' personal, societal, and environmental implications, and promote sustainable living (Kaza 78). Social workers can promote policy changes that limit unethical advertising, and empower clients to make ethical consumption choices by framing overconsumption as a personal and structural issue.

Mindful consumption can improve social service delivery by minimizing waste in public assistance programs and supporting eco-friendly resource allocation (Dominelli, 34). Buddhist teachings on avoiding waste and addressing food hunger may lead food banks to cooperate with local farms to share extra produce (Graham-Rowe et al. 12). Responsible consumption in homeless shelters can solve current needs and promote long-term ecological responsibility by recycling and educating residents (Besthorn and Meyer, 67). Social work organizations can also demonstrate environmental stewardship by analyzing their carbon footprints and adopting green buying practices (Alston 101). Critics warn against moralizing poverty or placing middle-class sustainability demands on excluded communities (Chitewere and Taylor, 78). Social justice-based mindful consumption in social work can reduce immediate suffering and modify economic institutions that cause overconsumption and deprivation.

**Environmental and Buddhist Engagement**

Engaged Buddhism, established by Thich Nhat Hanh and Sulak Sivaraksa, transforms spiritual practices to address social and environmental problems (Queen 15). The movement connects spiritual practices with environmental activism by applying Buddhist ideals such as interdependence, compassion, and a good livelihood to ecological challenges. Engaged in Buddhism can help social workers address environmental degradation and emotional effects. The Buddhist concept of systemic suffering (dukkha) and the person-in-environment perspective of social work complement each other. Engaged Buddhist programs sometimes mix meditation with community-based environmental restoration, showing how contemplative practices can influence communal action, an important method for eco-social work.

Social workers often engage in Buddhist environmental activism in catastrophe relief and community-building. The Buddhist Tzu Chi Foundation pioneered relief strategies that combined immediate humanitarian aid with long-term ecological sustainability (Huang 56). The social work concepts of empowerment and resilience are combined with Buddhist teachings on impermanence (anicca) and interconnection to underpin rehabilitation practices (Berila 89). Engaged Buddhist monks in Southeast Asia have led forest conservation efforts to address deforestation, rural poverty, and the core challenges of social work (Darlington 34). These examples show how Engaged Buddhism's dual focus on inner transformation and outer action can help social work solve complex socio-ecological issues through spiritually grounded, systems-level interventions.

However, integrating Engaged Buddhist environmental actions into mainstream social work requires careful navigation of various hurdles. The secular focus of professional social work may conflict with Engaged Buddhism's spirituality, requiring culturally sensitive modifications (Canda and Furman 45). Buddhist environmental activism generally criticizes structural greed and consumerism, which aligns with radical social work traditions, yet institutional social work settings in neoliberal systems may contradict this (Dominelli 112). Despite these obstacles, the emerging field of spiritually sensitive social work and ecological justice as professional priorities provides fertile ground for integration. Engaging Buddhism's holistic view of environmental healing, social justice, and personal transformation can help social workers address current crises with professional ethics and ecological wisdom.

**Social work and engaged Buddhism: An ethical correlation**

**1. Ecological and Social Justice**

The Buddhist ethical framework emphasizes the interconnectedness between social and ecological justice based on the concept of pratītyasamutpāda. Buddhist teachings state that all things are interdependent; hence, environmental degradation is linked to systematic social inequality. (Loy 78). This perspective opposes anthropocentric justice by emphasizing that ecological health is interconnected with human well-being. Buddhist teachings on ethical livelihoods and non-harm (ahiṃsā) condemn the karmic consequences of exploitative economic systems. Marginalized groups are disproportionately harmed by pollution, climate disasters, and resource depletion (Kaza 45). Engaged Buddhist philosophers such as Sulak Sivaraksa say that real social justice must include ecological stewardship because greed and ignorance cause the oppression of vulnerable communities and nature's devastation (Sivaraksa 112). Thus, Buddhist environmental ethics advocates systemic reform to solve social and ecological suffering by redefining justice as a comprehensive notion that transcends human-centric perspectives.

As "interbeing" shows, ecological justice is a key part of social justice in Buddhism (Thich Nhat Hanh 23). The Three Poisons—greed, hatred, and delusion—foment cycles of harm in the exploitation of natural resources and marginalization of disadvantaged communities (Macy and Brown, 89). Buddhist ethics emphasize compassionate action (karuṇā) that confronts poverty, inequality, and environmental harm. Eco-social work recognizes that environmental crises increase people's vulnerability (Dominelli 56). Climate-induced displacement disproportionately affects low-income areas, highlighting the need for an ecological and social justice framework. Social workers can promote eco-friendly policies that benefit underprivileged communities by utilizing Buddhist ideas such as mindful consumerism and community responsibilities. Buddhist ethics transform justice work by dismantling the illusory division between human and environmental rights, and supporting integrated solutions for a sustainable and equitable future.

**2. Holistic Health**

Buddhism's holistic vision of human well-being as inseparable from ecological and spiritual equilibrium matches the biopsychosocial-spiritual model of modern social work (Rogers & Stanford, 42). This concept, which goes beyond biomedical techniques, recognizes the role of biological, psychological, social, and spiritual factors in health (Engel, 132). Buddhist teachings on dependent origination (pratītyasamutpāda) emphasize the connectedness of individual wellness with environmental and communal circumstances (Macy 78). In Eco-Buddhism, the degradation of natural ecosystems has been associated with greater psychological suffering, particularly in impoverished people who are disproportionately exposed to environmental degradation (Albrecht 56). Buddhist ecological ethics can help social workers address the structural and environmental causes of their suffering.

Eco-therapy, a new mental health intervention based on nature-based healing, uses this synthesis (Buzzell and Chalquist, 34). Eco-therapy, based on Buddhist mindfulness (sati) and interconnectivity, uses natural habitats as co-facilitators to restore health and support the strengths-based approach to social work (Berger 89). Forest bathing and horticulture treatment have been shown to alleviate anxiety and depression and promote ecological belonging (Hansen-Ketchum et al. 203). In an age of climate change, eco-therapeutic social workers operationalize Buddhist environmental ethics by linking personal well-being to planetary health.

**3. Community Empowerment**

Based on Buddhist middle-path concepts, "sufficiency economy" attitude empowers communities and connects with social work's dedication to sustainable development and self-determination promotes balanced growth through moderation, reasonableness, and self-immunity to external shocks (UNDP 18). This strategy promotes community-based resource management, local wisdom preservation, and ecological stewardship, while rejecting globalized consumer capitalism, which social workers can learn from. The sufficiency economy's gradual capacity-building

and appropriate technology adoption offers social workers an alternative to top-down development by fostering resilience through culturally grounded, participatory methods that honor indigenous knowledge systems (Chambers 72). Buddhist-inspired community development approaches, such as the sufficiency economy, operationalize dignity, social justice, and environmental sustainability in social work (NASW 5). These methods show how spiritual-ecological worldviews can strengthen rural and marginalized people facing climate vulnerability (Sretthachau et al. 1038). In Thai communities, this strategy increased food security, debt cycles, and social capital, proving its viability as a community social work model (Mongsawad, 47). It provides social workers with a culturally sensitive framework that links micro-level interventions (household economic planning) to macro-level change (sustainable agriculture policies) while adhering to Buddhism's core teachings on interdependence and right livelihoods (Payutto 89). Social workers must rethink Western-dominated development paradigms and co-create solutions with communities that incorporate spiritual understanding into modern social work practices.

**Engaged Buddhism as a tool in Social Work Intervention**

**1. Eco-social Work Interventions**

Disaster Response: Buddhist-inspired disaster response emphasizes healing human trauma and damaged ecosystems, providing a holistic framework for post-crisis recovery. The 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami in Sri Lanka showed that monastic communities could combine psychosocial care with ecological repair (Leichty 143). According to De Silva (78), Buddhist temples were used for mental health counseling and reforestation, utilizing the principle of pratītyasamutpāda (interdependence) to address collective trauma and strengthen coastal mangroves for natural disaster protection. New research on "green social work," which promotes catastrophe responses that improve community well-being and environmental resilience, supports these efforts (Dominelli 112). Monastic-led initiatives used mindfulness to assist survivors process grief while planting trees, creating an ecological agency as part of the healing process (Klein et al. 34). This method fulfills humanitarian needs and mitigates climate vulnerability through sustainable ecosystem management.

Eco Buddhist ideas guide community-driven sustainability projects in cities to overcome natural alienation and socioeconomic inequality. Los Angeles' Buddhist Tzu Chi Foundation urban gardens combine food justice with mindfulness, teaching locals contemplative cultivation techniques that reinforce the Buddhist ideal of mindful consumerism (Watts, 56). Thai waste reduction programs use santutthi (content with enough) to reframe consumer behavior by organizing community clean-ups and dharma debates on materialism's environmental implications (Sivaraksa 92). These efforts demonstrate "just transition" ’ssocial work frameworks, which use environmental stewardship to alleviate poverty and empower communities (Agyeman 145). Urban social workers can teach underprivileged community sustainability and global connections by combining meditation with composting workshops and rooftop solar cooperatives.

**2. Eco-Therapy and Mental Health**

Eco-therapy-nature-based therapeutic interventions have shown promise in resolving mental health issues while matching Buddhist concepts of mindfulness and connectivity (Buzzell & Chalquist, 45). Forest therapy (shinrin-yoku), created in Japan, promotes mindful absorption in nature to relieve stress, regulate emotions, and be present (Miyazaki et al. 112). These techniques align with Buddhist teachings on anattā (non-self) and dependent origination (pratītyasamutpāda), which emphasize the interconnectedness of human well-being and nature (Loy 78). Structured nature-based mindfulness exercises such as guided forest walks, sensory grounding, and contemplative ecosystem observation help reduce anxiety and depression, and promote ecological consciousness (Berger and McLeod 56). Social workers can use these practices in clinical and community settings as a comprehensive alternative to therapy for individuals who may benefit from somatic and experiential healing.

Eco-therapy is a practical application of engaged mindfulness in Buddhist ecology, where natural experiences promote human healing and environmental responsibility (Kaza, 34). Traditional

Buddhist practices such as walking meditation and loving-kindness meditation can be used in psychiatric interventions to foster biophilic connections, a natural human affinity for nature (Wilson, 67). Mindfulness-based stress reduction (MBSR) programs that integrate natural components have improved trauma survivors' outcomes, supporting the Buddhist belief that healing requires harmony with one's surroundings. Social workers using these strategies must be sensitive to cultural accessibility and adapt interventions for various communities without copying Buddhist traditions (Almeida 145). Social workers can promote ecopsychosocial care models that address mental health crises and ecological degradation by rooting eco-therapeutic treatments based on empirical evidence and Buddhist ethics.

**3. Policy Advocacy**

Social workers are uniquely positioned to promote Buddhist climate policies, notably economic degrowth and renewable energy transitions. Samyak ajiva (proper livelihood) in Buddhism supports economic policies that prioritize ecological sustainability and social equality over limitless expansion. Degrowth principles promote redistributive measures that reduce consumption and improve the quality of life. Social workers may demonstrate how degrowth policies, such as shortened work hours, wealth caps, and local production initiatives improve psychosocial wellness and prevent ecological harm using their community needs assessment skills (Hickel 112). The Buddhist principle of appamada (heedfulness) requires cautious resource stewardship, which leads to policy advocacy for intergenerational justice-focused renewable energy systems (Macy and Brown, 78). Community solar schemes and utility bill support may help social workers safeguard vulnerable populations from energy poverty.

Buddhist ethics change the climate policy advocacy method as well as its results. According to Kaza 134, the Buddhist tenet of mettā (loving-kindness) advocates for understanding and addressing the worries of fossil industry workers rather than demonizing opponents. This idea can help social workers mediate equitable transition plans in coal-dependent communities, allowing for healing and retraining (Schmitz et al. 412). The Buddhist concept of dependent origination (paticca-samuppada) shows how climate solutions must address interrelated systems, including renewable energy, public transit, localized food systems, and circular economies (Loy, 89). Systems thinking extends the person-in-environment paradigm of social work to ecological dimensions (Besthorn 203). Buddhist frameworks should supplement indigenous and local knowledge systems in environmental policymaking; however, social workers must be conscious of the cultural context (Whyte 157). Social workers can advocate environmentally friendly and humane climate policies rooted in Buddhist ethics.

**Engaged Buddhism and Social Work Intervention Challenges**

Integrating Buddhist environmental ethics into social work practices creates several key problems that must be considered. First, Western practitioners who adopt Buddhist ideas without comprehending their cultural and philosophical backgrounds risk cultural appropriation (Almeida 112). Superficial terms like "mindfulness" or "interbeing" without their ethical foundations in the Four Noble Truths and Eightfold Path may reduce profound spiritual concepts to self-help techniques, reinforcing the consumerist mentality Buddhist ecology critiques (Purser and Loy 45). Social workers must learn Buddhist philosophy and cooperate with Buddhist communities to guarantee real, respectful integration, rather than exploitative appropriation (Kaza 78). Second, secular and spiritual approaches conflict, and some customers may refuse or feel alienated by the Buddhist terminology. Social workers must use culturally sensitive approaches to convert Buddhist ecological principles, such as interconnectedness and non-harm, into secular frameworks that fit clients' varied worldviews while preserving the original ideals (Gray and Coates 91).

A major obstacle to the application of Buddhist environmental ethics in social work is its structure. The capitalist economy's concentration on expansion and consumerism violates the Buddhist values of restraint, simplicity, and ecological care (Loy 56). Neoliberal-funded organizations typically oppose social workers who promote degrowth or sustainable consumerism (Dominelli, 78). Many Western social care systems are individualistic,

while Buddhism emphasizes group responsibility and systems thinking (Besthorn 112). Social workers must advocate for macroeconomic reforms that correspond with Buddhist-inspired "right livelihood" concepts and challenge unsustainable organizational systems (Schmitz et al. 34). The profession must critically analyze how institutional arrangements promote ecological harm and build Buddhist ecological wisdom-based alternatives.

**Case Studies**

**1. The Buddhist Tzu Chi Foundation: Disaster Relief and Environmental Education**

The Buddhist Tzu Chi Foundation, a global humanitarian organization based in Buddhism, integrates eco-Buddhist ethics into social work through disaster assistance and environmental education. Established in 1966 by Venerable Cheng Yen, the organization upholds the Buddhist principles of compassion (karuṇā) and interdependence (pratītyasamutpāda) by addressing both immediate human suffering and long-term ecological sustainability (Huang 45). Unlike conventional charity, Tzu Chi's disaster relief operations in over 100 countries promote community empowerment and ecological restoration. After the 2011 Fukushima nuclear accident, Tzu Chi delivered emergency supplies and initiated radiation safety and sustainable energy education programs, demonstrating its commitment to systems-level changes (Weller 112). Buddhist organizations can model holistic treatments that address humanitarian and ecological issues, aligning with the rising focus of social work on environmental justice.

Tzu Chi's recycling and climate education projects promote theits intertwining of environmental stewardship and social welfare. Nonprofits run over 10,000 recycling stations worldwide, many of which are maintained by mindful waste reduction volunteers (Tzu Chi nonprofit, "Global Recycling"). Buddhist teachings on karmic consequences and societal responsibility are used to recast environmental protection as a moral necessity in educational outreach (Kaza 89). Green jobs and intergenerational solidarity boost community resilience and reduce environmental damage (Shaw, 34). Tzu Chi's methodology shows social workers how spiritual frameworks can promote pro-environmental behavior while meeting socioeconomic demands, which is crucial in an era of climate-driven displacement (IPCC 15). This study shows how Buddhist-inspired organizations might inform eco-social work paradigms that transcend "human" and "environmental" solutions.

**2. Thai Sufficiency Economy Movement**

In the late 20th century, King Bhumibol Adulyadej introduced Thailand's Sufficiency Economy Philosophy (SEP), a Buddhist-inspired development model that promotes moderation, resilience, and sustainability to combat globalization and economic growth. SEP promotes ethical decision making, environmental stewardship, and community self-reliance in development based on Theravada Buddhist teachings of the Middle Way and good living (Sivaraksa 78). Moderation, rationality, and immunity drive individuals and communities toward sustainable consumption, risk minimization, and adaptation to ecological and economic shocks (UNDP 23). SEP prioritizes holistic well-being over GDP measures, coinciding with Buddhist critiques of materialism and "right consumption' (Loy 156). UNESCO recognizes the movement as a framework for sustainable development, especially for rural communities vulnerable to climate change and market fluctuations (UNESCO 9).

Buddhist temples in Thailand's community-based development programs host sustainability education and agricultural innovation (Darlington, 145). Organic farming cooperatives, local currency systems, and waste reduction programs implement SEP by reducing market dependence and improving ecological resilience (Kantamara, 67). However, critics cite difficulties extending the concept beyond rural areas and integrating its anti-consumerist stance with Thailand's urban, industrialized sections (Hewison 312). The SEP's inclusion in Thailand's 20-Year National Strategy and the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) shows its relevance as a Buddhist-inspired alternative to mainstream development theories (NESDC, 45). Social workers can learn from SEP how to integrate spiritual ethics with community development, especially in poverty alleviation and environmental sustainability interventions (Gray and Coates 89).

### 3. Mindfulness-Based Eco-Social Work in the West

Western eco-social work has pioneered contemplative methods for solving ecological challenges by integrating mindfulness practices with environmental activism. According to Kabat-Zinn (45) and Macy and Brown (78), these programs blend meditation practices with environmental stewardship to promote human well-being and ecological responsibility based on Buddhist ideas of sati and interconnectedness. Guided meditations, deep ecology exercises, and group processes assist work in which participants confront environmental grief and build hope and resilience (Macy & Johnstone, 112). Social work organizations have also begun using mindfulness-based stress reduction (MBSR) in community environmental projects to help people regulate their emotions and adopt greener habits (Rogers et al. 34). These techniques support ecopsychology, which emphasizes the reciprocal healing potential of human-nature relationships (Buzzell and Chalquist 56) and addresses the emotional toll of climate anxiety on social work clients (Albrecht 89).

Cultural contexts and ethics must be considered when applying Buddhist-derived mindfulness to Western eco-social work. Secular mindfulness programs are accepted in clinical social work (Hick and Furlotte 23), but their use in environmental activism raises problems regarding spiritual underpinnings in secular practice (Canda and Furman 67). To establish whether mindfulness-based eco-interventions improve psychological well-being and environmental consequences, social work scholars recommend evidence-based evaluations. As this area grows, social workers can use holistic, contemplative Buddhist ecological wisdom to address interrelated issues of mental health and environmental destruction.

## Conclusion

This study shows that eco-Buddhism transforms social work ethics by combining compassionate involvement with human suffering and ecological stewardship. Buddhist values of interdependence, compassion, and mindful consumption align with social work values of social justice, human dignity, and systemic change, providing a holistic approach to address environmental degradation and social inequality (Loy 89; Dominelli 45). These concepts allow social workers to challenge the anthropocentric focus of standard practice and create therapies that understand the interdependence of human and planetary well-being (Besthorn, 112; Kaza, 67). Buddhist-inspired models, from community-based sustainability projects to mindfulness-based eco-therapies, show potential for innovative, environmentally grounded social work practices, according to case studies.

This study makes recommendations for promoting integration. First, social work programmes must include courses on Buddhist environmental philosophy, eco-spirituality, and sustainable community development (Alston 34; Gray and Coates 78). Second, Buddhist environmental interventions, notably climate trauma therapy, catastrophe resilience, and green social work advocacy, require more empirical investigation (Macy and Johnstone 56; Schmitz et al. 102). Third, social workers, Buddhist communities, environmental scientists, and policymakers should collaborate to develop culturally sensitive, evidence-based ecological-social justice strategies (Canda and Furman 91; Bullard 45). Critical reflexivity is needed to avoid cultural appropriation and to respectfully and culturally adapt Buddhist teachings to secular social work frameworks (Almeida 112). Social workers facing huge ecological catastrophes must integrate Buddhist environmental ethics into their practice. Social workers must utilize systems thinking to address core causes rather than symptoms as climate change worsens poverty, displacement, and mental health (IPCC 15; NASW 9). The profession can reframe well-being in ecological terms and advocate for policies and practices that benefit people and the Earth by adopting eco-Buddhist principles. This synthesis suggests a more equitable, compassionate, and sustainable future in which social work meets its ethical duty to help disadvantaged populations and the vulnerable Earth nourish us.

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