**ENVIRONMENTAL CITIZENSHIP**

**Citizen:** A citizen is a participatory member of a political community. Citizenship is gained by meeting the legal requirements of a national, state, or local government. A nation grants certain rights and privileges to its citizens. In return, citizens are expected to obey their country's laws and defend it against its enemies.

**Citizenship:** denotes the link between a person and a [state](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/State_%28polity%29) or an association of states. It is normally synonymous with the term [nationality](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nationality) although the latter term may also refer to ethnic connotations. Possession of citizenship is normally associated with the right to work and live in a country and to participate in political life.

**Active citizenship:** refers to a [philosophy](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Philosophy) espoused by organizations and educational institutions which advocates that members of companies or [nation-states](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nation-state) have certain roles and responsibilities to [society](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Society) and the [environment](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Natural_environment), although those members may not have specific governing roles.

Active citizenship can be seen as an articulation of the debate over [rights](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rights) versus [responsibilities](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Moral_responsibility). If a body gives rights to the people under its remit, then those same people might have certain responsibilities to uphold. This would be most obvious at a [country](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Country) or nation-state level, but could also be wider, such as [global citizenship](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Global_citizenship). The implication is that an active citizen is one who fulfills both their rights and responsibilities in a balanced way.

**Rights:** are legal, social, or ethical [principles](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Principle) of [freedom](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Liberty) or [entitlement](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Entitlement); that is, rights are the fundamental [normative](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Normative) rules about what is allowed of citizens or owed to citizens, according to some legal system, social convention, or ethical theory.Rights are of essential importance in such disciplines as [law](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Law) and [ethics](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ethics), especially theories of [justice](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Justice) and [deontology](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Deontology).

Rights are often considered fundamental to [civilization](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Civilization), being regarded as established pillars of [society](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Society) and [culture](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Culture), and the history of [social conflicts](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social_conflict) can be found in the history of each right and its development.

**Social responsibility** is an [ethical](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ethics) or theory that an [entity](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Entity), be it an [organization](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Organization) or [individual](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Individual), has an obligation to act to benefit society at large. Social responsibility is a duty every individual or organization has to perform so as to maintain a balance between the economy and the ecosystem. A trade-off alwaysexists between economic development, in the material sense, and the welfare of the society and environment. This responsibility can be passive, by avoiding engaging in socially harmful acts, or active, by performing activities that directly advance social goals.

**Environmental Citizenship** is an idea that each of us is an integral part of a larger ecosystem and that our future depends on each one of us embracing the challenge and acting responsibly and positively toward our environment. It's about making changes in our daily lives to be environmental citizens all day, every day.

The idea of environmental citizenship was first developed by Environment Canada. It is now spreading around the world. It is an idea similar to and compatible with environmental stewardship in the Christian, Islam, and Judaic traditions, but is not committed to or associated with any particular religious or cultural tradition.

The concept of environmental citizenship currently tends to be used in one of two main ways. In the first, it refers to the teaching of values and practices appropriate to the achievement of sustainability. For example, householders need to be encouraged to switch off lights, insulate their homes, conserve water, and increase their recycling rates and through governmental programmes or the pronouncements of environmental organizations, people need to be made more aware of environmental problems and become environmentally responsible citizens; they need to be disciplined into 'good', 'green 'behaviors. In the second main contemporary use of the concept, environmental citizenship refers less to environmental responsibilities and much more to environmental rights. Specifically, the language of citizenship is used to name and critique the uneven spread of putative environmental rights. Particular groups, for example, are said to lack the right to clean air, to a safe environment, or to healthy working conditions.