

Oceanic Ethics: A Place-Based Quiz

Ethics · Answer Key · 15 Questions

1. In many Indigenous Australian communities, the concept of 'Country' extends beyond mere land ownership to encompass a complex web of responsibilities and spiritual connections. Ethically, how does this understanding of Country influence decision-making regarding resource extraction?

- A) It prioritises economic profit above all else to support the community.
- B) It necessitates a deep consideration of the long-term ecological and spiritual impacts on the land and its inhabitants.**
- C) It dictates that only external experts can make such decisions to ensure impartiality.
- D) It suggests that traditional custodians have no ethical obligation to consider environmental impacts.

2. The Great Barrier Reef, a UNESCO World Heritage site, faces numerous threats. An ethical framework focused on ecocentrism would prioritise the intrinsic value of which entity when making decisions about its protection?

- A) The economic benefits derived from tourism and fishing.
- B) The needs and desires of the local human population.
- C) The coral reefs, marine life, and the entire ecosystem's health and survival.**
- D) The technological advancements that could mitigate damage.

3. The ethical challenges of managing invasive species in island ecosystems like Fiji are significant. From a conservation ethics perspective, what is the primary moral justification for removing an invasive species that threatens native biodiversity?

- A) To reduce the perceived aesthetic threat to the landscape.
- B) To protect the genetic integrity and survival of native species.
- C) To increase opportunities for introduced species tourism.
- D) To fulfil international trade agreements without regard for local ecology.**

4. The concept of 'Kaitiakitanga' in Maori culture, particularly in New Zealand, involves guardianship and stewardship of the environment. Ethically, this translates to a responsibility to:

- A) Exploit natural resources for immediate personal gain.
- B) Maintain the mauri (life force) of the natural world for future generations.**
- C) Prioritise industrial development over environmental preservation.
- D) Delegate all environmental management to governmental bodies.

5. The ethical implications of sea-level rise in low-lying Pacific island nations like Tuvalu are profound, raising questions of climate justice. Which ethical principle is most relevant when considering the relocation of vulnerable communities?

- A) The principle of 'finders keepers' for habitable land.
- B) The principle of equitable responsibility and compensation for historical emissions.**
- C) The principle of voluntary displacement without external support.
- D) The principle of isolating affected communities to prevent further strain.

6. In Papua New Guinea, traditional land tenure systems often involve communal ownership. Ethically, how does this contrast with Western individualistic property rights when considering large-scale development projects?

- A) Communal ownership encourages unchecked individual exploitation.
- B) Communal ownership often requires consensus and consideration for the collective well-being and future of the community.**
- C) Western individual rights always lead to more ethical outcomes in development.
- D) Traditional land tenure has no ethical implications for development.

7. The ethical debate surrounding deep-sea mining in the Pacific Ocean often pits potential economic benefits against unknown ecological risks. An argument based on the precautionary principle would suggest:

- A) Proceeding with mining as soon as possible to maximise economic returns.
- B) Adopting a 'wait and see' approach, allowing mining to continue until significant harm is evident.
- C) Taking preventative action to avoid potential harm, even with scientific uncertainty about the extent of the risks.**
- D) Prioritising technological solutions that promise to mitigate future damage.

8. The ethical treatment of marine mammals, such as whales migrating through Australian waters, involves balancing human activities with animal welfare. Which ethical stance would advocate for the strongest protections for these animals?

- A) Anthropocentrism, focusing on human utility.
- B) Biocentrism, focusing on the inherent value of all living beings.**
- C) Speciesism, prioritising human interests.
- D) Utilitarianism, seeking the greatest good for the greatest number of humans.

9. The ethical challenges of managing waste disposal in remote Australian communities can be exacerbated by logistical difficulties. A utilitarian approach might justify:

- A) Ignoring waste management issues due to remoteness.
- B) Implementing costly but highly effective waste management systems regardless of immediate local benefit.
- C) Finding the most cost-effective solution, even if it has moderate environmental impacts, to benefit the wider community.**
- D) Relocating communities to areas with better waste management infrastructure.

10. In the Solomon Islands, the ethical considerations of traditional resource management practices often clash with modern conservation efforts. Acknowledging the importance of indigenous knowledge in conservation ethics implies:

- A) Discarding all traditional practices in favour of scientific methods.
- B) Recognising the ecological wisdom embedded in traditional practices and seeking integration.**
- C) Assuming indigenous knowledge is inherently inferior to scientific knowledge.
- D) Allowing traditional practices to continue unchecked, regardless of their ecological impact.

11. The ethical dilemmas of preserving cultural heritage sites, like those in Vanuatu, while also promoting tourism require careful balancing. An ethical framework that prioritises cultural integrity would likely advocate for:

- A) Unrestricted access to all sites to maximise tourist revenue.
- B) Minimising visitor numbers and ensuring that tourism activities respect and do not harm the cultural significance of the sites.**
- C) Allowing development that might compromise heritage for economic gain.
- D) Focusing solely on the monetary value of the heritage sites.

12. The ethical debate around bioprospecting in the diverse ecosystems of Oceania centres on fair benefit-sharing. Which ethical model best addresses concerns about Indigenous communities' rights to their traditional knowledge and biological resources?

- A) Exploitation without consent or compensation.
- B) Prioritising multinational corporate interests.
- C) The Nagoya Protocol, which promotes equitable sharing of benefits arising from the utilisation of genetic resources.**
- D) Open access for all scientific research, regardless of local input.

13. The ethical responsibilities of Australian governments in managing its vast marine parks, like those in the Coral Sea, involve balancing conservation with sustainable use. Which ethical consideration is paramount in this context?

- A) Maximising short-term economic gains from all marine activities.
- B) Ensuring the long-term health and biodiversity of the marine ecosystem for present and future generations.**
- C) Prioritising the needs of commercial fishing fleets above all else.
- D) Implementing minimal regulations to encourage all forms of marine exploitation.

14. The ethical challenges of addressing the impact of climate change on coastal communities in New Caledonia require a consideration of intergenerational equity. This ethical concept emphasizes:

- A) The right of the current generation to use resources without concern for future generations.
- B) The responsibility of the current generation to ensure future generations have access to comparable or better environmental conditions.**
- C) The obligation to prioritize the economic needs of the current generation above all else.
- D) The idea that future generations have no claims on current resources.

15. In the context of the Torres Strait Islands, the ethical implications of managing fishing quotas involve considering both the livelihoods of local communities and the sustainability of fish stocks. An ethical approach would likely involve:

- A) Setting quotas solely based on international market demand.
- B) Collaborative decision-making between local communities, scientists, and government to ensure ecological and economic sustainability.**
- C) Ignoring local community input in favour of external management plans.
- D) Prioritising large-scale commercial fishing operations over traditional practices.