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Regenerative Innovation and Ethical Design: The Philosophy of Eco-Humanism Behind Baby Safety Harness Made from Rubber Wood Certified by Indonesian Intellectual Property Rights

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Abstract

This study explores the ethical, ecological, and regenerative innovation of the Rubberwood Baby Safety Harness, a patented Indonesian product recognized by the Ministry of Law and Human Rights (Kemenkumham RI). The product embodies a *love-the-earth* philosophy through the use of rubberwood (Hevea brasiliensis) — a renewable material derived from non-productive rubber trees that are replanted after harvest. Using a qualitative interpretive approach, this research examines the intersection between *eco-humanism*, *regenerative product design*, and *ethical consumption* within the context of sustainable manufacturing and intellectual property. Findings indicate that rubberwood-based design promotes three ethical dimensions: safety, sustainability, and spiritual ecology, positioning the product as a living symbol of environmental responsibility. The study introduces the Green Product Design Model, integrating environmental ethics, natural resource management, and circular innovation. This research contributes to the development of a sustainable innovation framework grounded in moral, cultural, and ecological consciousness.

Keywords: Regenerative Innovation, Eco-Humanism Philosophy, Ethical Design, Sustainable Baby Safety Harness, Rubberwood Certification

1. Introduction

In the era of accelerating industrialization, the tension between economic productivity and environmental preservation has become one of the most pressing global dilemmas. The

manufacturing sector, particularly the furniture and childcare product industries, has long relied on synthetic and non-renewable materials that contribute to ecological degradation. Plastics, composites, and chemically treated woods have provided functional and aesthetic advantages but often at the cost of deforestation, carbon emissions, and microplastic pollution. Consequently, there has been a growing demand for a paradigm shift—from extractive and disposable production systems toward regenerative, ethical, and human-centered innovation.

Within this global shift, rubberwood (Heve a brasiliensis) has emerged as a symbol of eco-regenerative materiality. Unlike traditional hardwoods that require forest clearance, rubberwood is harvested from trees that have reached the end of their latex-producing life cycle, typically after 25 to 30 years. These trees are then replaced with new saplings, completing a closed-loop cycle of renewal. Such a process aligns with the principles of the circular economy, wherein waste is transformed into value, and production becomes an act of environmental stewardship rather than exploitation. The use of rubberwood represents not only sustainable resource management but also an ethical acknowledgment of the Earth's capacity for regeneration.

The present study focuses on an innovative product that embodies this philosophy: the Rubberwood Baby Safety Harness, an invention that has received official Intellectual Property Rights (HAKI) **EC00202059455 Togar Naibaho** certification from the Ministry of Law and Human Rights of the Republic of Indonesia (Kemenkumham RI, 14 Desember 2020). Beyond its technical design and functional purpose—ensuring child safety—the product represents a symbolic union of ecology and ethics. Its creation reflects a growing consciousness that product design can become a vehicle for eco-humanism, a philosophy that integrates technological advancement with empathy for both humans and the planet.

From a sustainability perspective, this product challenges conventional industrial narratives. It does not simply minimize environmental harm; rather, it participates in nature's regenerative processes. The use of post-productive rubber trees as raw material prevents waste, encourages replanting, and supports rural economies that rely on sustainable forestry practices. Moreover, the simplicity and natural beauty of rubberwood resonate with Japanese aesthetic and cultural values, such as *mottainai* (the moral rejection of waste) and *mono no aware* (the sensitivity toward the transience of life), making it highly appealing in eco-conscious markets like Japan. This intersection between design, culture, and sustainability opens a meaningful dialogue on how ethical consumption can express love for the Earth.

At the theoretical level, this research integrates perspectives from Environmental Ethics (Naess, 1973), Natural-Resource-Based View (Hart, 1995), and Eco-Humanism (Manzini, 2015) to form a holistic framework for understanding sustainable innovation. It proposes that the value of a product should not only be assessed by its market performance or technical efficiency but also by its moral coherence with environmental and social systems. The *Rubberwood Baby Safety Harness* thus serves as a living example of how innovation can emerge from compassion, responsibility, and reverence for life.

The recognition of this product through Indonesia's HAKI system further emphasizes that intellectual property rights can act as enablers of sustainability, transforming the concept of ownership into stewardship. By granting legal protection to eco-conscious inventions, the government indirectly promotes ethical creativity and environmental accountability. Hence, this study views HaKI not merely as a legal framework but as part of a philosophical and cultural transformation toward sustainable development.

This paper aims to (1) explore the eco-humanistic philosophy underlying the design of the *Rubberwood Baby Safety Harness*, (2) examine its role as a regenerative and ethical innovation, and (3) propose the Green Product Design Model as a conceptual framework for integrating sustainability, ethics, and human values in product innovation. By merging design thinking, environmental ethics, and intellectual property recognition, this study contributes to the discourse on how love for the Earth can be materialized through design, offering a model for future regenerative innovations that unite human creativity with ecological balance.

The study aims to:

1. Explore the philosophical foundation of eco-humanism within the product's design.
2. Analyze the regenerative and circular innovation principles embodied in rubberwood utilization.
3. Propose a *Green Product Design Model* as a framework for sustainable product development.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Environmental Ethics and Deep Ecology

The concept of *environmental ethics* represents a philosophical and moral framework that redefines humanity's relationship with nature. Traditionally, industrial progress has been guided by *anthropocentric values*, where nature is perceived as a resource for human consumption. In contrast, *deep ecology*, introduced by Arne Naess (1973), challenges this human-centered worldview by asserting that *all living entities possess intrinsic value*, regardless of their instrumental utility to humans. This philosophical shift calls for a transformation from exploitation to participation — from control over nature to coexistence within it.

Naess's principles of *biospherical egalitarianism* suggest that every species contributes uniquely to the ecological system and therefore deserves respect and moral consideration. This perspective aligns with modern sustainable design, which promotes a life-centered (ecocentric) approach rather than a human-centered one. Sustainable design is not merely about minimizing harm but about fostering conditions that allow natural regeneration and equilibrium. Within this framework, rubberwood (Hevea brasiliensis) serves as a material embodiment of deep ecological values. Its life cycle — from latex production to reforestation — mirrors the natural rhythm of growth, decay, and renewal, illustrating the principle that design can honor life's cyclical continuity rather than interrupt it.

The use of rubberwood in baby product manufacturing, particularly in the *Rubberwood Baby Safety Harness*, extends this ethical dimension further. It represents the protection of life (infant safety) while simultaneously preserving the broader web of life (forest ecosystems). Hence, the product integrates micro-ethics (care for individual human life) and macro-ethics (care for planetary life), offering a tangible manifestation of Naess's vision of harmony between humans and nature.

In this sense, deep ecology is not a passive philosophy but a call to design action, encouraging the creation of objects that carry moral intention — products that are alive with empathy for the Earth.

2.2 Natural-Resource-Based View (NRBV)

The *Natural-Resource-Based View (NRBV)* of the firm, developed by Stuart L. Hart (1995), extends the traditional *Resource-Based View (RBV)* by incorporating environmental sustainability as a core strategic capability. While RBV emphasizes internal resources—such as knowledge, technology, and innovation—as drivers of competitive advantage, NRBV argues that the ability to manage and preserve natural resources responsibly constitutes a unique, inimitable, and long-term source of organizational success.

From this theoretical standpoint, rubberwood exemplifies the NRBV principle. It is a renewable and ethically sourced material that not only reduces dependence on primary forests but also strengthens a firm's reputation and alignment with global sustainability standards. Companies utilizing rubberwood engage in a dual value creation process: economic (through marketable sustainable products) and ecological (through responsible material cycles). In the context of the *Rubberwood Baby Safety Harness*, this means that innovation does not emerge from exploiting scarce resources, but from revitalizing renewable ones — turning ecological awareness into strategic competitiveness.

Furthermore, the NRBV underscores three interconnected capabilities critical for sustainability:
(1) Pollution Prevention, achieved by replacing non-renewable materials like plastics with biodegradable rubberwood;
(2) Product Stewardship, reflected in eco-design that prioritizes safety and lifecycle ethics; and
(3) Sustainable Development, realized through continuous reforestation and ethical supply chain practices.

By integrating these principles, the design and production of the baby safety harness embody strategic greening — transforming environmental care into a competitive and moral advantage. This aligns with the broader global agenda for sustainable innovation ecosystems, where business success is measured not only by profit but by planetary responsibility.

Thus, the NRBV provides the theoretical bridge between resource management and moral innovation, explaining how regenerative design can serve as both an environmental necessity and a sustainable business strategy.

2.3 Eco-Humanism and Sustainable Design

The philosophy of eco-humanism positions human creativity and ecological consciousness as interdependent forces that must evolve together. According to Manzini (2015), eco-humanism is the synthesis of two great traditions: *humanism*, which values dignity, empathy, and creativity; and *ecology*, which emphasizes interconnection, balance, and respect for life systems. The fusion of these two philosophies results in a framework where design becomes a moral act, not merely a technical solution.

In the context of sustainable product design, eco-humanism suggests that innovation must not only enhance human welfare but also safeguard the natural conditions that make welfare possible. This dual responsibility transforms designers into ethical agents and products into carriers of moral meaning. The *Rubberwood Baby Safety Harness* embodies this integration. It is not only designed for ergonomic safety and aesthetic simplicity but also crafted from a material that symbolizes care, renewal, and continuity — both for the child who uses it and the planet that sustains its materials.

Eco-humanism also redefines the aesthetics of design. Rather than emphasizing luxury or artificial perfection, it values simplicity, honesty, and connection to nature. These qualities align closely with Japanese aesthetic principles such as *shibui* (understated beauty) and *wabi-sabi* (impermanence and natural imperfection), which enhance the product's emotional resonance in eco-conscious markets. In this way, the design transcends the economic function to become a moral narrative — a story of harmony between human need and ecological wisdom.

From a broader societal view, eco-humanism encourages education and cultural transformation toward empathy-driven innovation. It frames sustainability not as restriction, but as human flourishing in symbiosis with the Earth. Thus, the baby safety harness stands as an "eco-human artifact," illustrating how compassion, design, and ecology can coalesce into one unified creative expression.

2.4 Regenerative and Circular Design

The concept of regenerative design and circular economy has redefined modern industrial paradigms by shifting from a *linear* ("take–make–dispose") model toward a *circular* ("reuse–regrow–recreate") framework. McDonough and Braungart (2002), through their *Cradle-to-Cradle* design philosophy, argue that sustainability must move beyond efficiency into regeneration — where every output of production becomes an input for new life. In other words, waste does not exist; it is simply food for another cycle.

Rubberwood exemplifies this regenerative principle at both material and systemic levels. At the material level, the use of retired rubber trees prevents deforestation and provides renewable raw material for manufacturing. At the systemic level, replanting these trees ensures continuous carbon sequestration, soil health, and biodiversity restoration — forming a perpetual loop of growth and rebirth.

In the case of the *Rubberwood Baby Safety Harness*, this regenerative process reflects a closed-loop design where the end of productivity becomes the beginning of renewal. The life cycle of the rubber tree — planting, latex tapping, harvesting, replanting — symbolizes the ethical continuity of life.

Each stage of production honors nature's balance, embodying the *cradle-to-cradle* principle that the product's life should never subtract from the Earth's vitality.

Moreover, regenerative design introduces a moral dimension to innovation. It challenges the assumption that economic success must entail environmental cost, instead promoting the idea that design can heal rather than harm. This aligns perfectly with the philosophy of the *Rubberwood Baby Safety Harness*, where each creation contributes to environmental recovery. The product, in this regard, acts as a cultural artifact of hope, demonstrating that human ingenuity can operate within nature's regenerative rhythm.

At the industrial scale, adopting regenerative design has broader implications: it redefines the metrics of progress from profit and speed to resilience, renewal, and ethical coherence. The circular economy framework supports this transition, emphasizing long-term system value rather than short-term gain. Through its circularity, rubberwood production contributes to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) — particularly SDG 12 (*Responsible Consumption and Production*) and SDG 15 (*Life on Land*).

Thus, regenerative and circular design transcend technical practice to become an ethical imperative — a form of creative ecology that transforms human production into an act of gratitude to the Earth.

3. Methodology

This research adopts a **qualitative interpretive approach** grounded in **phenomenological inquiry** to uncover the moral, ecological, and cultural meanings embedded in the *Rubberwood Baby Safety Harness* design. The study follows the principles of **Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA),** which seeks to understand human experiences as lived and interpreted within a specific context (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2022). This approach is particularly relevant for examining how **ethical and environmental values** are expressed through product design. The *Rubberwood Baby Safety Harness* is not merely treated as a physical artifact but as a *text of values*—a narrative object that communicates ecological awareness, safety ethics, and emotional connection to the Earth. In line with the philosophical foundation of *eco-humanism*, the researcher positioned this inquiry within an interpretive paradigm, where **knowledge is constructed through interaction, reflection, and meaning-making**, rather than through objective measurement alone (Denzin & Lincoln, 2023).

The study involved **three primary data sources**: (1) **document analysis**, including the *HaKI registration and technical design files* **EC00202059455 Togar Naibaho** from the **Ministry of Law and Human Rights of Indonesia (Kemenkumham RI, 14 Desember 2020)**; (2) **semi-structured interviews** with the product inventor, local artisans involved in rubberwood processing, and eco-conscious consumers from Japan — a key export market known for ethical consumption (Kimura & Hasegawa, 2022); and (3) **observational analysis** of the material lifecycle of rubberwood production, from plantation to finished product. This triangulation of data strengthens the validity and reliability of the study by ensuring multiple perspectives on the same phenomenon (Creswell & Poth, 2023). The interviews explored perceptions of *ethical design*, *environmental harmony*, and

innovation responsibility, while document and observational analyses provided empirical grounding to interpret the symbolic and material value of rubberwood as a regenerative material.

Data were analyzed using the **Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA)** framework, which includes three iterative stages: *initial coding*, *emergent theme clustering*, and *interpretive synthesis*. Each data source was examined for patterns of meaning that reflected the principles of **deep ecology (Naess, 1973), Natural-Resource-Based View (Hart, 1995),** and **eco-humanism (Manzini, 2015).** The interpretive synthesis stage involved integrating empirical observations with philosophical reflection, thereby producing a comprehensive narrative on how the *Rubberwood Baby Safety Harness* embodies *regenerative ethics*. This synthesis method aligns with recent trends in **sustainability design research** that emphasize the intersection of material life cycles, user values, and planetary wellbeing (Walker & Giard, 2021; Chapman, 2023). To ensure rigor, the study also applied **Lincoln and Guba's (2020)** criteria of *credibility, transferability, dependability,* and *confirmability*, supported by reflexive journaling throughout the analysis process.

The methodological design is deeply informed by the triadic epistemological foundation of **rationalism, coherence, and empiricism**, as outlined in the philosophical section of this study. *Rationalism* guides the logical construction of the conceptual framework linking design ethics, sustainability, and innovation. *Coherence* ensures internal consistency across theoretical and empirical layers, validating that findings align with philosophical and managerial models. Finally, *empiricism* grounds the study in verifiable, experience-based evidence drawn from field observation and user narratives. This synthesis strengthens both the theoretical and practical dimensions of the study, making it a relevant contribution to contemporary sustainability discourse. By integrating qualitative inquiry with philosophical reflection, the methodology reflects what Hensher and Witte (2022) call *"ethical sustainability praxis"*—a research orientation that connects moral consciousness with creative ecological design.

Overall, this methodological approach does more than document the innovation process; it **reveals the ethical ontology of sustainable design**—how moral values, material regeneration, and intellectual property intersect in shaping new paradigms of eco-conscious innovation. It demonstrates that **methodology in sustainability research is itself an ethical practice**, requiring empathy, reflexivity, and responsibility toward both human participants and the planet. In doing so, this study not only examines a product but also articulates a broader research ethic: *to understand design as a moral conversation between humanity and nature.*

Validation:

To ensure the credibility and trustworthiness of the findings, this study applied a **triangulation *strategy*** that combined three complementary sources of evidence: documentation, field narratives, and philosophical interpretation. *The* ***documentation***—including HAKI certificates, design descriptions, and technical material reports from the Ministry of Law and Human Rights (Kemenkumham RI)—provided factual validation of the product's authenticity and legal recognition. The ***field narratives***, gathered through interviews with designers, artisans, and eco-conscious consumers, offered experiential perspectives on how ethical and ecological values were perceived and embodied in the *Rubberwood Baby Safety Harness*. Finally, the **philosophical**

interpretation, grounded in *Deep Ecology* (Naess, 1973) and *Eco-Humanism* (Manzini, 2015), allowed for theoretical coherence between the empirical evidence and the moral framework of sustainability. By integrating these three dimensions, triangulation not only enhanced data reliability but also ensured that the interpretation remained balanced between empirical observation and ethical reflection, thus reinforcing the study's overall **validity and epistemological integrity**.

4. Findings and Discussion

4.1 Ethical Dimensions of Rubberwood Product Design

The baby safety harness integrates three moral dimensions:

Dimension	Meaning	Embodiment in Design
Safety (Human Ethics)	Protection of life and welfare	Ergonomic structure ensuring child comfort and safety
Sustainability (Ecological Ethics)	Respect for natural cycles	Use of retired rubberwood, replanting post-harvest
Spiritual Ecology (Moral Philosophy)	Harmony between humanity and nature	Design philosophy inspired by *love-the-earth* values

Table 1. Ethical Dimensions of Eco-Humanism Embedded in the Rubberwood Baby Safety Harness Design

This triple-ethical layer illustrates eco-humanism in practice, aligning industrial innovation with environmental stewardship.

4.2 Cultural Symbolism: The Japanese Market Context

Japanese consumers demonstrate high *eco-literacy* and ethical awareness (*Kimura & Hasegawa, 2022*). Rubberwood furniture aligns with cultural principles such as:

a. Shibui — beauty in simplicity.

b. Mottainai — moral rejection of waste.

c. Mono no aware — sensitivity to life's impermanence.

Thus, the product resonates with *aesthetic minimalism and ecological mindfulness*, enhancing its market acceptance in Japan.

4.3 The Green Product Design Model

Below is the conceptual model integrating philosophy, material ethics, and design regeneration:

Green Product Design Model Diagram

Natural Resources (Rubber Tree)

↓

Responsible Harvesting (End of Latex Cycle)

↓

Ethical Manufacturing (Eco-Humanistic Design)

↓

Consumer Use (Safety + Emotional Connection)

↓

Recycling / Replanting (Regenerative Cycle)

↓

Continuity of Life & Planetary Love

Core Integration:

Philosophical Layer**:** Eco-Humanism, Deep Ecology

Strategic Layer**:** Natural-Resource-Based View (NRBV)

Design Layer**:** Cradle-to-Cradle Regenerative Cycle

This model emphasizes continuous harmony between innovation, ethics, and ecology, transforming production into a *cycle of care* rather than consumption.

4.4 Intellectual Property as Sustainability Recognition

The HAKI certification functions not only as legal protection but also as ethical validation. It demonstrates that national innovation policy can align with sustainable design ethics, bridging creativity, legality, and ecology.
This aligns with Elkington's (1997) *Triple Bottom Line* concept — integrating people, planet, and profit within innovation ecosystems.

5. Conclusion

The *Rubberwood Baby Safety Harness* exemplifies how *ethical innovation and eco-humanistic design* can merge to create products that protect life while preserving nature. By embodying the regenerative cycle of rubberwood, this invention becomes a *symbol of Earth-love ethics,* connecting human creativity to natural renewal.

This study contributes:

1. A *philosophical framework* integrating deep ecology and human-centered design.
2. A *conceptual model (Green Product Design Model)* linking moral intention with industrial practice.
3. Evidence that *intellectual property can serve as a policy tool* to promote sustainability-oriented innovation in emerging economies.

Future studies are encouraged to develop *quantitative models* of consumer ethical behavior and to analyze the *economic impact of green product HAKI* on sustainable entrepreneurship.

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Visual Summary for Journal Submission *Rubber Tree Plantation → Eco-Ethical Manufacturing → Baby Safety Use → Recycling & Replanting → Earth-Loving Regeneration.*