

Environment and Sustainable Development: Overview of India

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ABSTRACT

Major environmental problems, that are in fact the manifestations of the degraded environments at global level include air and water pollution, loss of biodiversity, global warming and climate change and ozone layer depletion. The genesis of the above said environmental problem can be easily traced to the life styles and developmental processes during the industrial revolution. Such a close relationship between environment and development has now be realized globally. Not only scientists but every section of the society, rich or poor having become convinced with this relationship, are now engaged to find the solution of these environmental problems, and the approaches to manage the relationship between environment and development in a way that life standard of every human being on the planet improves with minimum damaged to the environment. Such a philosophy of coordinated process is also referred by same as sustainable development.

"Sustainable development has been described as development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs".

Challenges and Efforts

We Indians, has a long tradition of love, respect and reverence for nature. Historically the protection of nature and wildlife formed an ardent article of faith, reflected in the daily lives of people and also enshrined myths, religion, art and culture.

Development must be environmentally sound and sustainable without constraints to quality of life. Today several efforts are under way and seeds of such efforts and different directions in order to meet the challenges. These efforts have been made by common people, nongovernmental organizations, voluntary agencies as well as Government. We have already made a start to achieving the goal of sustainable development by making efforts,

- For sustainable life-support systems.
- To meet the challenges of urbanization and industrialization.
- For conserving biodiversity.
- For capacity building for sustainable development.
- To globalize the challenge of sustainable development.

Sustainable life-support system

Programmes were initiated to protect, reclaim and manage the land, water and the biological resource which support agriculture and animal husbandry. Land, water and biological resources are intricately linked to one another, and their proper management is vital to sustaining India life support systems. Land degradation is being checked through management of wind and water erosion, overgrazing and deforestation, pressure on fuel wood and fodder is being reduced through an increase in biomass

production undertaken by various Government and non-Government organizations and voluntary agencies.

Urbanization and Industrialization

This challenge is being met in different ways as follows:

Human settlement schemes to deal with the problem of urban slums. Steps are being taken by the National Commission on Urbanization, 1988 and Housing and Urban Development Corporation (HUDCO)

- Water act (Prevention and control of pollution) Act, 1974.
- Air (Prevention and control of pollution) Act, 1981.
- Environment (Protection) Act, 1986.

Conservation of Biodiversity

Ecosystem, species and genetic diversity is being conserved in following ways-

- Indian board of wild life.
- Conservation programmes-National Parks, Sanctuaries etc.
- Biosphere Reserves.
- National Bureau of Plant Genetic Resources (NBPGR), New Delhi.
- National Bureau of Animal Genetic Resources (NBAGR), Karnal.

Capacity building for sustainable development

To integrate environmental issues into development planning, initiative came our only from the Government but also equally from non-Government Organizations (NGOS) and individuals. India has a very active movement by NGOS in the area of environment with and impressively large number of them involved in rural development, creation of public awareness, tribal welfare and action against polluting industries.

India and the World (Global issues)

The global community must address the issue of global development in order to move towards an environmentally sound planet. With this spirit, India realized the need for international co-operation, bilateral and multilateral programmes in dealing with issues of environment and development. At the Government level, the Ministry of Environment and forest acts as a nodal agency for relation with international agencies like UNEP, SACEP, IUCN, World Bank, FAO, UNDP, SAARC etc. The Conservation, protection and improvement of human environment are major issues all over the world. Land water, air, plants, animal and other forms life are to be improved. The path to sustainability development leads through ensuring that every project, every activity every scheme and every policy should be progressively and environmentally friendly.

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