



GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT ISSUES, RECENT POLICY INITIATIVES FOR ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION AND SUGGESTIONS TO GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT ISSUES

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Abstract

The environment issue has assumed the status of global problem, mobilizing civil society organizations, media sector and government around the world from the last two decades. Human activity, urbanization and industrialisation have led to rapid deterioration of the environment. Rapid industrialisation of last 300 years has led to a major imbalance the environment. Among global environmental changes, climate change has proved to be structuring the debate in recent years, characterized as one of the main challenges of the global society at the entrance of the 21st century. The difference between average temperature today and during those ice ages is only about 5 degree Celsius and these swings happen slowly, over hundred thousand years. The research paper examines the likely impact of climate change on the global problem of land degradation. The cause of and processes involved in soil erosion are discussed together with other forms of soil degradation such as salinity and desertification. Some strategies for mitigating the impacts of climate change on desertification are examined. This research paper explained various global environment issues and recent policy initiatives by the government for environment protection.

Keywords: Global Environment Issues, Recent Policy Initiatives.

Introduction

Everybody on this earth lives in common environment and if any change in environment occurs it will not effect the particular place or person or community but also impact is overall because of the rapid industrialization of last 300 years has led to a major imbalance. In Eastern Europe, due to industrial development, emission of gases has increased in atmosphere which has caused acid rain, black rain in Himalayan region due to burning of petroleum in gulf countries, increased human activity urbanization and industrialization have led to rapid deterioration of the environment. The development discrepancies in different regions of the world a serious threat of our common global environmental issues that are:

Ozone Layer Depletion: Ozone layer is an undetectable layer of protection around the planet that secures from the sun's unsafe beams. Ozone layer in the stratosphere has maximum concentration between 23-25 kms from earth. It protects the surface of the earth from ultraviolet radiations of the sun. Ozone occurs in concentration upto 1.0ppm as compared to 0.05ppm in troposphere. Depletion of the critical ozone layer of the air is credited to contamination brought about by Bromide and Chlorine found in Chlorofluorocarbons (CFC's). When these poisonous gases reach the upper part of the atmosphere, they cause a gap in the ozone layer, the greatest of which the Antarctic.

Global Warming and Climate Change: The increase in earth's average temperature due to anthropogenic activities like deforestation, burning of fossil fuel, industrialization etc. which are responsible for GHGs. Carbon dioxide has maximum contribution towards global warming through water vapor have maximum potential among all GHGs. The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) defines climate change as a change of climate which is attributed directly or indirectly to human activity that alters the composition of the global atmosphere and which is in addition to natural climate variability observed over comparable time periods. Climate change is the primarily influence by the total stock of GHGs in the atmosphere and not only by annual GHG emission.



Land Degradation: The most important resource of India is land which is the base for agricultural production. After China, India is the most populous country in the world accounting for 16.7% of world population. While population grows, the land surface is fixed and only a certain proportion of it is available for cultivation. In the context of increasing human and animal population, the non-expandable land resources have to accommodate the competing demands for production of food, fodder, fiber, fuel, minerals, urbanization, non-agricultural land use etc.

Deforestation And desertification problems: Forests are often cleared by man for agriculture, timber, construction wood, firewood, raw material, paper etc. Forest and vegetation are very good soil binders and prevent soil from erosion both with water and wind. Soil erosion directly leads desertification. Desertification is defined as a process of land degradation and destruction of the biological potential of the land due to various factors including climate change and human activities. Earth's approximately 13204 million sq. km of terrestrial area is facing desertification due to management and overexploitation land resources for human activities such as overgrazing.

Biodiversity Loss: Biodiversity is the variability among living organisms and ecological complexes of which they are a part, including within between species and ecosystem. Human activities both directly and indirectly like fragmentation and degradation of land due to agricultural activities, extraction activities including mining, fishing, logging and harvesting, urbanization and industrialization are responsible for presently high rates of loss of biodiversity. Among species found India only 12.6% of mammals and 4.5% of birds are endemic, as against 45.8% of reptiles and 55.8% of amphibians.

Hazardous Waste and Toxic Chemicals: It is a bulk of which is generated by the industries including fabric and dyeing. Industry can cause environmental pollution and adverse health effects. Among all the industries thermal power plants contribute maximum to pollution as they produce smoke and fly ash. Fly ash is being used in making bricks, roads and tiles in small amount but disposal of this fly ash is a serious problem. To meet the demand for food grains, farmers use various types of fertilizers and other chemicals in their fields. Electronic devices such as cells, TVs, mobile phones, hair dryer, A.C, refrigerator, laptops and computers etc. consist of toxic metals like arsenic, lead, cadmium, chromium, mercury etc. Electronic waste is reused and recycled but during recycling, dismantling of electronic waste is done, liquid and atmospheric releases end up in water, soil and air pollution.

Human Health: The origin of human health concept occurred around 1840 in England as a consequence of industrial revolution and disease epidemic like cholera, particularly in slum areas. L.E.A Winslow in 1929 of Yale University was the first person to define human health. He says, "Humans or public health is the science and art of preventing diseases, prolonging life and promoting health and efficiency through organized community efforts for the sanitation of environment, control of communicable diseases, the education of the individual in personal hygiene, organization of medical and nursing". Services for the early diagnosis and preventive treatment for disease and the development of social machinery to ensure everyone a standard of adequate for concept changed and the state has the direct responsible for the health of the individual and named as 'Mother and Child health Services'. Environment has a direct impact on human health.

Recent Policy Initiatives for Environment Protection

Montreal Protocol: It aims to phase out HFCs by 2030. It came into force in 1989 and has been ratified by 197 parties. However, HFCs are not ozone depleting but have high global warming potential. India has recently launched (HPMP) Hydro chlorofluorocarbon phase out management plan stage II for 2017-2023. Recently India has accepted the request of United States and some other developed countries to work towards phasing out refrigerator chemicals known as HFCs that were mostly used in air conditioning, refrigerating and foam industry to cut production and consumption of ozone depletion substances to protect the earth's fragile ozone layer. India's refrigerator sector is likely to be adversely impacted as HFCs were its mainstay. They will have to



find an alternative (expensive) technology that too with a short time. India companies will be compensated for the costs involved in ensuring that these gases are not released. In order to reduce their undesirable impacts, India has to make a case for full compensation for India and other developing countries for the cost of technology transition and a longer time frame for this transition.

Paris Agreement: The Paris agreement is an agreement within the UN framework Convention on climate change (UNFCCC) dealing with greenhouse-gas-emission mitigation, adaption and finance. It will come into force by 2020 is not legally binding on countries to cut their emission. A long-term goal of keeping in global average temperature to well below 2 degree Celsius above pre-industrial level. To aim to limit the increase to 1.5 degree Celsius, since this would significantly reduce risks and the impacts of climate change.

Kigali Amendment: It amends the 1987 Montreal Protocol(MP). It was designed to close growing ozone hole in by banning ozone depleting coolants like chlorofluorocarbons. Thus, amended MP which was initially conceived only to plug gases that were destroying the ozone layer now includes HFC responsible for global warming. This move will help to prevent a potential 0.5 Degree Celsius rise in global temperature by the end of the century. It aims to phase out Hydro fluorocarbon, a family of potent GHG by the late of 2040s. Under Kigali Amendment, in all 197 countries, including India have agreed to a timeline to reduce the use of HFCs by roughly 85% of their baseline by 2045.

Convention on Biodiversity: The convention on biodiversity (CBD) was opened for signature at the earth summit in Rio Da Janeiro on 5th June, 1992 and entered into force on 29th Dec, 1993. It is an international legally binding treaty with three main goals are conservation of biodiversity, sustainable use of biodiversity, fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the use of genetic resources. Its overall objective is to encourage actions, which will lead to a sustainable future. With its three objectives, the CBD is often seen as the key international instrument of sustainable development. It has two supplement agreement -Cartagena Protocol and Nagoya Protocol. Cartagena Protocol is on biosafety to the convention on Biological Diversity is an international treaty governing the movement of living modified organisms resulting from modern biotechnology from one country to another. Nagoya Protocol on access to genetic resources and the fair and equitable sharing of Benefits Arising from their utilization to the Convention on biodiversity. Its objective is the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources, thereby contributing to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity.

Millennium development goals And Sustainable Development Goals: The concept of MDGs was born at United Nation conference. It has eight goals that all 191 UN states have agreed to try to achieve by the year 2015. The United Nations Millennium Declaration, signed in Sep. 2000 commits world leaders to combat poverty, hunger, disease, illiteracy, environmental degradation and discrimination against women. The MDGs established measurable, universally agreed objectives for eradicating extreme poverty and hunger, preventing deadly but treatable disease and expanding education opportunities to all children, among other development imperatives. The concept of SDGs was born at the UN conference on Sustainable development, Rio+20 in 2012. All the SD Summit on 25th Sep, 2015 UN member states adopted the 2030 agenda for SD, which includes a set of 17 SDGs to end poverty, fight inequality and injustice and tackle climate change by 2030 which includes no poverty, no hunger, good health, quality education, renewable energy, clean water and sanitation, gender equality, good jobs and economic growth, innovation and infrastructure, reduced inequalities, sustainable cities and communities, responsible consumption, Climate action, life below water, life and land, peace and justice, partnership for goals.

Conclusion and Suggestions

Global environment issues are a big problem all over the world. With million of different species that live in forest, deforestation is a major threat to their survival and a big conservation issue. It also increases the GHGs with in the atmosphere which leads to further global warming. Forests are cleared to make way for new humans,



which in turn makes more humans, you can see the problem. According to international data an estimated 18 million acres of trees are clear cut to each year to make way for new development and wood products, that is just under half of all the trees on the planet since the industrial revolution began. Human activities in past decades have raised serious issues related to the environment and its conservation.

Sustainability is the key to prevent or reduce the effect of environmental issues. There is now clear scientific evidence that humanity is living unsustainably, and that an unprecedented collective efforts is needed to return human use of natural resources to with sustainable limits. For humans to live sustainably, the earth's natural resources must be used at a rate which they can be replenished. Government should find GHGs substitutes such as HFCs. Our home and transportation could be major source of GHGs emissions. A certified home energy audit can help make our home more energy efficient. If we commute via biking, walking or public transportation we are doing our part to fight global warming, but if we must own a motor vehicle, consider trading in our gas guzzler for fuel-efficient hybrid or yet- go electric. We can support Rainforest Alliances and similar organisation stop using paper towels and use washable clothes instead, use cloth shopping bags and look at labels to make sure you only use FSC-certified wood and paper products. We can also boycott products made by palm oil companies that contribute to deforestation.

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