
Changing Environment And Sustainable Development

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Abstract

The industrial revolution marked a major turning point in Earth's ecology and human's relationship with their environment. The Industrial revolution dramatically changed every aspect of human life and life styles. The achievement of sustained and equitable development remains the greatest challenge facing the human race. There is growing need to explore the relationship between development and the environment. The environmental problems can and do undermine the goals of development. Strong environmental policies complement and reinforce development. It is often the poorest who suffer most, from the consequences of pollution and environmental degradation. Unlike the rich, the poor cannot afford to protect themselves from contaminated water, in cities they are more likely to spend much of their time on the streets, breathing polluted air, in rural areas they are more likely to cook on open fires of wood or dung, inhaling dangerous fumes; their lands are most likely to suffer from soil erosion. Policy reforms and institutional changes are required to bring about accelerated development and better environmental management. The obstacles are great. Nevertheless, the present time is unprecedented in its potential for change. We need to follow an energy efficient growth trajectory like catalyzing energy efficient problems, providing incentives for selling environment friendly products, scale up the addition of renewable energy particularly solar energy, promote environmental friendly urbanization, strengthen governance for sustainable development at local, national and international levels. At international level there is both a need and scope for regional and global cooperation in sustainable development.

Keywords- Changing Environment, Sustainable Development. Environment Issues and Policies.

Introduction

Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam is a Sanskrit phrases which means the "World is one family". The statement is not just about peace and harmony among the societies in the world, but also about the truth that somehow the whole world has to live together like family. It is the duty of every person to disseminate information regarding the cultural wisdom, contained within the pages of ancient scriptures so, that this wisdom can guide the present generation towards, addressing and pressing global problems. The industrial revolution marked a major turning point in Earth's ecology and human's relationship with their environment. The Industrial revolution dramatically changed every aspect of human life and life styles. The industrial revolution started in the mid-1700s in Great Britain when machinery began to replace manual labour. Fossil fuels replaced wind, water and wood, used, primarily for the manufacture of textiles and the development of iron making processes. These processes gave rise to sweeping increases in production capacity and had affect all basic human needs, including food production, medicine, housing and clothing. Not only did society develop the ability to have more things faster, it helped to be able to develop better things. These industrialization processes continue even today. And with the very same mechanisms and effects that brought about both the progress and the indelibility connected results of that progress to our ecology the good the bad and the ugly-Over the last 250 years, we are entering a

new era of sustainability. That is the next revolution. The 20th century an expansive era seemingly a time of jet planes, space travel and the Internet. The early years of 21st century have shown us the limits of our small world. Regional blackouts remind us that flow of energy we used to take for granted may be in a tight supply. We would be wise to remember that our ancestors put aside their short term interests so that we could enjoy natural national heritage, we have today. It is our patriotic duty towards future generations, to leave those resources and values in better shape than we inherited them, for which sustainable development is the main 'Mantra'.

Concept Of Sustainable Development:- "Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising, the ability of future generations to meet their own need".

-World Commission 1983

The concept of sustainable development has a wide depth. It is not limited up to environmentalists, but also it is connected with the economists, political scientists,

ecologists, politicians and decision makers. Today it is spread out in the political agenda of political parties and elections campaign. Sustainable development is considered present development with context to needs of future development. Over exploitation of resources creates many problems for future generation. In one hand it is directly connected with the developed economies and on the other hand, it is an integral part of the environment. It is our duty to return the bounties of nature in the same form as we had inducted.

Sustainable development emphasises the creation of sustainable improvements in the quality of life of all people through increases in real income per capita, improvements in education, health and general quality of life and improvements in quality of natural environmental resources. The achievement of sustained and equitable development remains the greatest challenge facing the human race. Despite good progress over the past generation more than one billion people still live in acute poverty. The essential task of development is to provide opportunities so that these people and the hundreds of millions not much better off; can reach their potential. But although the desirability of development is universally recognised, recent years have witnessed rising concern about whether environmental constraints will limit development and whether development will cause serious environmental damage-in turn impairing the quality of life of this and future generations. This concern is overdue. A number of environmental problems are already very serious and require urgent attention. Inadequate attention has been given to the environmental problems that damage the health and productivity of largest numbers of people especially the poor. This paper attempts to analyse the problems and prospects of sustainable development further more poverty and environment degradation.

Sustainable Development And Global Warming:- The achievement of sustained and equitable development remains the greatest challenge facing the human race. There is growing need to explore the relationship between development and the environment. The environmental problems can and do undermine the goals of development. There are two ways in which this can happen. First, environmental quality, water that is safe and plentiful and air that is healthy-is itself part of the improvement in welfare that development attempts to bring. If the benefits from rising becomes are offset by the costs imposed on health and the quality of life by pollution, this cannot be called development. Second, environmental

damage can undermine future productivity. Soils that are degraded, aquifers that are depleted and ecosystems that are destroyed in the name of raising incomes today can jeopardise the prospects for earning income tomorrow. It is need of the hour to explore the impact-for good and bad-of economic growth on the environment. There is need to identify the conditions under which policies for efficient income growth can complement those for environmental protection and identify trade-offs.

There are strong "win-win" opportunities that remain unexploited. The most important of these relates to poverty reduction; not only is attacking poverty a moral

imperative, but it is also essential for environmental stewardship. Moreover, policies that are justified on economic grounds alone can deliver substantial environmental benefits. Eliminating subsidies for the use of fossil fuels and water, giving poor farmers property rights on the land they farm, making nearly polluting state-owned companies more competitive, and eliminating rules that reward with property rights those who clear forests are examples of policies that improve both economic efficiency and the environment. Similarly, investing in better sanitation and water and in- improved research and extension services can both improve the environment and raise incomes.

But these policies are not enough to ensure environmental quality; strong public institutions and policies for environmental protection are also essential. The world has learned over the past two decades to rely more on markets and less on governments to promote development. But environmental protection is one area in which government must maintain a central role. Private markets provide little or no incentive for curbing pollution. Whether it an air pollution in urban centers, the dumping of unsanitary wastes in public waters, or the overuse of land whose ownership is unclear, there is a compelling case for public action. Here there may be trade-offs between income growth and environmental protection, requiring a careful assessment of the benefits and costs of alternative policies as they affect both today's population and future generations. The evidence indicates that the gains from protecting the environment are often high and that the costs in forgone income are modest if appropriate policies are adopted. Experience suggests that policies are most effective when they aim at underlying causes rather than symptoms, concentrate on addressing those problems for which the benefits of reform are greatest, the incentives rather than regulations where possible, and recognise administrative constraints.

Strong environmental policies complement and reinforce development. It is often the poorest who suffer most, from the consequences of pollution and environmental degradation. Unlike the rich, the poor cannot afford to protect themselves from contaminated water, in cities they are more likely to spend much of their time on the streets, breathing polluted air, in rural areas they are more likely to cook on open fires of wood or dung, inhaling dangerous fumes; their lands are most likely to suffer from soil erosion. The poor may also draw a large part of their livelihood from unmarked environmental resources i.e. common grazing lands or forests where food, fuel, and building materials have traditionally been gathered. The loss of such resources may particularly harm the poorest. Sound environmental policies are thus likely to be powerfully redistributive. Making decisions about some environmental problems is complicated by uncertainties about physical and ecological processes, by the long term nature of their effects, and by the possibility of thresholds beyond which unexpected or irreversible change may occur. New evidence that the impact of chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) on stratospheric ozone depletion is greater

than earlier thought, is a timely reminder of how little we know. Such uncertainties call for much greater attention to research and to designing flexible precautionary policies.

World Development Report 2001 also focuses its concern primarily on the welfare of developing countries. The most immediate environmental problems facing these countries are unsafe water, inadequate sanitation, soil depletion, indoor smoke from cooking fires and outdoor smoke from coal burning which are different from and more immediately life-threatening than those associated with the affluence of rich countries, such as carbon dioxide emissions, depletion of stratospheric ozone, photochemical smogs, acid rain, and hazardous wastes, Industrial countries need to solve their own problems, but they also have a crucial role to play in helping to improve the environments of developing countries. First, developing countries need to have access to less-polluting technologies and to learn from the successes and failures of industrial countries environmental policies. Second, some of the benefits from environmental policies in developing countries are the protection of tropical forests and of biodiversity, accrue to rich countries, which ought therefore to bear an equivalent part of the costs. Third, some of the potential problems facing developing countries are global warming and ozone depletion, in particular-stem from high consumption levels in rich countries; thus, the burden of finding and implementing solutions should be on the rich countries. Fourth, the strong and growing evidence of the links between poverty reduction and environmental goals makes a compelling case for greater support for programs to reduce poverty and population growth. Fifth, the capacity of developing countries to enjoy sustained income growth will depend on industrial countries economic policies i.e. improved access to trade and capital markets, policies to increase saving and lower world interest rates, and policies that promote robust, environmentally responsible growth in industrial countries, will all help.

Policy reforms and institutional changes are required to bring about accelerated development and better environmental management. The obstacles are great. Nevertheless, the present time is unprecedented in its potential for change. The growing recognition of the importance of environmental concerns, the rapid introduction of economic reform programs around the world, and the trend toward democratisation and participation in the development process all point in the right direction. The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) - the "Earth Summit" - in June 1992 has provided an opportunity for the world's nations to commit themselves to an agenda of reform. It is essential that the energies that have been unleashed by UNCED not be dissipated but rather be channeled toward addressing those environmental problems that most urgently threaten development.

Not every problem can be a priority for every country. Taking the view that the highest environmental priorities are those that directly affect the welfare of large numbers of people, it is asserted that the current environmental debate has paid too little attention to the problems of sanitation and clean water, urban air pollution, indoor air pollution, and severe land degradation. Damage to the environment has three potential costs to present and future human welfare. Human health may be harmed. Economic productivity may be reduced. And the pleasure or satisfaction obtained from an unspoiled environment, often referred to as its "amenity" value, may be lost. All are difficult to measure, but the third is especially so. "Amenity" includes values that range from those associated with recreation to those associated with deeply held spiritual views about the intrinsic worth of the natural world. The difficulty

in measuring it argues for much more public involvement in setting priorities. Since environmental problems vary across countries and with the stage of industrialization, each country needs to assess its own priorities carefully.

Strategies For Sustainable Development:

Two broad sets of policies are needed to attack the underlying causes of environmental damage. Both are necessary. Neither will be sufficient on its own. Policies that seek to harness the positive links between development and the environment by correcting or preventing policy failures, improving access to resources and technology, and promoting equitable income growth. Policies targeted at specific environmental problems: regulations and incentives that are required to force the recognition of environmental values in decision making.

Fortunately, many policies that are good for efficiency are also good for the environment. Policies that encourage efficiency lead to less waste, less consumption of raw materials, and more technological innovation. World Development Report 2002 described a set of "market- friendly" policies for development. These included investing in people through education, health, nutrition, and family planning, creating the right climate for enterprise by ensuring competitive markets, removing market rigidities, clarifying legal structures and providing infrastructure fostering integration with the global economy through promotion of open trade and capital flows; and ensuring macroeconomic stability..

All these policies can enable better environmental management. For example, improved education is essential for the widespread adoption of environmentally sound agricultural technologies, which are more knowledge intensive than conventional approaches. And freedom of international capital flows can facilitate the transfer of new and cleaner technologies. Two elements of this package are especially important; the removal of distortions that encourage too much resource use, and the clarification of property, rights.

But these "win-win" policies will not be enough. Also essential are strong policies and institutions targeted at specific environmental problems. Lessons for effective policymaking include the following.

- Trade-offs between income and environmental quality need to be carefully assessed, taking long-term, uncertain, and irreversible impacts into account. Carefully balancing costs and benefits is especially important for developing countries, where resources are scarce and where basic needs still must be met.
- Standards and policies need to be realistic and consistent with the monitoring and enforcement capacity and the administrative traditions of the country.
- Blunter and more self-enforcing policies are likely to be attractive in developing countries. Policies need to work with the grain of the market rather than against it, using incentives rather than regulations where possible.
- Governments need to build constituencies for change-to curb the power of vested interests, to hold institutions accountable, and to increase willingness to pay the costs of protection. Local participation in setting and implementing environmental policies and investments will yield high returns.

The costs of protecting and improving the environment are high in absolute terms, but they are modest in comparison with their benefits and with the potential gains from economic growth. Improving the environment for development may make it necessary to raise investment rates in developing countries by 2-3 percent of GDP by the end of this decade. This would enable stabilisation of soil conditions, increased protection of forests and natural habitats, improved air and water quality, a doubling of family planning expenditures, sharply improved school enrolment rates for girls, and universal access to sanitation and clean water by 2030. The costs of addressing global atmospheric issues would be additional.

Finding, implementing, and financing solutions will require a partnership of efforts among nations. Specifically:

- Improved know-how, new technologies, and increased investment are essential. Open trade and capital markets, the restoration of creditworthiness through policy reform and selective debt relief, and robust, environmentally responsible growth in the world economy will all be needed.
- The close link between poverty and environmental problems makes a compelling case for increasing assistance to reduce poverty and slow population growth and for addressing environmental damage that hurts the poor.
- High-income countries must play a major role in financing the protection of natural habitats in developing countries from which the whole world benefits. They must also assume the primary responsibility for addressing worldwide problems of which they are the primary cause.

Conclusion:- We need to follow an energy efficient growth trajectory like catalyzing energy efficient problems, providing incentives for selling environment friendly products, scale up the addition of renewable energy particularly solar energy, promote environmental friendly urbanization, strengthen governance for sustainable development at local, national and international levels. At local level management of resources requires participation of all stake holders. Also at the local level, strength democratic institutions generally lead to better and more sustained management of natural resources. To enhance effectiveness of people's participation in local governance, committees comprising of both elected and executive members of local bodies and representatives of comprising of both elected and executive members of local bodies and representatives of communicative groups must be formed. At national level Sustainable development is achieved through optimum gains from several variables rather maximising those from single one. This requires government departments, by convention sectorally organized, to work together or in some cases as a single multidisciplinary authority. At international level There is both a need and scope for regional and global cooperation in sustainable development.

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