



## **Inclusive and Sustainable Development in India vs. Environmental Protection: Issues, Challenges and Solutions**

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### ABSTRACT

Today, due to environmental destruction, a serious threat has arisen not only to the existence of mankind but also to the existence of the entire biological community. The way, in which the natural resources of the earth are being over-exploited behind the blind race of development, the existence of the coming generations has started to appear in danger. Natural resources are getting scarce to meet the needs of the ever-increasing population. Increasing pollution and climate change have made the problem even more serious. In this situation, the concept of sustainable and inclusive development has rendered the importance of environmental protection and alerted mankind to think in this direction and take necessary steps. Indian literature and culture have always been spreading the message of co-living with the environment, but as soon as we changed our life values under the influence of westernization, we brought an environmental crisis at our doorstep. Today, our country has chosen such a model of development in which there is neither any concern for environmental protection nor any sympathy for the coming generations. For not only India but the entire world to move forward in the direction of sustainable development, Babu has to inculcate in his mind that this earth can fulfill the needs of man but not his desires.

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## Research Objectives

1. To develop general awareness about the concept of sustainable and inclusive development.
2. To study the challenges and problems along the way to the concept of sustainable and inclusive development in India.
3. To present necessary measures and suggestions for resolving the problems in the way of sustainable and inclusive development.

## Introduction

The concept of sustainable development is not a new concept as human beings have been living life in harmony with nature since the beginning of his life. Nature has provided all the resources necessary for human beings to survive, such as food, water, shelter, clothes etc. This relationship of man and nature continued with some ups and downs until the beginning of the Industrial Revolution, but it began to deteriorate after the Industrial Revolution. Such a blind race for development started which created a formidable problem of environmental destruction. Unbridled exploitation of natural resources started in the name of development, due to which the environment and natural resources started getting destroyed. When the consequences of natural destruction in the form of climate change and global warming began to appear in front of the world community, it was forced to think about environmental protection and talk about sustainable development so that the coexistence man and environment was restored and save this environment for the generations to come.

## Discussion and Result

Talking about environmental protection and inclusive development in the context of India, then there is hardly any better example than India. India is a country with an agricultural economy and in the words of Gandhi, the soul of this country resides in our village. Mahatma Gandhi thought that if these villages were destroyed then India would be destroyed. Gandhiji had deep implications behind calling villages the soul of India. This idea was not his imagination but was based on his direct experience. The villages of India present a unique example of inclusive and sustainable development where even today man is living in symbiosis with nature. If studied deeply and objectively, then it is easily proved that our materialistic lifestyle is the only responsible for this destruction in environmental destruction. Gandhiji always opposed the excessively materialistic life because he knew that a highly materialistic life would lead to the pit of destruction of the environment as well as man himself. He said that nature can satisfy man's needs but not his greed. He wrote in 1931 that it is impossible to achieve the goal of environmental protection as long as mankind is engaged in the creation and continuous search for the means of material pleasures and comforts. The term "sustainable development" was first used in the 1970 Cuban Declaration of Cocoa. After this the word was used as a medicine for the problems of development at the national and international level. Sustainable development refers to the development that fulfills the needs of the present generation as well as ensures the fulfilment of the needs of the future generation. Under Sustainable Development, along with limited use of natural resources, special attention is given to their conservation, so that the coming generations can also benefit. According to this, the process of development should be such that the environment is not degraded and its conservation is encouraged. In 1987 the Brundtland Commission defined sustainable development as Sustainable development meets the needs of the person without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. That is, taking steps to meet the needs of the present population keeping in mind the needs of the population in the future is sustainable development. Growing with equal opportunities means Growth with Equal Opportunities is inclusive growth. In other words, development that not only creates new economic opportunities but also ensures equal access to such opportunities for all sections of the society. We can call that development as inclusive development

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when it ensures the participation and contribution of all the sections of the society. The basis of this process of development is equality in which the circumstances of the people are not taken into account.

It is also worth mentioning that inclusive development has to deliver basic amenities i.e., housing, food, drinking water, education, skill, development, health as well as means of livelihood to lead a dignified life to all sections of the population but such While doing this, we also have to pay full attention to environmental protection because development done at the cost of environment is neither sustainable nor inclusive.

### **Objectives of Sustainable Development**

There is a difference of opinion among countries, international community, conventions and institutions regarding the concept of sustainable development. Despite these differences, the main objectives of sustainable development are as follows:

1. To make arrangements for the primary needs of humans like bread, cloth, house, health education etc. in such a way that there is minimum degradation of the biosphere.
2. To preserve the environment and biodiversity for the future of mankind.
3. To work together for the sustainable development of the individual and the country.

Explaining the objectives of sustainable development, the Secretary General of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development warned that we are living educatedly on this earth, which is being seriously degraded, now we cannot live in this environment for long. Can't do any business for a long time. If we remain co-workers of this existence and continue on this process, then soon the treasures of our earth will be empty.

### **Sustainable Development and Environment**

The development journey of man and the use of his environment have a history. This association of man and environment is eternal. It is human tendency to develop continuously and environment is the source of development. Today the stage of human development has reached, whose main credit is to the environment. Hence development has an impact on the environment. In the 1992 Earth Summit held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, it was clearly recognized that there is a deep relationship between environment and development. Hence development has an impact on the environment. As long as this effect is limited or general, then it does not have a special effect on the ecosystem, but when it starts becoming denser and more extensive, then distortions start to occur in the ecosystem and its effect falls on the whole organism. But it is not possible to stop the development because of the environment. The need is that development should be given the right direction. In other words, the state of development is like that of an unbridled horse at this time, the need is that this unbridled horse should be given the right direction by putting a bridle on it. By giving the right direction to development, its adverse effects on the environment can be prevented. But this work will have to be done at the world level, the whole world will have to do it collectively, scientists, researchers, administration and the general public will have to cooperate together, only then there will be meaningful development. Although human intervention in the natural process has been going on for a long time, the rise and development of industrialization has increased both the speed and quantity of this interference to an alarming extent. Production through industrialization has doubled day by day and quadrupled, poverty, ignorance, disease have ended, prosperity has increased, but along with-it environmental pollution has also increased, which has caused serious damage to the biological system. Nature works in a certain order, if any of its components are tampered with excessively, then its balance is disturbed. Louis Thomas has called the earth a living cell and has described the environment around it as a shield to protect it, this defence shield is the environment which we have to protect.

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Poverty and underdevelopment due to excessive population in developing countries aggravate the problem of environmental pollution, whereas the problem of developed countries is aggravated by the process of development itself. The desire for prosperity and material pleasures generated by industrialization has increased the burden on natural resources and advancement in medical science has increased the burden on natural resources along with population by reducing the death rate. Ecological crisis has raised the question in front of the world today about what should be the right direction of development. Thinkers and philosophers have found the direction of development. This is called sustainable development, total development or maintenance development. It is related to the environment. There is harmony between development and the environment. A development in which the basic needs of human beings like food, clothes, house, health and education can be fulfilled.

Today, developed countries are putting enormous pressure on the environment and creating new problems not only for themselves but also for others. Population growth, industrialization and modernization have polluted the water sources. Due to the increasing noise of the metropolis, life is disturbed. Due to noise pollution, diseases like depression, stress, blood pressure, and heart attack are increasing. The problem of noise pollution in the environment has become acute due to festivals, fairs, celebrations, loudspeakers, motor vehicles, aircraft trains. Not only this, the environment has been polluted due to the use of nuclear energy, the Chernobyl incident of Russia, the fire in India's Narora plant in 1963, indiscriminate exploitation of forests. Green land is decreasing due to forest destruction, which results in soil erosion, erratic rainfall, floods and droughts.

### **Measures to achieve the goal of sustainable development**

Developments are taking place in various fields all over the world. The standard of living of the people is also improving, but due to this blind race for development, the environment and natural resources are getting affected. Therefore, there is a need for such development which can prove to be eco-friendly as well as help in the conservation of natural resources. This is possible only through sustainable development and for this the following steps need to be taken to achieve the goal of sustainable development-

**1. Use of alternative energy sources** – Under the concept of sustainable development, emphasis should be laid on the use of alternative energy sources like solar energy, wind energy, tidal energy, geothermal energy, bio gas etc. so that resources like coal and petroleum can be saved. Because one, this fuel is available in limited quantities on the earth and secondly, due to their excessive use, the danger of environmental pollution is also increasing day by day. Global warming and acid rain are also the result of excessive use of these fuels. In a country with an agricultural economy like India, there is a huge potential for biogas, all that is needed is proper infrastructure and management. By converting the post-harvest waste and cattle dung into biogas, alternative sources of energy can be created in rural areas.

**2. Water Conservation-** As a result of indiscriminate exploitation of underground water, the problem of water has taken a formidable form at the global level. If this situation continues, then the next world war will be for water only. To deal with the increasing demand for water, special emphasis needs to be given on rainwater harvesting as well as conservation and limited use of water. Apart from this, there is also a need to cover the vacant land with vegetation because vegetation encourages underground seepage by stopping the flow of rainwater, which maintains the ground water level. Rejuvenation and conservation of wetlands is the need of the hour for the stability of ground water level. In arid and semi-arid areas, water conservation can be done by adopting sprinkler and drip irrigation methods. A revolutionary step towards water conservation is interlinking of rivers. With this not only rain water can be conserved, but the water that is wasted in the sea can be transported to the

water scarcity areas. There is a need for a comprehensive action plan and study for interlinking of rivers so that the adverse impact on the environment can be prevented.

For water conservation, the traditional techniques adopted for water conservation will also have to be revived and the techniques adopted in Rajasthan in this area can guide the whole country. In addition to the traditional techniques, innovative techniques of water conservation will also have to be adopted and such a technique of construction work should be developed in the country so that the waste water during the rainy days is reserved through rainwater harvesting, its drinking water and other water in future. can be used for tasks.

**3. Fossil Agriculture Promotion-** Modern farming system based on chemical fertilizers and pesticides has caused maximum damage to natural resources like soil. On one hand the soil structure is being destroyed due to excessive use of chemical fertilizers, while on the other hand, the use of pesticides affects the activities of microorganisms which increase the fertility of the soil. As a result of all this, the fertility of the soil is adversely affected. For soil conservation under sustainable development, special emphasis should be given on fossil agriculture today, so that the use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides should be completely banned and soil conservation should be promoted from agriculture.

**4. Forest Conservation and Forest Planting-** Forests are very important natural resources which are the basis of our life. Indiscriminate deforestation not only destroys biodiversity but also causes problems like soil erosion, floods, drought, and decline in ground water level etc. We all know very well that forests are the main absorbers of carbon dioxide and the main source of oxygen, the life-giving gas. Forests are helpful in environmental protection. The reason for the increase in the temperature of the earth is the destruction of forests, which encourages the increase in temperature i.e., global warming. In order to achieve the goal of sustainable development, there is a need to emphasize afforestation along with limited use of forest resources so as to increase the forest cover as well as avoid the threat of climate change. Forest cover is an important factor in determining the climate on this earth and the more the forest cover of the earth, the more it will help in achieving the goal of inclusive development, preserving this environment and sustainable development.

**5. Conservation of wild life-** For achieving the goal of inclusive development, not only conservation of forest cover is necessary but conservation of animals living in forests is equally important. The construction works that are being done for the construction of dams, road construction, mineral mining, development of industries and tourism have resulted in the destruction of the natural habitats of many organisms. Many species of flora and fauna have either become extinct or are on the verge of extinction. Under the concept of sustainable development, there is a great need to promote the conservation of these endangered species so that ecological balance is maintained and future human generations can benefit from the benefits of nature.

**6. Environmental Laws-** It is very important to have effective laws and rules for the protection of the environment. It is also necessary to enforce these laws and rules forcefully and effectively to protect and protect the environment from being polluted.

**7. Establishment of Smart Village –** An important effort towards sustainable development and environmental protection is the establishment of Smart Village. India is a country with an agricultural rural economy. It is practically not possible to accommodate the entire country's population in cities. We have to provide the same facilities as the cities to the villages and establish smart villages on the lines of smart cities. Unless the vision of Smart Village is realized, achieving the goal of environmental protection and sustainable development is not possible in a country like India because our villages have

the ability to live their lives with limited resources that are eco-friendly. The establishment of smart villages will not only reduce the pressure on the cities, but it will also be possible to produce the necessary material for the nutrition of the cities. If cities are considered as a symbol of materiality and villages are considered as a symbol of spirituality, then it is no exaggeration to say that without the union of spirituality and materiality, development of anything is not possible. Especially when it comes to sustainable development, there is a great need for spiritual development because spirituality inspires us to live life with minimum resources where there is little need for materiality. But realizing the vision of rural development and smart villages requires a lot of political will and a high level of management so that the infrastructure in rural areas is developed in such a way that rural life also becomes dignified and convenient.

We all know that it is not easy to reverse the process of development but it is not an impossible task. Talking in the view of Gandhi, this work is possible only when a person learns to live with limited resources by sacrificing material cravings. The day this is possible, we will no longer need materialistic development, which is responsible for environmental destruction. Following the path of materialistic development inspired by western countries, achieving this goal of inclusive and sustainable development will remain a dream. We have to limit our needs and adopt a way of living with minimum resources. Similar efforts at the individual level will one day make this seemingly impossible change possible. The problems of poverty, unemployment, hunger in India have arisen as a result of this materialistic development because we have forgotten our rural areas in the race of materialism. We neither paid attention to the expected development of rural areas nor made active efforts to strengthen the economy of rural areas. In the context of India, in order to achieve the goal of inclusive growth and protection of the environment, its villages, rural economy, and traditional employment methods will have to be revived and infrastructure will have to be developed for their development.

Even after 7 decades of independence, more than a quarter of the country's population is still poor and they do not have access to basic amenities of life, in such a situation the concept of inclusive development in India has not really landed on the ground. Development depends on the balanced development of both rural and urban areas; it can also be seen as the first condition of inclusive growth. At present many other employment projects like MNREGA are effective and have helped the people to some extent but it cannot be called a permanent means of livelihood whereas there is a need for a permanent and long-term employment for the villagers. The experience so far is that in the rural areas other than agriculture, other alternative means of employment have not been created, even though many schemes of employment generation have not been run in the last decades. Apart from this, the infrastructural development in the village was also neglected, as a result of which a large number of people kept on migrating from the villages and people kept getting oriented towards the cities. Due to this the number of slums in the cities increased and most of the cities are unable to cope with the increasing pressure of population.

How ironic is it that the agricultural economy, which is called the backbone of India's economy, continued to weaken and the villages became deserted, on the other hand, haphazard urbanization strengthened in the cities and the basic facilities in the cities collapsed. Not only has this, due to the lack of livelihood, there been a flood of crimes in the cities. The reality is that there is no state in India where alternative employment opportunities are available in sufficient numbers from the agricultural sector. The government will have to provide active means for the development of agriculture through innovative experiments in agriculture. Emphasis will have to be given on increasing technology in the development of agriculture. Agriculture has to be made the engine of development of this country. After agriculture, there is a need to focus on tourism along with the domestic and cottage industries present in the state.

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## Conclusion

In conclusion, it can be said that even though India is making its mark as a fast-growing economy in the world and it is dreaming of becoming a superpower, it is also preparing to send rockets to Mars after the Moon. It is making its inroads but the main question is that unless the common man gets the basic amenities of life and he is not included in the mainstream of the nation, then it is possible that these achievements will not matter much. It has to be understood that at the time of attainment of independence, the population of the country was about 32 cores, today after passing more than 70 years; almost double the population is living below the poverty line, so the government has to give concrete shape to the Indian economy based on agriculture. It will also have to encourage investment in agriculture to connect farmers to agriculture, strengthen infrastructure in the sector and promote research.

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