

Social Issues and Environmental Change of Jammu and Kashmir in India

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Abstract

Since the beginning of human civilization, mankind has lived in a competitive relationship with nature. His relentless pursuit of progress, comfort and security was resulted in increased stress on environment, particularly since the industrial revolution. Consequently, the life sustaining environment has been forced to transform more rapidly than ever before. Human tendency to exert a negative influence on ecology has resulted into rapid increase in the greenhouse gases in the atmosphere, large scale deforestation, loss of biodiversity, severe land degradation and environmental pollution. The effects of these problems are global, so we call them as global environmental problems. The overall impact of Jammu and Kashmir these problems has been observed as – environmental change, climate change, depletion of ozone, a rise in sea level, changes in agricultural output and loss of biodiversity, ultimately leading to an ecological crisis capable of affecting the entire life and life support systems existing on our planet – Earth.

In the 1970s, philosophers began to formulate a new field called environmental ethics, a study concerned with the value of the physical and biological environment. The focus of this field of study is different from traditional ethical values, which simply meant moral values in the Jammu and Kashmir society.

Keywords :*Environmental change, climate change, ecological crisis, social security, Biodiversity*

Reference to this paper
should be made as follows:

Received: 25.12.2019

Approved: 31.12.2019

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*Social Issues and
Environmental Change
of Jammu and Kashmir
in India*

*RJPSSs 2019, Vol. XLV,
No. 2, pp. 284-289*

Article No.36

Online available at:

[http://
rjpss.anubooks.com/](http://rjpss.anubooks.com/)

Introduction

In the 1970s, philosophers began to formulate a new field called environmental ethics, a study concerned with the value of the physical and biological environment. The focus of this field of study is different from traditional ethical values, which simply meant moral values in the society. There are both practical and moral reasons for placing a value on the environment. They fall into six categories i.e. social issues, environmental change, utilitarian, ecological, aesthetic, and moral. The answer includes following three factors.

(i) New effects on nature : Because our modern technological civilization affects nature greatly, we must examine the ethical consequences of these new actions.

(ii) New knowledge about nature : Modern science demonstrates how we have changed and are changing our environment in ways not previously understood, thus raising new ethical issues. For example, until the past decades, few people believed that human's activities could be changing the Earth's global environment. Now, however, scientists believe that burning fossil fuels and clearing forests have changed the amount of carbon-dioxide in the atmosphere, and that this may change our climate. Hence we have emphasized a global perspective. The new perspective raises new moral issues.

(iii) Expanding moral concerns : Some people argue that animals, trees and even rocks have moral and legal rights and that it is a natural extension of civilization to begin including the environment in ethics. These expanded concerns lead to a need for a new ethic.

THE LAND ETHIC

The subject of environmental ethics further leads to a discussion of the rights of animals and plants, of nonliving structures, and of large systems that support our life.

The land ethic put forward by Aldo-Leopold in 1949 affirms the rights of all resources, including plants, animals, and earth materials, to continued existence and, at least in certain location to continued existence in a natural state. This ethic effectively changes the role of man from conqueror of the land to a protector of the environment. Ecological ethics limit social as well as individual freedom of action in the struggle for existence. A land ethic assumes that we are ethically responsible not only to other individuals and society, but also to the larger community that includes plants, animals, soils, atmosphere, and water that is to the environment.

The land ethic of Jammu and Kashmir puts man as steward of nature, with a moral responsibility to sustain nature for ourselves and for future generations. According to this view, wilderness has intrinsic value to be maintained for itself and because our own survival depends on it. Because our effects on the environment today have consequences for the future, environmental ethics also involve the rights of future generations.

Obligations to the Future

Another major concept in environmental change of Jammu and Kashmir is the responsibility of welfare of future generations. We know that modern technology is affecting the environment in such ways that these effects will last hundreds and thousands of year. Man produces chemicals that can remain active even for longer periods.

- Radioactive wastes from nuclear power plants.
- The environmental effects of thermonuclear war.
- Long-term climatic changes resulting from land-use changes and technological activities,
- The worldwide spread of non-radioactive toxic chemicals.
- Extinctions of large numbers of plants and animals.
- Rapid increase in human population.
- The destruction of forests and fertile agricultural soils, land.
- The long-term impacts of short-term technological benefits, such as the impact on natural systems caused by rapid advances in genetic engineering.

Role of an Individual of Jammu and Kashmir

Individuals can involve themselves in many ways in the process of improving the environment. Like any social and political movement, environmentalism consists of wide range of approaches. There is the conservative style of the nature conservancy, whose major function has been to conserve land and to ensure that these lands are maintained as natural reserves. At the opposite extreme is the radical activisms of organizations such as Greenpeace, whose activities have included protection of whales from poaching.

At an even deeper level, environmentalism encompasses a broad range of political and philosophical approaches. As emphasized throughout this text, environmental problems are in part the result of the large number of human beings on the Earth. This means that individual actions, summed over large numbers of people, can have great influence on the environment.

Given the wide range of environmental issues, a person interested in contributing to improving the environment faces a distressing situation in which of the many environmental issues should one participate. Our advice to individuals who ask this question is to choose one of the problems that has the most personal meaning and them to participate directly in solutions. Today, there are local organizations, or local issues of national organizations, in most parts of the developed nations that are concerned with a variety of environmental problems. People looking for a way to help can seek the organizations that takes the philosophical approach most consistent with their own and that focuses on the issues that have the best meaning to them many NGOs in India are working on different environmental issues.

Science, Technology and Environment

How valuable is the environment. The simplest answer is that a proper environment is essential to sustain all renewable resources – food, fibers, wood, air, water, and even ourselves and our own health. But, as the case study of the sea lion and steelhead trout demonstrates, people have placed many other kinds of values on the environment. The debate over its ethical value is as old as civilization.

Although our modern civilization has had many negative effects on the environment, we recognize that modern civilization has also made the environment more livable in many ways. With medical and technological advances, we have better health care, an increased standard of living that allows significant public health and sanitation measures, better control of parasites, such as mosquitoes (and of the diseases they spread), and better ability to protect ourselves from natural hazards, such as earthquakes, hurricanes, and tornadoes.

In the past few years, we have begun to learn how we can use our technologies to live in closer harmony with our environment than we have in the recent past.

Class of objectives

Agricultural

Socio-economic

Environment

Objectives

Maximize soil productivity, minimize costs of agricultural production

Maximize total employment in agriculture

Minimize input of nutrients per unit of acreage minimize input of nutrients per unit of product

Environment and Sustainable Development :

Mahatma Gandhi referred to a satisfactory society, long before we ever perceived the present meaning of environment, by saying that, “earth can provide

for all the needs of humans, but not for their greeds”.

Despite the fact that the term sustainable development has become common currency among many groups, it is a confused and sometimes contradictory idea and there is no widespread agreement as to how it should work in practice. The concept has developed in the international forum from a document called the World Conservation Strategy (IUCN/UNEP/w.w.f. 1980), which argued that three priorities should be incorporated into all development programme.

- Maintenance of ecological processes.
- Sustainable use of resources.
- Maintenance of genetic diversity

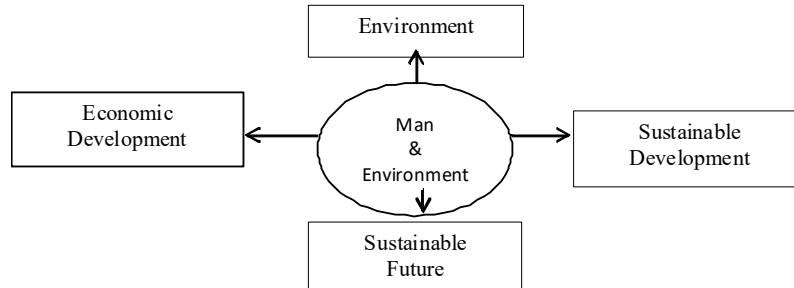
Sustainable development became popular after the world commission on Environment and Development (also known as the Brundtland Commission after its chair Gro-Harlem Brundtland of Norway) which was formed by the UN in 1983 and reported in 1987 (WCED 1987). The commission emphasized that the integration of economic and ecological systems is all-important if sustainable development is to be achieved, and coined a broad definition for sustainable development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (WCED, 1987”).

Conclusion and Suggestion

It is important to realize that sustainable development does not mean no human impact on the environment. Such a situation is impossible to achieve as long as there are people on the planet. The ideal situation to strive for is one in which all environmental impacts can be undertaken consciously, in the full knowledge of the costs and consequences, even though this situation is a long way off, not least because we still have much to learn about the operation of nature. And even when and if such a status is attained, accidents will still happen.

However, one of the central theme has been the need to change the ways in which socio-economic system work in order to reduce environmental impacts which feedback on the operation of society. The emphasis on economic growth, by which use of resources channeled through society, must be replaced by an emphasis on sustainable development the qualitative improvement in human welfare. There is no doubt that many modifications in society are necessary to achieve a globally sustainable future. Some suggest that the scale of alteration is comparable to only two other changes in the history of humankind: the agricultural revolution of the late Neolithic period and the Industrial Revolution of the past two centuries.

Environment



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