

Environmental Issues: Solutions & Conservations

Abstract

In order to survive on the planet of Earth, it is very important that the delicate balance between the human beings and their natural habitat i.e. the environment should not be disturbed. Unfortunately, the modern human being is trying hard to be the master of the natural world. Also human beings have been able to exploit natural resources in the eco-system with a power incomparable by any other living being. This exploitation has given rise to the Collapse of the natural self protective and self perpetuating mechanisms built into nature, a situation made even worse by a belief that human beings have the right to use the natural environment solely for their own benefits, without considering the consequences of their actions on the system. As a result we have invited a host of problems like ecological imbalance, environmental degradation, depletion of flora and fauna and deteriorating human health. Global Environmental issues are harmful aspects of human activity on biophysical environment of the earth. Major current environmental issues include climate change, pollution, environmental degradation and resource depletion.

Keywords: Environmental Degradation, Climate Change, Environmental Issues, Pollution.

Introduction

Environmental problems, which may have global impacts are complex and often interrelated with socio-economic factors. These problems, such as water and air pollution, generation of solid and hazardous waste, soil degradation, climate change and loss of biodiversity does not recognize political borders and pose major threats to human safety, health and productivity. Due to these threats to human future it is essential to address these problems.

Environmental Issues

There are major environmental issues that require urgent attention to make the ecology friendly.

Environmental Pollution

Environmental pollution is the introduction of contaminants in to the natural environment causing instability, disorder, harm and discomfort to the biotic and biotic organisms. Today environment pollution is one of the most serious problem facing humanity and other life forms of our planet. Various environmental pollution are- Air pollution, River pollution, Ground water pollution, Light pollution etc.

Disrupting Bio-Geo-Chemical Cycles

Climate Changes

Worldwide industrialization, Urbanization, increasing population have led to the increasing demand for the energy, which has adversely affected the climate conditions. Climate being the most environment variable on earth is getting warmer day by day. The global warming are becoming noticeable in countries which are known to have a cold climate. Extreme weather along the Argentina coast is killing chicks of Magellenic penguins. {7 Feb. 2014}

Green House Effect

The Green house effect is a natural process in which certain gases, known as "Green House Gases" trap the heat that radiates from the earth's surface. It is these gases who regulate the radiant energy balance on earth, thus making it habitable, but its increase i.e. enhanced green house effect as it actually taking place is feared to cause global climate changes of irreversible and highly destructive type. Nearly 20% of the climates warming green house emissions are due to deforestation that releases stored carbon back into the atmosphere.



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Ozone Layer Depletion

On the earth's surface ozone is a pollutant but in the stratosphere it forms a protective layer that reflect radiations back into the space, protecting us from the damaging ultra-violet rays. Several pollutants attack the ozone layer but chief among them is the chlorofluoro carbons (CFCS), Nitrous oxide from the fertilizers and pesticides. Scientists find that the protective ozone layer in the stratosphere is thinning. In the Antarctic Region it vanishes almost entirely for a few weeks every year.

Global Warming

This has been considered as the most pressing environmental issue. Global warming is necessitated by the ability of our ecosystem to respond to climate change due to compromised environment. Global warming has the effect of melting polar ice lands, displacing people from tropical and coastal islands and can ultimately threaten the survival of human race.

Loss of Bio-Diversity

The variety of life on Earth, its biological diversity is commonly referred to as biodiversity. The number of species of plants, animals and micro organisms, the enormous diversity of genes in these species, the different ecosystem on the planet, such as deserts, rainforests and coral reefs are all part of biologically diverse Earth. Many flora and fauna have productive, medicinal, consumption, commercial value for centuries. Coastal communities have used plants and animals of coral reefs for their medicinal properties. Coral reefs provide an environment for more than a quarter of all marine life and close to one third of the coral reefs have been damaged by human kind. Mining of ocean beds for petroleum, natural gas, magnesium etc. cause disruption of the ocean floor leading to loss of bio-diversity. Many species of plants and animals have been reduced to a critical number and are on the edge of extinction.

Depletion of Natural Resources

Mankind has consumed more natural resources over the past century than all earlier centuries put together. Rapid economic growth has led to depletion for renewable and non-renewable resources. So some extent the renewable resources can be managed by human efforts but the real tension is with the non-renewable resources, which once finished will take million of years to form. Resources such as fossil fuel, forest, fishes, healthy soil, many minerals are rapidly depleted and are in the danger of disappearing from the planet. 40% of the forests worldwide have been depleted since 1700s. Another depleted resource is the fishes. Fossil fuel is also a depleted resource. Three quarter of all our energy comes from fuel. A quarter of the plants fertile soil have been depleted by over use and misuse. Humans are using up plants raw material about 20% faster than they are being replenished.

Deforestation

Forest are an important natural resource. Besides enhancing the quality of environment and life support system forest plays a vital role in forest economy. Forests provide rubber, fruits, nuts, medicinal herbs, floral, greenery etc. Many

pharmaceutical companies obtain raw material from tropical forest for making drugs. But the reckless feeling of trees by humans for their ultimate ends has resulted in deforestation. Forest are burned, cut down for various reasons like cleaning of land for agriculture, for industries, for cities and many more.

Soil Erosion

Soil is a renewable natural resource, it plays an important role in the determination of quality and composition of the biosphere. In fact the biosphere develops over the soil and is not only a home for microbes but is also a source of nutrition for plants. All the growth activities are having direct impact on land. It has resulted in land degradation i.e. loss of fertility, loss productive capacity of the soil. No doubt soil erosion is a natural process but it becomes a problem when developmental and human activities cause it to occur at a much faster rate.

Water Degradation

In the modern world the quality of water is under threat for the fast growing population. The quality of inland water is under compromise from dumped industrial and chemical waste, untreated sewage, medicinal residues and fertilizers and chemical run off. The above activities worsen the already existing problem of water pollution. The increased use of underground water in coastal region results in the intrusion of salt water. Water wars are not becoming a reality.

Solutions

The key to solve our environmental problems also lies in our own hands. The problems can be properly addressed through co-operation amongst different countries, international organizations and civil society. The environment as a vital issue is a national resource too, is not only an important constituent but also the basis of national development. Unless the people are convinced that by protecting the environment their health and property can be safeguarded, all legislative administrative and judicial measures would remain futile environmental management must include public awareness, public participation, involvement of media and environmental justice.

Measure for Environmental Restoration and Conservation

Considering the extent of environment deterioration that has already taken place greater efforts should be made for the ecological restoration and conservation various measures includes:

1. Community participation and public awareness.
 - a. Social forestry
 - b. Joint Forest Management
 - c. Relevance of indigenous practices
2. Enactment and enforcement of Acts, Laws, Polices: International ban on ozone-destroying chemicals like CFC's have helped to reduce the loss of protective ozone.
3. Encouraging compulsory environment education at the school level onwards.
4. Regenerate renewable resources when ever and whenever possible like forests.
5. Adoption of eco-friendly ways of production and consumption like a solar plant, wind energy etc.

6. Strength investment on environmental conservation in the country's annual budget.
7. To set up pollution control devices which reduce pollution?
8. Proper sewage and wastage treatment techniques should be adopted.

Conclusion and Suggestion

1. Natural resources whether exhaustible or in exhaustible are an important component of economic growth. But these resources are likely to get exhausted in the near future leading to shortage of resources, so resources conservation is also important.
2. Minimize the wastage and not to leave the wastes the entire responsibility of the natural to decompose. Proper method should be devised for decomposition and disposal of wastage. It should be done by human efforts.
3. To introduce the concept of "Wastage Management".
4. To introduce the concept of 3R's-i.e. 'Reduce' and 'Reuse' and 'Recycle'. This should be followed by both producers and consumers.
5. Sustainable development is the immediate cure and not the ultimate one. Sustainable use of resources given enough time to the society to find ways out of the problem of depleting natural resource.
6. The environmental needs to be conserved and restored for its rich biological diversity, natural resource and aesthetic value and that the future generation inherit a quality environment with fair share of earth's resources.

The environment has mistakenly been understood as a 'Resource'. But it should be realized that it is neither a free gift of nature where resources freely flow for economic growth nor it is a sink for the deposition of waste products from the industries, houses and other sources. In fact, the environment needs to be viewed as a 'Capital' that is to be nurtured carefully.

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