

# India's Efforts towards Environmental Sustainability

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## Abstract

*Study of Environmental Sustainability with respect to India is become more important, because as per Environmental Performance Index -2018, India ranks 177 out of 180 countries. Here the, matter is not just for improvement in rank in performance index but of India, our present as well as coming generations. As India is one of the fastest growing economies of the world its rate of carbon emission is also higher in the world. This should be controlled to attain environmental sustainability through sustainable development.*

*Since independence, by formulating various policies and law the Govt. of India is taking many steps to attain this harder objective. Along with Govt. NGO, Social Activists and religious persons are also playing very important role. Here, the objective of this paper is to examine the effect of govt. policies and laws for achieving this goal.*

**Keywords:** Environment Sustainability, Sustainable Development and Efforts taken by GoI.

## Introduction:

For all living beings the survival on earth becomes possible only with the presence of

favorable environment. If we talk about environment the sum total of all surroundings of a living organism, including natural forces and other living things, which provide conditions for development and growth as well as danger and damage. Environmental Sustainability is a state in which the demands places on the environment can be meeting without reducing its capacity to allow all people to live well, now and in the future. Or a state which meets the human needs of the present, without compromising the ability of future generation to meet their own needs. We also can say it is guaranty to provide unlimited future.

Environmental Sustainability is harder and harder to achieve. All the components of environment as Atmosphere, Lithosphere, Hydrosphere and Biosphere have been damaged badly. Release of chemicals and particles in air are causing direct damage to the troposphere in term of air pollution. Emission of GHGs also is depleting the ozone layer. Deforestation and mining also cause loss of habitat of millions of species. Inadvertent and deliberate discharge of petroleum, improper sewage disposal, thermal pollution is a big threat for earth and aquatic life. As biosphere is result of all



three's confluence the damage of these is a unprecedented loss for environment.

**Objective:**

1. Importance of study of Environmental Sustainability

2. Global Initiatives
3. Steps taken by Govt. of India and its Impact
4. Present Status
5. Suggestions and way ahead

**Research Methodology**

Type of Research	Explanatory Research
Area	India and Major Global Conventions
Data Type	Secondary
Sample Type	Convention/Judgment

**Importance of study of Environmental Sustainability**

Survival on earth becomes possible only with a great synthesis of Atmosphere, Hydrosphere, Lithosphere and Biosphere which are essential components of environment. Even little bit change in any of the component create big problems, but the present situation is seems going out of control that is a big threat not only for present and coming generation of human being but for whole life on earth. Some horrible facts related to this are given below: Global warming is worldwide accepted phenomenon and consequently 2016 was the hottest year of the history.

Global sea level to rise by up to 1.2 meters despite Paris agreement, say scientists ([www.independent.co.uk](http://www.independent.co.uk)) some of the islands like Maldives are facing the sinking problem.

Failure of food crops also consequences of environmental change more negatively impact found on tropical areas, Saharan and

sub Saharan countries facing massive hunger problems. Productivity of agriculture land is decreasing even world's most fertile areas facing this problem.

Thousands of animal and plant species has been extinct from earth which was very essential part of our ecosystem.

Natural resources are becoming scarce. This is happening because of over exploitation and declining re-growth capacity of nature.

Reserves of ground water are decreasing all over the world. Recently Cape Town 2<sup>nd</sup> most populous city of South Africa is facing 'Zero Day' (There will be no water for supply after 9<sup>th</sup> of July, 2018)

600000 sq. km. of Amazon rainforest has almost been destroyed so far. During 1970, these forests were more than twice the size of UK.

**Global efforts to maintain Environmental Sustainability**

Some of the major Conventions of Parties mention below:

1. United Nation Convention to Combat Desertification, it is a strategic framework and most comprehensive global commitment to achieve Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) in order to restore the productivity.
2. Ramsar Convention for Conservation of Wetland, It is an international treaty for the conservation and sustainable utilization of wetlands, recognizing the fundamental ecological functions of wetland and their economic, culture, scientific and recreational values.
3. Long range Trans Boundary Air Pollution (Air Pollution Convention), it is intended to protect the human environment against the air pollution and to gradually reduce and prevent air pollution, including long-range Transboundary air pollution.
4. Minamata Convention on Mercury, it is an international treaty to protect human health and the environment from anthropogenic emissions and releases of mercury and mercury compounds.
5. Stockholm convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POP), its aim to eliminate or restrict the production and use of persistent organic pollutants which are harmful.
6. Rotterdam Convention for prohibition of Importation of Hazardous Chemicals, and use of it after proper labeling, including directions on safe handling and information purchases of any known restrictions or bans.

7. Vienna Convention, its aim to protect ozone layer.
8. Convention on the conservation of migratory species (Bone Convention), It is an intergovernmental treaty concluded under the aegis of the UNEP, concerned with conservation of wildlife and habitats on a global scale.
9. Basel Convention on the control of Transboundary movement of Hazardous wastes and their disposal.
10. Montreal Protocol, an international treaty designed to protect the Ozone layer in phase out manner.
11. Convention on biological diversity (CBD), conservation of biological diversity, sustainable use of its components and fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from genetic resources.

### **Steps Taken by GoI**

Traditionally and culturally India is a nature loving country. But increasing modernization and race of development imbalance the natural system, over exploitation of nature and natural resources tend India to take legislative measures. Some of them are given below:

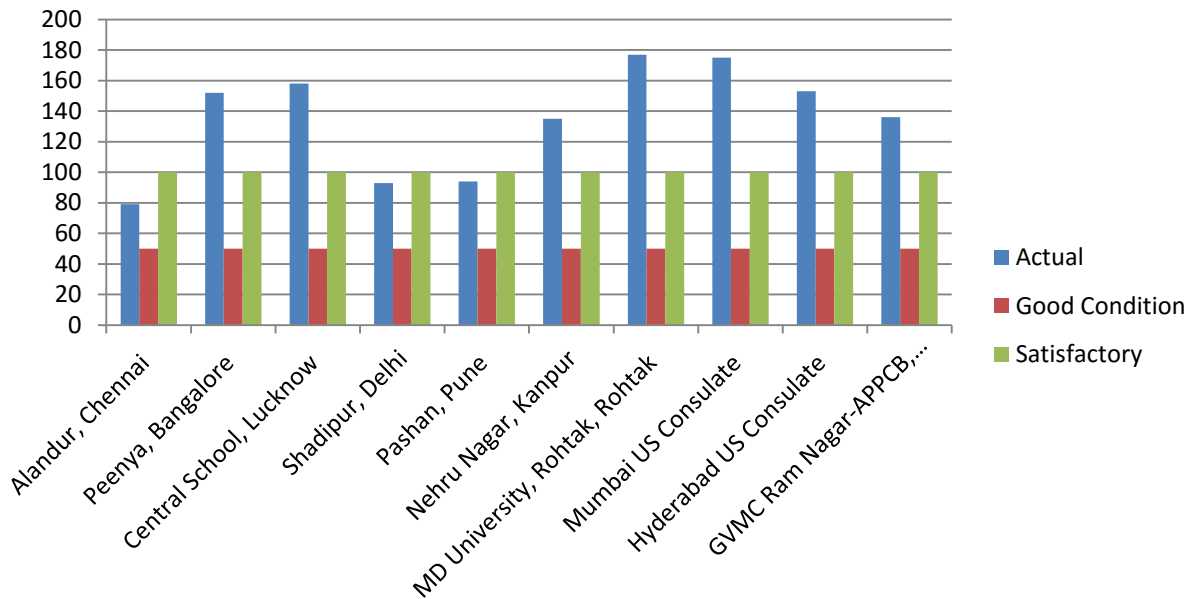
1. Wild life protection Act 1972: aim to formalization of national parks, wildlife sanctuaries conservation reserves and community reserves. Protection to habitat and wildlife with in premises of such protected areas. Development of National Board for Wildlife and State Boards for Wildlife for identification of future protected areas.

2. Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974: This Act prohibits the discharge of pollutants into water bodies beyond a given standards. Central Pollution Control Board also setup by this act.
3. Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution Act, 1981: To mitigate the problems associated with air pollution air quality standards were established,, under the 1981 Act. The Act also talks about the means; inspect pollution control equipment and manufacturing process of control the air pollution.
4. Environment protection act 1986, it is a legislation which signifies the central government's determination to take effective steps to protect the environment.  
Time to time central govt. issues notification under the EPA for the protection of ecologically-sensitive areas or issues guidelines for matters under the EPA:
  - Doon Valley Notification (1989), Restrict the consumption of coal.
  - Coastal Regulation Zone Notification (1991), Restrict waste dumping in water.
  - Dhanu Taluka Notification (1991), it is declared ecologically fragile region and setting up of power plant is restricted in area.
  - The Environmental Impact Assessment of Development Projects Notification, (1994 and as amended in 1997).
  - Ash Content Notification (1997): Thermal power plants cannot use the coal which has more than 34% ash content.
- Disposal of Fly Ash Notification (1999) Fly ash should be used in cement, concrete blocks, bricks and other construction material also.
5. The National Environment Appellate Authority Act, 1997 This Act establish a National Environment Appellate Authority to hear appeals with respect to restriction of areas in which any industry operation or process or class of industries, operations or processes could not carry out or would be allowed to carry out subject to certain safeguards under the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986.
6. Hazardous wastes: This deal with management of hazardous waste. These include:
  - Industrial waste: Manufacture, storage and import of hazardous chemicals and for management of hazardous wastes.
  - Biomedical Waste: proper disposal, segregation, transport etc. of infectious wastes.
  - Municipal Wastes: enable municipalities to dispose municipal solid waste in a scientific manner.
7. National Environment Tribunal Act, 1995: To give relief and compensation for damages to persons, property and the environment and for the matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.
8. National Environmental Policy, 2006: NEP is a response to India's national commitment to a clean environment.

Aim of the policy is conservation of critical environmental resource. Enhancement of resources for environmental conservation.

**Air Quality status** of 10 Major Cities of India. Here no city has good air quality. Only three has satisfactory conditions. If we talk about the top most polluted 50 cities of the world highest 22 cities of India is placed here.

### Present Status:



**Status of Agriculture land**, in India agriculture land is decreasing at the rate of 0.03 million hectare per year (30,000 hectare per year). It is alarming and serious problem for a country which is having 2<sup>nd</sup> largest population (1.3 billion) of the world.

**Status of Ground water**, The UN report had predicted that by 2025, nearly 3.4 billion people will be living in 'water-scarce' countries. As per the Ministry of Water Resources, India has 18% of the world's population but has only 4% of total usable resources. By 2025, India's annual per capital availability of water will further

reduce to 1,340 cubic meters and by 2050, to 1,140 cubic meters.

### Suggestions and way ahead:

1. Today it is needed to think globally but act individually.
2. Awareness and education among people should be spread about environmental degradation, its causes and consequences in future. But a thing always should be in mind it is practical subject not just to study in schools, college, seminars and campaigns.
3. Effective and efficient use of renewable energy should be at

priority rather than conventional sources of energy.

4. Focus should be on Reduce, Reuse and Recycle at mass basis.
5. Extension of forest covers.
6. How far possible there should be use of green packaging.
7. Set ambitious performance targets, and consider a rewards system which motivates everybody to get involved.
8. Wherever possible reduce business travels through the use of teleconferencing and video conferencing.
9. Reduce, Reuse and Recycle approach should be adopted.

**Conclusion:** How far we think environmental sustainability could not be achieved by only creating awareness and making laws in parliament. Because this is not, the byproduct of ignorance, if I am right a century ago or pre industrialization age people were more illiterate than of today but environment was more worth living. Environment threats are byproduct of industrialization, modernization and race of development. Now this race for development has become a threat for the race of mankind. This only can be solved by advance technologies in the field of energy, water harvesting efficient land use and conservation of biodiversity etc.

World should invest more for research and development for environmental sustainability than R&D for defense equipments which sure cause destruction of mankind rather than way of survival.

Sure, world will awake before late, otherwise the race for development will be destruction of race of mankind and this beautiful earth as well.

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