



Sustainable Improvement and Biodiversity

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Abstract: *Our nation is alive because it has been gifted with various natural resources like varieties of plants, animals, insects and all the living organisms that form beautiful biological resources. Preservation and sustainable development of these biological resources have been one of the most difficult tasks since early ages. People were unaware of their importance and were also unaware of their most of the uses. As the time has passed by, their multiple uses and qualities have been explored. Still nothing has ended. We are exploring and tearing down all these beautiful resources. We are not at all thinking about the life we are giving to our upcoming generation. It might happen that they will study about many of the natural resources in books but won't get to see them through their bare eyes. India has been gifted with a lot by Mother Nature but exploiting it has been the favourite part of so-called children of Mother Nature. Its preservation and sustainable development is in our hands. Various steps have been taken to achieve various goals that have been set up by our Nation. It's just not the concern of India. It's an international issue for which a lot of steps are to be taken. Various conferences took place. Convention for Biodiversity (CBD) was laid down in The Rio Conference, 1992. India was one of the first few countries who signed the CBD. "The Biological Diversity Act, 2002" was established in 2003. India was the one who defined goals that were to be achieved by them. Enacting an act was not sufficient. Fulfilling all the criteria and its proper execution will always be its main motive. Whether its motive will be fulfilled or it will be abandoned was our main concern. Study shows that it has always been neglected. Some goals might have been achieved but some are still being neglected.*

Keywords: Sustainable Development, Biodiversity, Biological Resources

I. INTRODUCTION

We live among different kinds of life forms i.e. the variety of animals, plants, fungi, and even microorganisms like bacteria. This is what we call as Biodiversity. These natural lives must work in balance to balance everything that surrounds us. Good Human health is important to live on earth. Similarly, Earth's good health is equally important for our life. Balanced biodiversity provides good and healthy life to our Mother Earth. It provides us with medicines, good quality food and all other living necessities. It helps us in generating good economy for our country. For example; we produce a lot of finished goods from raw materials which we get from Mother Earth like wood is used to make papers, houses, boats, etc and trees are used for making medicines which cure our lives.



II. WHAT IS BIODIVERSITY?

Term biodiversity is a short form of word “biological diversity”. In biodiversity bio means ‘life’ and diversity means ‘variety’. Altogether it is known as “variety of life”. Biodiversity in relation with biosphere works parallelly. If our biodiversity is good, our biosphere will be good. If it’s better, then our biosphere will be better. If it’s the best, our biosphere will be the best. But now our biodiversity resources are decreasing due to many reasons.

III. WHAT IS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT?

Sustainable Development is when you do not compromise needs of our future generation by fulfilling your present needs. When we look for Sustainable development, many questions occur in front of us. When poverty will be eradicated? When will the livelihood and standard of living be the best for our country? And the most important question that hits is: what is the best was to solve these issues? Answer to all this is: “Biodiversity”.

IV. INDIAN PERSPECTIVE

Our country is rich in biodiversity but we are still struggling for reaching at par with globalised world. Under UN Convention on Biological Diversity it was discussed about the biodiversity issues in which it has been stated that conserving biodiversity can only lead to sustainable development. If you harm your biodiversity, your world will be at greater risk. This is what we are doing at present. Putting our world into greater risk!

Nature has generously endowed our country. With only 2.4% of the world’s land area, India has 7-8% of the recorded species of the world, with over 46,000 species of plants and 91,000 species of animals. India is also an acknowledged centre of crop diversity, and harbors many wild and domesticated animals, fish and millions of microbes and insects.

We need to achieve the following goals for our mother earth:

1. Social and human development,
2. Ensuring availability of sanitization and water facility,
3. Providing nutritious food and improving standard of living,
4. Valuing parts of plants and animals that are used for medicinal purpose,
5. Ensuring economic well-being.
6. All forms of activities that lead to sustainable development of our biodiversity.

The life that we are expecting for our future generation can be provided only after achieving aforesaid goals.

4.1 In Comparison with Globalised World

Conservation of biodiversity was recognized in several conferences but efforts for its systematic constitution were taken in 1980s with the constitution of an “Ad hoc Working Group of Experts on Biological Diversity” in 1987. Foundation for conservation of forests under the Forest Principles and Conservation of Biodiversity under the Convention for Biodiversity (CBD) was laid down in The Rio Conference which was held in 1992. The CBD came in force on 29th December 1993.



Framework for the sustainable management and conserving world's natural resources was provided under the CBD.

India was one of the first few countries who signed the CBD and also made some ratification into the same. India's Biological Diversity Act was drafted in 2002 and was established in the year 2003. It provided us with combination of roles for the authority to ensure conservation and other related

issues which cannot be managed merely by invoking regulatory provisions.

Although various provisions have been laid down by our legislators; India lack at various levels. All time increasing population, agriculture expansion, industrialization, urbanization, large scale developmental projects such as dams, highways, mining lead to a lot of biodegradation and over exploitation of our biological resources. This doesn't ends here!

Illegal trade of high value wildlife and destruction of endangered species have severely threatened our flora and fauna. Greed for money has increased greed for natural resources that too Free of Cost.

Children of Mother Earth are stealing away all the precious properties and not even bothered to protect it for the upcoming generations.

Statistical Overview:

India is one of the 17 countries which exhibit great diversity of the world. It has only 2.5% of the earth's land area and contributes about 8% of the known global biodiversity. Assessment was carried out by the Forest Survey of India (FSI) and we get to know that the forest cover of our country is about 6,75,538km² and represents about 20.55% of India's total geographic area. India was recorded with 8% of the world's species which includes millions of races, subspecies and local variants of species. Currently a network of 668 Protected Areas (PAs) has been established in India, extending over 1, 61,221.57sq. kms. (4.90% of total geographic area), comprising 102 National Parks, 515 Wildlife Sanctuaries, 47 Conservation Reserves and 4 Community Reserves. 39 Tiger Reserves and 28 Elephant Reserves have been designated for species specific management of tiger and elephant habitats.

General overview:

We all know what our rights are. How many of us know about their duties?

From childhood we are given one general guideline: **'Do not harm anyone'**. Whatever it takes, one should not think of doing wrong with others. We teach our young ones the lesson of give and take because we find it to be our duty to provide them with good moral values. We tell them that if you are taking something from someone, you must learn to give something in return. Nothing comes free of cost!

Environment is giving us a lot, whether we consider wood, trees, animals or birds, we all know that we are dependent upon them. Totally! Now consider yourself in place of your young ones. Are you following the rule of Give and Take? Are you giving anything in return to our mother earth?

We all need to understand that consuming and only consuming and not preparing anything to consume in future will leave us bare handed. We might consume everything now but in future our



young ones won't be having anything to consume. How will we justify this to our future generation? Being elder, what example are we setting for our young ones?

For conserving our biological diversity, India enacted a landmark Act: 'The Biological Act, 2002'. It was enacted to make sure that people who are utilizing our biological resources and knowledge related to those resources must share access benefit arising out of those usages.

But for more than 15 years since its enactments, it was seen that its implementation was not carried on properly. In 2016, a case was filed in the National Green Tribunal to make sure that BDA is implemented properly.

Biodiversity Management Committees and People's Biodiversity Registers formation was improved due to the NGT order which was very important for the implementation of the Act. Still it has been stated that from among all the Environmental laws in India, Biological Diversity Act 2002 is that Act which is most underutilized one. It is a law that provides control over biodiversity, protects and recognizes it and its traditional knowledge, makes sure that biodiversity heritage is created all over India and makes assessment of the impact created by the ecologically destructive projects; but still it is not applied in a proper manner.

One day it was supposed to be taken into consideration and that day was not far away. The Biological Diversity Act (BDA), 2002 was disseminated to not let go the goals set in Biodiversity Convention which are as follows:

1. To conserve our biological diversity,
2. To use its components sustainably, and
3. To share benefits arising from genetic resources fairly and equitably.

To implement this Act, three-tier structure was organized. They were as follows:

1. National Biodiversity Authority (NBA) at the national level
2. State Biodiversity Boards (SBBs) at the state level and
3. Biodiversity Management Committees (BMCs) at local body levels

BMCs' primary responsibility is to document the local biodiversity and knowledge associated with it in the form of **People's Biodiversity Registers (PBR)**.

In 2018, in one of the landmark judgment held by Uttarakhand High Court it was stated that "Biological resources are the property of a nation where they are located geographically, but they are also property of the indigenous and local communities who have conserved it for us through centuries". The judgment stated that "Indigenous and local communities are the beneficiaries under the Act if they grow 'biological resources' or have traditional knowledge of these resources"

In July 2016, a petition was filed by an activist Chandra Bhal Singh who was from Pune stating that BDA 2002 must be implemented properly before the National Green Tribunal (NGT). After this, multiple orders were passed by NGT directing the Indian government's Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, the NBA and the SBBs for complying properly but the significant order was passed in the year 2018. Order was given by the NGT to comply with the constitution of BMCs and the preparation of PBRs within six months. They even directed the MOEFCC and the NBA to monitor the activities properly.

Looking towards the progress, by 31st January 2020, 100 percent compliance to the constitution of BMCs and preparation of PBRs was directed by NGT. They stated that if any of the state defaults



the directions they will be fined with Rs. 10 lakhs per month each after coming into force from 1st February 2020. The MOeFCC and the NBA were directed to continue carrying on with their task of monitoring the activities properly.

Some of them feel that rules are made to be broken. People having this mentality won't comply with such directions. Same goes with some of the states. Not every state follow rules properly. Some or the other way they fail in complying according to the directions. For such kind of states it was declared by the NGT that those states cannot be allowed to plead for their incompetency or inability for not carrying out what law mandated and where they ignore public interest.

People turning out to be an activist for Environment:

1. **Tulsi Gowdais** an Environmentalist. She is from Uttara Kannada district of Karnataka. She never received a formal education and yet, today, she is known as the "Encyclopedia of the Forest" as she is having vast knowledge of diverse species of plants and herbs. She has planted more than 30,000 saplings and has been a part of environmental conservation activities from approx. past six decades. She has been awarded with Padma Shri award which is fourth highest civilian award in India for her contribution to the protection of the environment.
2. **Dr Krithi Karanth** is an environmentalist. Her main aim was to bring human and wildlife together so that they can live peacefully. She works mostly in the Western Ghats where variety of flora and fauna is found. She has published more than 90 scientific and popular articles and a children's book.
3. **Jis Sebastian** is a conservation ecologist who fought for gender discrimination. She stayed in the forest all alone to promote environmental revolution. She has been working hard to preserve plants and animals.
4. **Nandini Velho** is a trained field biologist who made up herself for protecting the biodiversity of the world and save our planet Earth. She has made all her attempt to achieve her goal successfully. She is one of the face of modern conservation in India.

These are just few among all the economists struggling for saving our mother Earth. We have many of them but we want more of them.

CONCLUSION

Everyone living on this planet is surviving for their own personal motive. Their personal motive depends upon their economic status. Poor people are living to get at least what they deserve i.e. their basic needs. Middle class people earn to bring themselves good standard of living. Rich class people are living to get more from what they have. They explore more and more. No doubt that we have made a lot of discoveries because of exploring these resources. But now the time is different. Situation at present demands for development that do not harm needs of future generation. Development which bring hopes in our hearts. Hopes of giving our upcoming generation a beautiful tomorrow. The tomorrow where they won't be wandering for fulfilling their basic needs.

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