

# Multidisciplinary nature of Environmental Studies

Subject- Environmental Studies and disaster management

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By- Dr. Pawan Kumar Goutam

Department of Crop Physiology

Chandra Shekhar Azad University of Agriculture and Technology

Kanpur UP

# **The Multidisciplinary Nature of Environmental Studies**

1. DEFINITION, SCOPE AND IMPORTANCE
2. NEED FOR PUBLIC AWARENESS



## **DEFINITION :**

Environmental studies refers to the study of environment.

Environmental Studies deals with every issue that affects a living organism.

It is a multidisciplinary approach that brings about an appreciation of our natural world and human impact of its integrity. It is an applied science.

Environmental studies involves understanding human interactions with the environment. It requires an integrated approach to several disciplines of science and social approach.

OR,

It is a multidisciplinary academic field which systematically studies human interaction with the environment in the interest of solving complex problems. OR,

It is a broad study that includes the natural environment, the built environment, and the sets of relationships between them.

## **SCOPE:**

The scope of environmental studies is extremely wide and covers some aspects of nearly every major discipline.

We need to understand biology, chemistry, physics, geography, resource management, economics and population issues to understand all the different aspects of our environment.

Our dependence in nature is so great that we cannot continue to live without protecting the earth's environmental resources. Thus, our environment is refer to as *Mother Earth* by most traditions. Most traditional societies have learned that respecting nature is vital for protecting their own livelihood. This has led to many cultural practices that have helped traditional societies protect and preserve their natural resources.

Modern societies began to believe that the easy answer to the question of producing more resources could be provided by the indiscriminate application of technological invasions.

*For example: Growing more food by using fertilizers and pesticides, developing better strains of domestic animals and crops, irrigating farmland through mega-dams and developing industry. All this has led to rapid economic growth but this type of ill-considered development has inevitably led to environmental degradation besides several harmful effects as well.*



Our natural resources can be compared with money in a bank. If we use it rapidly, the capital will be reduced to zero. On the other hand, if we use only interest, it can sustain us over the longer term. This is called sustainable development. Thus, each professional in their field should strive to achieve sustainable development through their actions.

## **IMPORTANCE :**

Natural resources are all a part of our life-support system and without them life itself would be impossible. With the increase in population increases the use of quantity of resources used by each one of us. Our earth cannot be expected to indefinitely sustain this expanding level of utilization of resources.

Take actions in our daily lives for environment improvement

1. To clarify the idea that what is to be done in environment context.
2. To bring awareness and knowledge about environment in individuals and social groups.
3. To make them participate in solving the real time environmental problems.

## **SOME IMPORTANCE OF ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES:**

1. By learning the knowledge of environmental studies people will understand the concept “the need of development without destruction of the environment.”
2. It is useful in checking environmental pollution and related solutions.
3. It helps in maintaining ecological balances.
4. It helps to gain skills to assess the environmental impact of human activities. It will help to protect biodiversity.
5. It gives us basic knowledge of environment and associated problems
6. It helps to achieve sustainable development.
7. It helps to educate people regarding their duties towards the protection of environment.
8. The knowledge of environmental science will be applied to the study of agriculture which will be helpful to farmers.

## **NEED FOR PUBLIC AWARENESS-:**

As the earth's natural resources are rapidly utilized and our environment is being increasingly degraded by human activities or anthropogenic sources, it is evident that something needs to be done. We often feel that managing all this is something that the Government should do. But if we continue to endanger our environment there is no way by which government can perform all these clean up functions.

It is the prevention of environmental degradation that must become a part of all our lives. Protecting our environment is economically more viable than cleaning it up once it is damaged.

It is possible only when public are aware about the ecological and environmental issues. For example; Ban the littering of plastics (polythene) cannot be successful until the people understands the environmental implications of the same. Public should understand about the fact that if we degrade our environment we are harming ourselves. It is the duty of an educated people to educate others about the adverse effects on environment. Everyone needs to make aware and motivate each and every individual for environmental consciousness.

Thus, individually we can play a major role in the management of environment which can only be possible through public awareness. Mass media such as newspapers, radio and television strongly influence public opinion. We can reduce the wastage of natural resources through proper functioning. We can act as watchdogs that inform the government about the sources that lead to pollution and degradation of the environment.

Several Government and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) are working towards environmental protection in our country. They have created a growing interest in environmental protection and conservation of nature and natural resources.

## **INSTITUTIONS IN ENVIRONMENT:**

1. Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS), Mumbai.
2. Botanical Survey of India (BSI), Kolkata
3. Bharati Vidyapeeth Institute of Environment Education and research (BVIEER), Pune
4. Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), New Delhi
5. Centre for Science and Environment (CSE), New Delhi
6. Centre for Environment Education (CEE), Ahmedabad
7. Ministry of Environment and Forest (MoEF), New Delhi
8. Environmental Information System (ENVIS)
9. World Wide Fund for Nature-India (WWF-I), New Delhi.
10. Wildlife Institute of India(WII), Dehradun
11. Zoological Survey of India (ZSI), Kolkata
12. Salim Ali Centre for Ornithology And Natural History ( SACON), Coimbatore.

## **PEOPLE IN ENVIRONMENT:**

- 1. Salim Ali :** Our country's leading conservation scientist and influenced environmental policies in our country for over 50 years. He wrote several great books including the famous Book of Indian Birds. His autobiography, Fall of a Sparrow should be read by every nature enthusiast.
- 2. Indira Gandhi:** She played a significant role in the preservation of India's wildlife. During her tenure, India gained a name for itself by being a player in the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) and other International Environmental Treaties and Accords.
- 3. Medha Patkar:** She is known as one of the rural India's champions. She supported the cause of the down-trodden tribal people whose environment has been affected by dams on the Narmada River. She has been a central organizer and strategist for Narmada Bachao Andolan (NBA), a people's movement organised to stop the construction of a series of dams planned for India's largest westward flowing river, the Narmada.

### **Sunderlal Bahuguna:**

He was the noted Garhwali, Uttarakhand environmentalist and Chipko movement leader. The idea of Chipko movement was of his wife Vimla Bahuguna and the action was taken by him where the effort was to save areas of trees and forests from cutting by forest contractors. He coined the Chipko slogan “Ecology is permanent economy” and is one of his contribution to the cause and to the environmentalism in general. He was awarded Padma Vibhushan Award by Government of India for environment conservation and Right Livelihood Award for Chipko Movement.

### **MC Mehta:**

He is India’s most famous environmental lawyer. Since 1984, he has filed several public interest litigations supporting the cause of environmental conservation. His most famous and long drawn battles supported by Supreme court include protecting Taj Mahal, Cleaning up Ganga River, banning intensive farming of shrimps on the coast urging the government to implement environmental education in schools and colleges and a variety of other conservation issues.



**Thank You**