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**ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT**

INTRODUCTION

The talks of 'environment' is not something new, it has evolved long back during the early 1970s and since then it has become a strong worldwide issue and many moments have started for the protection of the environment.

"Environmental Protection always starts with the protection by humans".

Environment Protection is the practice of protection of the natural environment by any individual, organization and governments. The only objective of environment protection is to conserve the natural resources by protecting the existing natural environment in every way possible by opting any sort of possible repair or by reserving the previously adopted trends.

But these days due to the advancement of the technologies and the fancy lives of people, the demand of overconsumption of goods and services, rapidly

increasing population, the pre existing environment is degrading and the degradation is so fast that there might be very high chances that the upcoming generations would not be able to see the current environment through their own eyes (although the current environment is not that good, it is already destroyed by the people living in the society, but if this kind of ‘abusing of the environment’ continues, then our kids will not be able to witness even this environment.)

A few sensible people have recognized these issues and governments of many countries have started raising their voices against environment degradation and have implemented laws for its protection (mostly by imposing heavy fines.)

Since the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals in 2015, we can see connections between the environment protection (and development) and sustainable development for the welfare of the mankind without any distinction.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Sustainable Development is the organizing principle for meeting human development goals while simultaneously sustaining the ability of natural systems to provide the natural resources and ecosystem services on which the economy and society depends. The simplest definition of sustainable development can be stated as – meeting the current needs of the people, without compromising the needs of the future generations.

Types of Resources:

- 1) **Renewable Resources** – Renewable resources are capable of natural renovation into useful products (within a time span). This resource has the potential to renew and be indefinitely available.

For example, water, air, soil, etc.

- 2) **Non – Renewable Resources** – Non – renewable resources are available only in a finite amount (or their renewable rate is very slow, which is nearly negligible) which amounts it to be available in a fixed quantity.

For example, minerals, fossil fuels, etc.

- 3) **Extrinsic Resources** – Extrinsic resources are available with the possible extrinsic. These resources are prone to breakdown, but if we want to continue using it then the proper management is really important.

For example, wind, tidal energy, geothermal energy, etc.

- 4) **Continuous Resources** – Continuous resources are available generations after generations and these resources are neither renewable non renewable, it is just that they do not stay in a fixed place (fixed location), they keep on moving in different locations with the influential factors of the environment.

For example, wind, water, tides, etc.

Bortelmus, 1986 – The concept of sustainable development has made society conscientious and in the same time, recognized the role and importance of environmental factors as well as of the functions and the services the environment provides.

The Sustainable Development Goals are also known as the ‘Global Goals,’ which were adopted by 170 member countries by the United Nations Member States in 2015 to protect and safeguard many roles in the welfare of the society (these goals were adopted worldwide for the welfare of the entire world for the betterment balance of socio, economic and environment) with the pledge to leave “No One Behind” by 2030.

The SDGs have the target to bring the life changing things in the lives of the people with the inclusion of - Zero Poverty, Zero Hunger, Zero Discrimination against anyone (including girls and women) and every country is spreading hands to achieve targets like these and many others.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

In total there are 17 Sustainable Development Goals adopted by the United Nations, which are as follows:

- 1) **No Poverty** – The current scenario of the world’s that is faced by the mankind is that to eradicated poverty in all its forms, but even today millions of people are facing problems to fulfill their basic needs of the life like - food, cloth, shelter, education and health.

Countries like China and India have suddenly emerged as the two biggest populations of the world and due to this; there is an uneven distribution of economy amongst the nations. 80% people living in South Asia and Sub Saharan Africa are living in extreme poverty; lacking clean drinking water, sanitations, etc.

As per the researchers conducted, it is seen that, women are poorer than men because of lack of equal pay for equal works, lack of education and even lack of employment.

- 2) **Zero Hunger** – Personally, I believe that this target is not on the right target to achieve its goals; with the population of the world being 7.8 billion (2020) and that too countries like China and India being the biggest population makes it impossible to eradicate hunger from the world. On daily basis, nearly 690 million (9% of the world population) people around the world cannot afford food even for two meals in a day. Almost 135 million people suffer from acute hunger and on the other hand, common people are wasting food and even celebrities are spending lakhs on money in their weddings and personal functions for providing food to their gusts and in the end it goes wasted.

Food is the basic necessity of survival of the mankind. Without food the body will lose its strength and eventually the person will become weak and the starvation will lead to the death.

- 3) **Good Health and Well Being** – The scenario of 50-100 years back, it can be seen that the immunity of the human body has increased a lot and the research and vaccine development has lead to the increase in the life of the human expectancy.

For example, there was vaccine for polio, malaria, but today we have the vaccine of these life-threatening diseases.

Talking about the current scenario of COVID – 19 also, we can see that, even without the vaccine, people who are good with their immunity are able to fight back with the Corona Virus, which proves that, in comparison to the previous 2-3 decades the life expectancy has increased, the infant mortality rate has decreased, but still there is lack of ‘good health and well being’ in the developed and developing nations.

- 4) **Quality Education** – The only goal of Quality Education is to provide a balanced set of education to the children of every society, so that in future with their skills they can help in developing the welfare of the economy of the country, which in returns provide better standards of living.
- 5) **Gender Equality** – Gender Equality is important for empowering the women in the nation. It is necessary for the welfare of the left-out women to come out of their homes and lend a helping hand in the growth of the economy and establishing peace.

If we see the results of the past few years, we can observe there is less number of girls from school and college dropout, women are seen in almost every sector of men, reservations in government jobs is provided for empowering women, strict laws are established for protecting women from crimes, child marriage and sati pratha have been abolished completely.

- 6) **Clean Water and Sanitation** – Clean water and clean sanitation are two of the most common fundamental rights that every human being should be provided with, because water is the most essential part of the survival of the man and without clean water the health of the human would start degrading. Same is the case in clean sanitation and hygiene, without cleanliness of the surroundings the human body will be prone to infections and diseases.

Talking about the current scenario of COVID – 19, the governments all over the nations is asking its people to maintain clean surroundings and to keep

themselves clean so that they are not prone to catch infections of Corona in any form possible.

- 7) **Affordable and Clean Energy** – As we know that most of the population of the world still lives in dark and that's what the goal of Sustainable Development is to provide every person with clean and affordable electricity and in the past 16 years the number of people with electricity has increased drastically.
- 8) **Decent Work and Economic Growth** – The goal of every nation is to be economically strong and every nation aims to achieve it so that the GDP (Gross Domestic Product) of the country is maintained and people of the nation can maintain a decent standard of living and attain themselves with the minimum requirements of life (food, cloth, shelter, health and education) and to achieve the same decent work to every person is to be assigned according to the skills, ability and interest.
- 9) **Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure** – Creativity of the new thoughts and ideas is to be encouraged and the government needs to allow businessmen to invest in establishing more industries in the country so that the quality of products being produced can improve and infrastructure will support the economic development and human well being.
- 10) **Reducing Inequality** – “Leaving no one behind,” that's what the motto of Sustainable Development is that to take everyone together and to leave no one behind in the era of development. In the world we can see

inequalities taking in 'n' number of ways, like the inequalities of gender, race, caste, class, religion, community, etc. and the most common victims of inequalities are either women or the poor people.

The current corona scenario also shows the same scenes, the poor people (mostly the labour class) are being hit hard due to loss of jobs and same are the case with women and kids; people being locked up in their homes are becoming frustrated and which eventually leads to violence on children and women in the house.

- 11) **Sustainable Cities and Communities** – Mobilizing cities and communities clearly stands for the development of the urban areas of the country, by 2050 2/3rd populations would have started living in the cities. So, it is important for the countries to start working on the development of the cities to provide the best facilities for its people, which would eventually lead to the development of the nation.
- 12) **Responsible Consumption and Production** – It basically talks about consuming and producing things in such a way that the needs of the current generation are fulfilled without destroying the needs of the future generation.
- 13) **Climate Action** – These days due to the advancement of technologies, globalization and industrialization every country is facing climatic changes. The emission of greenhouse gases is increasing at a drastic way and so is the depilation of the ozone layer, which in return is just increasing 'Global Warming.' Every country is now coming forward to join hands for the protection of the environment.

- 14) **Life Below Water** – On an average, 3 billion people depend on the marine life and water biodiversity for their survival. Oceans are very important as oceans absorb 30% of the carbon dioxide produced by the humans, but since the establishment of the industrialization and globalization we can see an increase of 26% rise in the ocean acidification. This SDG aims to protect the oceans and life below water from pollution and exploitation.
- 15) **Life on Land** – As the oceans are important for humans, in the same way land is also very much essential for the survival of the humans. On land plants provide food for a very large population on the earth, 30% earth is covered with forests, which is a shelter for millions of animals and species. But again, due the needs of the humans the forests are being cut down, which causes loss for the biodiversity and illegal exploitation of the animals too. Hence, to protect the life of these flora and fauna important steps are to be taken.
- 16) **Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions** – The Goals of Sustainable Development cannot be achieved with the establishment of ‘Peace and Justice’ and for this ‘Strong Institutions’ are required for fulfilling the human rights and effective governance. Crimes, human exploitation, human trafficking, torture, conflicts between nations should be stopped and people should start focusing on the advancement and betterment of the economy of their nations.
- 17) **Partnership for the Goals** – The overall goals of Sustainable Development can be achieved only with the help of the ‘Partnership and

Cooperation' of the nations in each other development, because without the cooperation of ever country improvement is nearly impossible.

MEASURES

The people living in the societies needs to realize the importance of the environment and needs to take steps for the development and safeguarding of the environment. Hence, below are some of the measures mentioned which we can take in or day to day life and they can help in protecting the environment:

- 1) **Reduce, Reuse and Recycle** – These are the most basic and simple steps which we have been taught from a very young age for the protection of the environment. These are the 3 “R’s,” which can be followed for reducing, reusing and recycling of the products in our day to day life.
- 2) **Clean Surroundings** - Cleaning up the surroundings, by throwing garbage in the right kind of dustbins, according to the type of waste, whether it is a recyclable waste or a non recyclable waste.
- 3) **Education** – Everything begins from knowledge and education, if we know the ways and values of the environment and the resources, then we will be further able to teach others its value and importance and in all together everyone will unite.
- 4) **Conservation** – Conservation is the most important part; conservation of resources, water, minerals, soil, everything is important for the survival of the humans, because humans wants are endless and our lives depends directly or indirectly on the environment.
- 5) **Avoid plastic** – Plastic is non biodegradable and we should avoid using it because it remains for years and years and keeps on damaging the environment and its surroundings. Even before throwing away and

plastic product (even a plastic bag) we should reuse it as many times as possible.

- 6) **Save energy** – Conservation of energy is also very important, because electricity is produced with the help of other resources present in the environment and if we are wasting electricity then in a way, we are also wasting the other resources. Simple way of doing it is by turning off the electricity when not in use and using the natural light (sunlight) as much as possible.
- 7) **Save Trees** – Planting and saving trees should be made as a law in every citizen's life, because without the trees human survival is impossible as trees provides us with oxygen and take back the carbon dioxide produced by us.
- 8) **Chemical waste management** – The chemicals produced by the industries should not be directly disposed off in the water bodies or in the landfills, rather industries should take care that these waste products are reduced to the minimal amount of pollution, so that they do not harm the environment and people living in there.
- 9) **Use of Public transports** – For the protection of fossil fuels, people should start walking for short distances and should even avoid using private transport as much as possible and start using public transport, so that even the amount of pollution is also reduced in the environment.