

Sustainable Growth and Climate Change

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Abstract: -

Sustainable growth is the progress path which needs to be adhered to achieve developmental objectives without compromising the resources. The Sustainable growth cannot be achieved with commitment of Countries globally. The act to comply is not just limited to individuals but it requires major policy decisions to enforce strict norms for resource utilization. What started with Earth Summit is formulation of Millennium development goals followed by Paris Convention which scripted Sustainable development Goals and most importantly its implementation. Climate Change is a consequence of resource exploitation and thus alternate energy sources and policy are required to address Climate Change.

Introduction

Growth is a phenomenon which every individual experiences. Growth is something which we admire and aspire for. However, what essentially needs to be considered is growth comes at a certain cost. Growth is something which isn't independent of resources. To grow we have to deploy resources, and this causes gradual depletion of the resource. Growth leads to development however it has a characteristic of eroding the resources. Times immemorial the key ingredients of our existence that is our planet earth and its environment our solar system and the ecosystem around it is showing rapid transformation in terms of industrialization. The Era of industrialization can be marked from beginning of 1860 to 1900 where the growth has substantially caused exploitation of various natural resources for human benefits thus leading to depletion of essential ingredients of survival.

Thus, came in existence the call for sustainable Development. The cause of exponential industrial growth doesn't come without eating away our natural resources. For rapid industrialization emerged a requirement for land which led to deforestation. For running industries energy is required which led to consumption of fossil fuels and the rapid pace is such that nonrenewable energy sources may come to verge of extinction towards the end of this century. For infrastructure development again the requirement of land and then for operational purposes power is required on recurring basis. Population explosion is another factor which has fueled the requirement for infrastructure development.

Sustainable Growth

All the above factors come at the cost of depletion of our natural resources and gradually this is leading towards extinction of the same. Also, the impact is not just limited to any specific country or region, but it has a global effect. The resultant outcome of the rapid industrialization is the change in worldwide weather phenomena. Global warming is the key concern among them. The question arises if growth and industrialization is causing such a harm then can we do away with it?

Growth is a necessity for accommodating the inhabitants; however solution evolves with the measures of Sustainable developments. What Sustainable development means is growth without compromising the resources available. A simple example is mining of rare earth metals and minerals are essential, for this we have to essentially do deforestation however once the metals are mined the land needs to be again forested. Alternatively, we have to deforest a 1 Square km area then we should ensure to do a forestation of 1 square km area too. Thus, with this practice at least we give back our generations a status quo of our green environment. Of course, rare earth minerals and metals stands are consumed.

Thus, what sustainable development means is to evolve with measures to replenish the resources exploited for growth. The pace of replenishment needs to be at a much higher rate vis a vis the consumption of these resources. The reason being we are also required to make up for the lost time and

the exploitation done in previous years which have gone unaddressed. There are often arguments made that the planet is gradually ageing and there is natural depletion and there are natural cycles and ways in which the planet recovers itself. Although this is true and nature has its own course of recovery and maintaining its balance however the Human added aggravation has caused the rapid consequential damage. Global warming is a collateral damage of rapid growth.

The responsibility of sustainable growth is not limited to individuals. The call requires a unanimous commitment of all individuals and nations to bring in policy changes and target sustainable growth. If this would have begun in 1900 probably individual efforts like putting off the lights to reduce power consumption. Individual efforts of forestation. Lesser consumption of fuel of nonrenewable nature etc. would have appeared sufficient. However, in today's scenario the need to act is not limited to individuals. Neither individual act may suffice the requirements of replenishment of depleted resources.

Milestone: Paris Convention

It's time when global leaders and developed nations join hands with other countries to lead with example. 2015, the concept of Sustainable development was recognized by 195 nations in Paris convention. At the 21st Conference of parties these countries joined hands to sign climate change agreement and agreed to jointly take action against Climate Change post 2020.

It wasn't that prior to 2015 the world was unaware about the growing concerns over climate change, in 2000 the millennium development goals(MDG) were set however in 2015 the MDG were replaced with SDG i.e. Sustainable development goals. New milestones were set, and commitments were accorded to achieve sustainable developments. In fact 17 new SDG and 169 targets were accorded by the various countries of the world.

The 2015 Paris convention was followed by Morocco convention with an urge of implementing the decisions made in Paris agreement. Actions speak louder than words and the focus was to emphasis on additional efforts and necessity for implementation of the rules drafted in the Paris convention. To understand the impact and necessity of climate change Climate scientist observed that climate change would necessarily lead to global warming. What it means is compared to preindustrial era the temperature is likely to increase by 2 degrees Celsius. The Target that has been set in 2020 is to maintain global temperature at 1.5 degrees.

The targets accepted by Indian Government in this parlance are to reduce the Carbon emission of 2030 below the level of Carbon emissions of 2005. Carbon emissions are a major cause of depletion of Ozone layer. Which causes the Greenhouse effects i.e. keep our earth warm. Certain amount of Green house effect is must as this keeps the warmth of earth intact however the excessive emissions of carbon will read to depletion of Ozone layer thus eventually retaining more heat to earth thus increasing overall temperature leading to global warming. The Targets adopted by Indian government may appear ambitious but sincere efforts made towards the reduction of same may help in achievement of these goals which are also a necessity.

India also has taken a lead in setting up a solar alliance of nations falling between the tropics. 121 nations have joined the league to focus on development of solar energy as a renewable energy source. The Alternate energy sources readily available are solar energy / wind energy / water energy etc... the alternative energy sources are those which can replace our traditional nonrenewable energy sources like Coal / petrochemicals etc. These traditional energy sources are rich in carbon content and thus lead to higher carbon emissions. The only way to contain this phenomenon is by developing alternative energy sources.

To discourage the use of fossil fuels and other nonrenewable energy sources Government should also consider Carrot and Stick model that is incentives the users of Green energy by subsidizing the effort and make it accessible and affordable while tax and levy for the users of nonrenewable energy users. Carbon Tax is a term introduced by Canada which has become the first country to levy 20 dollar on Carbon emission.

Thus from 2020 we see lot of government projects to penetrate into Electric vehicle and subsidize the segment. This technology is a win-win for both the consumers and the industrialist. As the mobility of

individual is not affected and they get a solution affordable to their pocket. Thus, the Electric vehicle segment has seen a rapid growth over the years.

Similarly various government projects do focus on preservation of land and forest. Reforestation is made compulsory for all mining activities. Also, the focus is to utilize the captive resources and develop wind and solar power plants to meet the power supplies of the developing states. These again are economically beneficial as the input cost of raw material is free to air. Only the one-time installation cost for commencement of operations is required.

Climate Change

The biggest challenge to deal with is the growing concerns of Climate Change. Climate Change is basically misunderstood as Global warming alone. However, to rightfully understand the scenario Climate Change is not limited to warming alone. Climate change means extreme weather temperatures. i.e the Cooler lands might face severe downfall in temperature and the warmer Zones may see the higher temperature.

Also global warming to common understanding in an increase in temperature of 1 or 2 degrees Celsius. Now to understand the severity of this situation we have to understand what this rise of 1 or 2 degrees may do. A substantial part of earth is covered with water that is sea. And our poles are covered with glaciers. If there is a rise in temperature the glaciers are certainly going to melt leading to excessive flow of water to oceans. Thus, leading to flooding of inhabited land.

An individual may think that he is fit and can absorb 1 or 2 degrees of additional temperature. The severity of temperature is not limited to a rise in temperature alone. A 35-degree temperature with 100% humidity can prove fatal to an individual as the heat liberated by body may not get absorbed by environment as the humidity is already 100%. Thus, the impact of global warming in no circumstances can be taken lightly.

Conclusion

The combined efforts of government and individuals are the only way out for sustainable development. It's our responsibility to take care of mother earth rather than just exploiting it. Development has to happen and thus resources will get exploited however it's equally essential the progress comes not at cost of extinction. The alternate energy sources and its early adoption is the only choice we have. It's time to act and let's begin to act rather than be sorry.

References:

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