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Impact of man on environmental degradation

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Abstract

There is no doubt in denying the fact that the deterioration of the environment through the depletion of some resources like soil, water and air is generally known as environmental degradation. It also includes abnormality in ecosystems, extinction of wildlife, pollution and habitat destruction. It is one of those threats which are time and again threatening the existence of mankind in the contemporary society. It can be witnessed in many ways like when the natural habits are destroyed or the natural resources are depleted. To save the environment is the biggest need of the hour which includes environmental resources management.

Keywords: Pollution, environment, degrade, resources, change, process

Introduction

Without any shadow of doubt, we can perceive from our observation that environmental change is a continual and gradual process that is taking place since the origin of man's life on this earth. Since then, dynamic system of energy and material transfer have operated on a global scale to bring out gradual and sometimes catastrophic transformations of the atmosphere, hydrosphere, lithosphere and biosphere.

Man is no longer the product of his environment, he is also its transformer and creator. In fact, human beings have been an ecological dominant since their emergence on the earth. Man, in other words, has been interacting with his physical environment right from the primeval stage of human development and continues to do so even in this age of space technology with greater vigour. With the advance in science and technology the frontiers of knowledge have expanded beyond the cosmic space and environment of the earth has been transformed beyond recognition. People in their increasing numbers and technological skills have placed their imprints upon the natural landscape and environment.

Human beings must always have been concerned with their environment since it was their immediate surroundings that provided the resources necessary for survival. For pre-historic and pre-literate times the only testimony to this lies in pre-historic cave paintings. These cave paintings, depicting the pictures of aurochs, sheep, goats, horse deer and dogs give an idea about the wildlife, erstwhile environment and man's relationship with his surroundings.

There are number of agents which contribute to environmental changes and processes and are very complex. During the last two or three million years, the major agents of environmental change have been climate and humans both directly affect the process operative in environmental system. We are familiar with the fact that all natural systems are in a state of dynamic equilibrium. Most environmental systems, however, have both resilience and resistance to change and it may be that positive feedback occurs over such a long time period, that change is gradual and imperceptible.

Causes of climate changes

Fluctuation and changes in climate occur both spatially and temporally, the causes of which are a source of considerable speculation and controversy. External factors such as changes in solar radiation, sunspots and internal factors such as adjustments within the earth's atmospheric circulation, may either singly or in combination, be responsible for climatic change.

During the last century, numerous theories relating to climatic change have been advanced. Several experts have emphasized changes in the quantity and quality of solar radiation. The second theory of climate change is the astronomical theory.

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According to this theory, the angle of ecliptic changes in the eccentricity of earth's orbit and the procession of the equinoxes.

The third main reason regarding the climate changes in the past occurred mainly because of the volcanic activity. This theory has, however, been referred as the volcanic eruptions and volcanism cannot persist over millions of years and the climatic changes in the past occurred only over millions of years.

Environmental changes in the historic period

It is very difficult to say with certainty regarding the ending of pre-history period. It is generally believed that it began with the period of Phinoceans, Greeks and Romans. In these civilizations, people witnessed considerable environmental changes. Besides the expansion and intensification of agriculture, the most important development during the historic period was the Industrial Revolution in Britain in 1779. In the 18th century, one can see stupendous growth of population in Britain where there was rise from 5million to more than 10 million. Industrial invocations were accelerated to meet the basic needs of people. This was also a period of rapid change both in terms of social organization and the landscape. The growth of urban centres encouraged the migration from the rural to the urban areas. Moreover, the international politics has come to play an important role in landscape changes since they influence trade as well as agricultural and industrial production and economic policies.

Problems caused by environmental pollution

1. Increase in Greenhouse Gases
2. Early Spring, Late Winter
3. Acidification
4. Ozone Depletion

Impact of agricultural development on environment

By and large, this is responsible for causing environmental degradation. The use and misuse of chemical fertilizers and new rotation of crops is continuously bringing changes in soil chemistry. But, on the other hand, poor agriculture practices are degrading the soil. Soil-making processes are notoriously slow, so more soil-friendly practices need to be adopted. Man needs to follow some methods like contour farming, terracing, vegetative barriers as well as improved land use practices at the farm level.

Causes

Among the major causes can be included the following factors

1. Soil Erosion
2. Salinization
3. Desertification
4. Deforestation

Conclusion

In this way, after making an incisive and in depth study of different factors, we can safely and rightly aver the fact that the primary causes of environmental degradation are attributed to the rapid growth of population in combination with economic development and over use of natural resources. Major environmental calamities in India include land degradation, deforestation, soil erosion, habitat destruction and loss of biodiversity. Economic growth and

changing consumption patterns have led to a rising demand for energy and increasing transport activities. Air, water and noise pollution together with water scarcity dominate the environmental issues in India. According to World Bank estimate, between 1995 through 2010, India has made one of the fastest progresses in the world, in addressing its environmental issues and improving its environmental quality. Still, India has a long way to go to reach environmental quality similar to those enjoyed in developed economies.

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