



# **National Environmental Policy, 2006 (NEP, 2006)**

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# **Policies Made In India Before NEP, 2006:**

- **Environment Protection Act, 1986**
- **National Forest Policy, 1988**
- **National Conservation Strategy and Policy Statement on Environment and Development, 1992**
- **Policy Statement On Abatement Of Pollution, 1992**

## **Other Policies Related to Environmental Planning:**

- **National Agriculture Policy, 2000**
- **National Population Policy, 2000**
- **National Water Policy, 2002**

# **Introduction to National Environmental Policy, 2006**

- The National Environment Policy was first formulated in 2006, by Government of India, Ministry of Environment and Forest**
- The National Environment Policy seeks to extend the coverage, and fill in gaps that still exist, in light of present knowledge and accumulated experience. It does not displace, but builds on the earlier policies**
- The dominant theme of this policy is that conservation of environmental resources is necessary to secure livelihoods and well being of all rather than the degradation of the resources**

# Objectives Of National Environmental Policy, 2006

- **Conservation of Critical Environmental Resources:**  
To protect and conserve critical ecological systems and resources, and invaluable natural and man-made heritage, which are essential for life support, livelihoods, economic growth, and a broad conception of human well-being.
- **Intra-generational Equity: Livelihood Security for the Poor:**  
To ensure equitable access to environmental resources and quality for all sections of society, and in particular, to ensure that poor communities, which are most dependent on environmental resources for their livelihoods, are assured secure access to these resources
- **Inter-generational Equity:**  
To ensure judicious use of environmental resources to meet the needs and aspirations of the present and future generations
- **Integration of Environmental Concerns in Economic and Social Development:**  
To integrate environmental concerns into policies, plans, programmes, and projects for economic and social development

- **Efficiency in Environmental Resource Use:**

To ensure efficient use of environmental resources in the sense of reduction in their use per unit of economic output, to minimize adverse environmental impacts

- **Environmental Governance:**

To apply the principles of good governance (transparency, rationality, accountability, reduction in time and costs, participation, and regulatory independence) to the management and regulation of use of environmental resources

- **Enhancement of Resources for Environmental Conservation:**

To ensure higher resource flows, comprising finance, technology, management skills, traditional knowledge, and social capital, for environmental conservation through mutually beneficial multi-stakeholder partnerships between local communities, public agencies, the academic and research community, investors, and multilateral and bilateral development partners

# **Principles of National Environmental Policy, 2006**

- Human Beings are at the Centre of Sustainable Development Concerns**
- Right to development must be fulfilled so as to equitably meet developmental and environmental needs of present and future generations**
- In order to achieve sustainable development, environmental protection shall constitute an integral part of the development process and cannot be considered in isolation from it**
- Where there are credible threats of serious or irreversible damage to key environmental resources, lack of full scientific certainty shall not be used as a reason for postponing cost-effective measures to prevent environmental degradation**
- In various public actions for environmental conservation, economic efficiency would be sought to be realized**

# **Strategies and Actions of National Environmental Policy, 2006**

- **Process Related Reforms**
- **Substantive Reforms**

# Process Related Reforms

## Approach:

The objective is to reduce delays and levels of decision-making, realize decentralization of environmental functions, and ensure greater transparency and accountability

## Framework for Legal Actions:

- The present approach to dealing with environmentally unacceptable behaviour in India has been largely based on criminal processes and sanctions
- Although criminal sanctions, if successful, may create a deterrent impact, in reality they are rarely fruitful for a number of reasons. On the other hand, giving unfettered powers to enforcement authorities may lead to rent-seeking
- Civil law, on the other hand, offers flexibility, and its sanctions can be more effectively tailored to particular situations
- The evidentiary burdens of civil proceedings are less daunting than those of criminal law. It also allows for preventive policing through orders and injunctions
- Accordingly, a judicious mix of civil and criminal processes and sanctions will be employed in the legal regime for enforcement, through a review of the existing legislation
- Both civil and criminal penalties would be graded according to the severity of the infraction



# **Substantive Reforms:**

## **Environment and Forests Clearances:**

- **Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) will continue to be the principal methodology for appraising and reviewing new projects**
- **The assessment processes are under major revision in line with the Govindarajan Committee recommendations**
- **Under the new arrangements, there would be significant devolution of powers to the State/UT level**
- **However, such devolution, to be effective, needs to be accompanied by adequate development of human and institutional capacities**

## **Coastal Areas:**

- **Development activities in the coastal areas are regulated by means of the Coastal Regulation Zone notifications and Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) plans made under them**
- **The ICZM plans should be reviewed at pre-determined intervals to take account of changes in geomorphology, economic activities, settlement patterns, and coastal and marine environmental conditions**
- **Decentralize, to the extent feasible, the clearance of specific projects to State level environmental authorities, exempting activities, which do not cause significant environmental impacts, and are consistent with approved ICZM plans**

## Living Modified Organisms (LMOs):

- The use of genetically modified plants and animals are very helpful for progress, but can also pose significant risks to ecological resources, and perhaps, human and animal health. These risks can be reduced by:
  - (i) Reviewing the regulatory processes for LMOs so that all relevant scientific knowledge is taken into account, and ecological, health, and economic concerns are adequately addressed
  - (ii) Periodic review of the National Bio-safety Guidelines, and Bio-safety Operations Manual to ensure that these are based on current scientific knowledge
  - (iii) Ensuring the conservation of bio-diversity and human health when dealing with LMOs in transboundary movement in a manner consistent with the multilateral Bio-safety Protocol

## Environmentally Sensitive Zones:

- Identify and give legal status to Environmentally Sensitive Zones in the country having environmental entities with “Incomparable values” requiring special conservation efforts
- Formulate area development plans for these zones on a scientific basis, with adequate participation by the local communities
- Create local institutions with adequate participation for the environmental management of such areas, to ensure adherence to the approved area development plans, which should be prepared in consultation with the local communities

## Monitoring of Compliance:

- Even after proper planning, if the execution of the plan is not successful, it can make the whole project to fail its objectives. To avoid such failure, the following methods are used:

(i) Take measures, including capacity development initiatives to enable Panchayati Raj Institutions and urban local bodies to undertake monitoring of compliance with environmental management plans. Measures will also be taken to encourage municipalities to annually report their environmental performance to their governing bodies

(ii) Develop feasible models of public-private partnerships to leverage financial, technical, and management resources of the private sector in setting up and operating infrastructure for monitoring of environmental compliance, with ironclad safeguards against possible conflict of interest or collusion with the monitored entities

## Use of Economic Principles in Environmental Decision-making:

- It is important to understand the financial aspects of the works done for the environmental conservation to keep it in check with respect to the country's economic conditions
- Use of existing policy instruments, such as the fiscal regime, may significantly reduce or eliminate the need for enhanced institutional capacities to administer the incentive based instruments
- In future, accordingly, a judicious mix of incentives and fiat based regulatory instruments would be considered for each specific regulatory situation

# Strategies Used for Environmental Reforms:

## Land Degradation:

- Adoption of scientific and traditional sustainable land use practices through research and development
- Pilot scale demonstrations and farmers' training
- Promote reclamation of wasteland and degraded forest land to reduce desertification through action plans

## Forests:

- To formulate an innovative strategy for increase of forest
- Afforestation of degraded forest land, wasteland and tree cover on private or revenue land

## Wildlife:

- Expanding the Protected Area Network
- Paralleling multi-stakeholder partnerships for afforestation
- Encouraging eco-tourism at wildlife sites
- Implementing measures for captive breeding and release into the wild identified endangered species.

## **Biodiversity:**

- **Strengthen the protection of biodiversity hot spots**
- **Pay attention to the potential impacts of development projects on biodiversity resources and natural heritage**
- **Conservation of Genetic material of threatened species of flora and fauna**

## **Wetlands:**

- **Identification of valuable wetlands and to prevent their degradation and enhance their conservation**
- **Sustainable tourism strategies for identified wetlands**
- **To take explicit account of impacts on wetlands of significant development projects.**

## **Conservation of Man-made Heritage :**

- **Setting ambient environmental standards, especially for air quality, the potential impacts on designated heritage sites**
- **Integrated regional development plans formulation**

## Environmentally Sensitive Zones:

- Identify ESZs
- Formulate area development plans
- Create local institutions for the environmental management of such areas.

## Sustainable Mountain Development:

- Norms for infrastructure construction in mountain regions Promotion of organic farming
- Sustainable tourism

## Sustainable Coastal Resources:

- Sustainable management of mangroves
- Protection to coastal environment

## Conservation of Freshwater Resources:

- River management
- Groundwater management

## Pollution Abatement

## Climate Change

# **Social Forestry**



# Meaning

- **Social forestry is the management and development of forest with afforestation on barren lands to achieve environmental benefit and rural development**
- **In simple words, it is the practice of forestry of the people, forestry by the people and forestry for the people**
- **The term was first used by the National Commission on Agriculture, Government of India, in 1976 (Sixth Five Year Plan)**
- **The aim of social forestry is taking the pressure off the forests and making use of all unused and fallow land**
- **This concept of village forests to meet the needs of the rural people is not new. It has existed through the centuries all over the country but it has been given a new character recently**

# **The social forestry practices**

- **Raising windbreaks on dry farm lands**
- **Planting shelterbelt**
- **Planting along roadsides**
- **Planting in village common lands and waste lands**
- **Planting along the railway lines and canal banks**
- **Planting small wood lot in farm lands if it is large**
- **Planting foreshore areas of irrigation tanks**
- **Reclamation of highly degraded and eroded soils**
- **Afforestation of command areas of irrigation projects**

# Objectives

- To fulfill the basic requirements of fuel, fodder, small timber, supplementary food and income from surplus forest products in rural areas and replacement of cow dung
- Provision of employment opportunities and to help increase family income for alleviating poverty
- Development of cottage industries in rural areas
- To organize people in their struggle for socioeconomic development and to integrate economic gains in the distribution of their benefits to the rural society
- To provide congenial environment and preserve the cultural identity of local or indigenous people as their life related to forest
- To indoctrinate the value of village level self sufficiency and self management in production as well as distribution of forest products with social justice

- **To form the villagers into a well-knit community and an effective functional unit of society which can shape its own destiny**
- **Aid in reclamation of degraded lands, conservation of soil and moisture**
- **Improvement of agricultural production and prevention of environmental deterioration through unsustainable practices**
- **To increase the natural beauty of the landscape, create recreational forests for the benefit of rural and urban population**
- **Protection of agricultural fields against wind speed and natural calamity**
- **To solve the food scarcity in rural areas to a large extent**
- **To help increase production of certain edible fruits like cashew, mango, coconut and palms that have high nutritional value and grow well under social forestry programme**
- **To utilize the available land according to its carrying capacity**

# Components of Social Forestry

## 1. Farm forestry

Farm forestry is the name given to programmes which promote commercial tree growing by farmers on their own land. Farm forestry was defined by NCA (1976) as the practice of forestry in all its aspects in and the around the farms or village lands integrated with other farm operations.

## 2. Extension forestry

Extension forestry is the practice of forestry in areas devoid of tree growth and other vegetation situated in places away from the conventional forest areas with the object of increasing the area under tree growth. It includes the following:

### ➤ Mixed forestry

Mixed forestry is the practice of forestry for raising fodder grass with scattered fodder trees, fruit trees and fuel wood trees on suitable wastelands, panchayat lands and village common lands

## ➤ Shelterbelts

Shelterbelt is defined as a belt of trees and or shrubs maintained for the purpose of shelter from wind, sun, snow drift, etc.

## ➤ Linear strip plantations

These are the plantations of fast growing species on linear strips of land

## 3. Rehabilitation of degraded forests

The degraded area under forests needs immediate attention for ecological restoration and for meeting the socio economic needs of the communities living in and around such areas.

## 4. Recreation forestry

Recreation forestry is the practice of forestry with the object of raising flowering trees and shrubs mainly to serve as recreation forests for the urban and rural population. This type of forestry is also known as Aesthetic Forestry which is defined as the practice of forestry with the object of developing or maintaining a forest of high scenic value.

# **Benefits of social forestry**

- **Increase the supply of fuel wood and fodder**
- **Generate rural employment**
- **Maintain ecological balance**
- **Appropriate use of wastelands**
- **Promote village and cottage industries**
- **Induce environmental and tree consciousness among people**
- **Relieve pressures from natural forests**
- **Stabilize agricultural production**

# References

1. <https://www.india.gov.in/national-environment-policy-2006>
2. Kumar V. (2015), Social forestry in India: concept and schemes. Van Sangyan Vol. 2, No. 11.