

# Environment and Sustainable Development: An Indian Scenario

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**Abstract:** *The concept of sustainable development has undergone various developmental phases since its introduction. The historical development of the concept saw participation of various organizations and institutions, which nowadays work intensely on the implementation of its principles and objectives. The concept has experienced different critiques and interpretations over the time while being accepted in different areas of human activity, and the definition of sustainable development has become one of the most cited definitions in the literature. In its development, the concept has been adapting to the contemporary requirements of a complex global environment, but the underlying principles and goals, as well as the problems of their implementation, remained almost unchanged. All the factors have resulted in the widening of economic and social disparity, which is a threat to sustainable development. The present economic growth helps to create more opportunities for the more educated section of the upper and middle class, with a 'trickle-down' effect on a section of the poor. The vital role of governments consists of setting robust and sustainable policies to regulate the business mechanism for the individuals and industries. This review paper will highlight the role of the three main players in the Sustainable Development Future: government, industry, and society from a new and integrated perspective. The dream of a sustainable India needs to blossom and grow incessantly in your mind and theirs. Do your part, do your best, join hands with the rest, and little by little, times shall change, the impossible shall be possible. **It's a dream, it's a challenge***

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Climate change and its effects will further reduce the adaptive capacity of dry land farmers, forest dwellers, fisherfolk, and nomadic shepherds, which is already very low. Water, soil, and air, which are the vital environmental sources for maintaining life have been shrinking alarmingly. The main reasons for the water crisis are increasing demand, zonal disparity in distribution, lack of ethical framework for use, inadequate knowledge and resources, major land-use changes, long-term water level decline, and increase in salinity and pollution. We have a path for sustainable development, but unless all our methods are directed toward it, we cannot achieve sustainable development. To meet the challenging situation of widening economic and social disparity, inclusive growth is the best tool, but it is a dream without improvement in agricultural growth, employment generation, poverty reduction, and involvement of the social sector (health, education, and women empowerment). We must learn from China in this regard. Elements of the successful experience of the Chinese such as, high and labor-releasing agricultural growth, favorable income distribution through broad-based agricultural growth, availability of infrastructure, higher levels of literacy and skills, inducements for the location of enterprises in rural areas, and easy access to credit and inputs for the poor section of society, are extremely relevant for developing countries.

### Can we achieve Sustainable Development?

In spite of the very difficult circumstances in which many developing countries currently find themselves in, sustainable development *is* achievable, however, it would require a lot of concentrated and coordinated effort. If appropriate supply-side policies, such as education and vocational programmes, were to be implemented, illiteracy rates would drop and people would be made more aware about the environment surrounding them which would contribute greatly to a rise in environmental awareness. In addition, an appropriate government, which prioritized the

growth of green GDP instead of GDP measured by the usual methods, would have to come into power and use its budget efficiently in order to invest in green energies, health services, and benefits systems, amongst others. Of course, this is only touching the tip of the iceberg, nevertheless, it illustrates very well that sustainable development is achievable and straightforward, however, each of the steps underlined above are incredibly hard to achieve. Concluding, sustainable development is achievable, however, it is only achievable if everyone is dedicated to achieving it. In order for this to happen, the world needs a wakeup call of cosmic dimensions – the only worry is it might be too late by then. Furthermore, many scholars believe that the collaboration between the society members and industrial organisations is very essential to enrich the sustainability culture presently and in the future. Accordingly, all the parties of the stakeholders should be conscious about the resource efficiency concept and its applications.

## II. CONCLUSION

Sustainable development should provide a solution in terms of meeting basic human needs, integrating environmental development and protection, achieving equality, ensuring social self-determination and cultural diversity, and maintaining ecological integrity. Although the concept of sustainable development has undergone certain changes during the past, its fundamental principles and goals have contributed to a more conscious behaviour adapted to the limitations of the environment. This is the reason of adopting the concept in different areas of human activities. Numerous international organizations have been involved in implementation of the concept, while it has found positive implementation locally, but it did not produce significant results on a global scale. This fact proves environmental problems which, 30 years after the introduction of the concept, are still ongoing. Contemporary understanding of the concept of sustainable development is considered through the United Nations Millennium Development Goals focused on a complex global situation, such as population growth, hunger and poverty, wars and political instability, and further degradation of the environment. Many countries are not even close to sustainable development and the gap between developed and underdeveloped countries has deepened. SD thrives on the commitment of people and so in order to translate the concept into action, public participation should be increased. All people must be aware and acknowledge that their survival and the survival of the future generation depend on responsible behaviour regarding consumption and production, environment and progressive social values. It is only by integrating the pillars can negative synergies be arrested, positive synergies fostered, and meaningful SD made to happen. It implies that economic, social and environmental “sustainability” form elements of a dynamic system. They cannot be pursued in isolation for “SD” to flourish; therefore all decisions should seek to encourage positive growth and equilibrium within the natural system. Although ensuring sustainable development is everyone’s business, global, regional, national organisations as well as governments and civil society organisations are advised and expected to show ownership, leadership and citizenship. In conclusion, all the stakeholders should adopt the accountability and responsibility to implement sustainability in the present and secure it for the future. Thus, taking all the aspects in consideration, India has surely come a long way, but still it has a long way to go! **Sustainability is not the way out, but it is rather the only way for any country to prosper and sustain in today’s world of uncertainties.** The way ahead for India seems to be a challenging one which demands fruitful involvement of the government, the backing of the corporate and private investors and most crucially, the awareness and the sensibility which should be injected in the young minds of the nation. The dream of a sustainable India needs to blossom and grow incessantly in your mind and theirs. Do your part, do your best, join hands with the rest, and little by little, times shall change, the impossible shall be possible. **It’s a dream, it’s a challenge.**

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