



Mains Practice Question

Q. The environmental problems are simultaneously linked with social problem. Discuss. (250 words)

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Approach

- Highlight causes of environmental problems due to economic and ecological reasons.
- Connect with how these problems are also linked to social processes – how both affect each other
- In conclusion state need for appreciating the link and work in resolving such problems

Introduction

Present environmental problems are immediate results of economic practises adopted in the wake of Industrialisation and consequent man's indifferent attitude towards ecology.

- **Resource Depletion:** Fossil fuel, intensive input-based economy results in overexploitation of natural resources beyond carrying capacity like overuse of groundwater in Green Revolution areas, forest ecosystem is depleting due to changing land use pattern.
- **Pollution:** Air, water and land pollution is caused due to increased emissions and wastage from urbanised and industrialised societies.

Body

- Such environmental problems are also linked to social processes where each affects other in a cyclic manner.

Environmental problem becoming social problem

- As per International Organisation of Migration, vulnerable sections of society like women, children, old age would be most adversely affected due to Climate Change, example drought induced forced migration in Sub-Saharan Africa.
- Disasters inadvertently affect society at large, especially those with less access to resources, for example ability to rehabilitate post-floods or cyclones.
- Some ecological problems reinforce social inequality and cycle of poverty, example reduced productivity of soil in Vidarbha (Maharashtra) due to HYV seeds planting and consequent inability to re-invest in land rehabilitation resulting in Farmers Suicide.

Social Causes to Environmental Problems

- **Changes in social values and norms** like consumerism without regards to ecological values result in commodification of nature leading to its overexploitation
- **Social Inequality** in access to resources and say in their way of utilisation leads to environmental conflicts, example alienation of tribals from forest conservation and its resource usage leading to economic development prevailing over environmental development.
- **Changing and pressing demands** of society like Food Security, increased productivity leads to pressure on already limited natural resources.

Way Forward

- Thus, environmental problems are intertwined with social processes. There is a need for achieving sustainability at social, economic as well as ecological level like highlighted in SDG-2030 goals, agendas of UN-Habitat.

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