



Mains Practice Question

Q. Discuss the socio-economic impact of climate change on India. (150 Words)

22 Mar, 2019 GS Paper 3 Economy

Approach

- Give a short introduction of 'Climate Change'.
- Enumerate the Socio-economic impact of climate change.
- Conclude with steps taken by government at national and global level.

Introduction

- Climate change is a change in the pattern of weather, and related changes in oceans, land surfaces and ice sheets, occurring over time scales of decades or longer. IPCC reports that an increase in global temperatures by 2 °c from preindustrial levels, if timely measures are not taken, will prove disastrous for the planet.
- WMO recently underlined how extreme weather events are impacting India including the severe flooding in Kerala in August 2018, which led to economic losses estimated at \$4.3 billion. Rainfall in Kerala in August was 96% above the long-term average.

Body

Socio-economic Impacts of Climate Change

- **Reduced water quantity:** A reduction in water supply due to climate change combined with an increase in demand for agricultural irrigation will have an impact on the ability of aquatic ecosystems to maintain and replenish. This will adversely impact agriculture, industries, economy, health and lives of people, specifically the vulnerable section like women, children, lower socioeconomic strata etc.
- **Small farmers will feel the effects:** Climate change is poised to make matters worse for farmers through a shift in climate and agricultural zones, changes in production patterns due to higher temperatures and more extreme and changing precipitation patterns all of which will threaten crops.
- **Rural and urban poor are the hardest hit:** Disadvantaged groups do not have the resources to cope with effects such as extreme flooding or droughts that may displace them or change their way of life. This will result in impoverishment, mass migration which may lead to crisis and violence.
- **Unequal capacity for adaptation:** Developing countries, who did not significantly contribute to the amount of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere, now are at an even greater disadvantage when it comes to dealing with the effects of climate change.
- **Public funds** that could have originally been used towards education will now have to go to sea walls.
- **Women, children, and the elderly more vulnerable:** Children and the elderly are more susceptible to the health concerns associated with climate change such as heat-related ailments from higher temperatures, malnourishment due to increased strain on food supplies/increased prices, and also disease that can be associated with increased flooding.

- **Communities forced to relocate:** Many communities will be forced to move as they are exposed to rising sea levels, extreme drought that puts strain on resources, or even extreme rainfall that becomes the norm.

Conclusion

- Indian being a developing country with 2nd largest population in the world, it has to use its resources efficiently to alleviate poverty as well as reduce climate change impact and adapting new ways to make a resilient society.
- Government of India have already launched National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC) in 2008 that includes National Mission on Sustainable Habitat, National Mission for Sustainable Agriculture, and National Solar Mission etc. to shift to adaptation and mitigation of climate change. India has also committed to NDCs of Paris climate meet to put on track its initiatives in tackling climate change at global level.

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