



NATURAL RESOURCES IN INDIA

Dr. D. B. Karnik

Associate Professor & Head,

Dept. of Geography

Smt. G.K.G. Kanya Mahavidyalay, Jaysingpur

Affiliation Shivaji University, Kolhapur

ABSTRACT:

India is rich in natural resources. The country produces as many as 87 minerals including fuel, metallic, non-metallic, and atomic minerals. Among the minerals, reserves of coal, iron ore and bauxite are vast and will last decades. India's coal reserves of 293 billion tonnes are the fourth largest in the world and account for nearly 10 per cent of global deposits. Bauxite reserves of 3.5 billion tonnes and iron ore deposits of 28.5 billion tonnes are the fifth and seventh largest, respectively, in the world. Any stock or reserve that can be drawn from nature is a Natural Resource. The major natural resources are - land, forest, water, mineral and energy. India is rich in natural resources, but majority of the Indians are poor. Nature has provided with diverse climate, several rivers for irrigation and power generation, rich minerals, rich forest and diverse soil.

Key Words: non-metallic, irrigation, rich etc.

INTRODUCTION:

Although India possesses a wide range of minerals and other natural resources, its per capita endowment of such critical resources as cultivable land, water, timber, and known petroleum reserves is relatively low. Nevertheless, the diversity of resources, especially of minerals, exceeds that of all but a few countries and gives India a distinct advantage in its industrial development.

Domestically supplied minerals form an important underpinning for India's diversified manufacturing industry, as well as a source of modest export revenues. Nationalizing many foreign and domestic enterprises and government initiation and management of others gave the Indian government a predominant

role in the mining industry. However, government involvement has been gradually reduced as private investment has grown.

OBJECTIVES:

1. To study the different natural resources in India.
2. To study the causes of depletion of Natural Resources in India.

NATURAL RESOURCE IN INDIA:

1. Water Resources:

Water, a vital natural resource and precious commodity, is essential for multiplicity of purposes, viz., drinking, agriculture, power generation, transportation and waste disposal.

2. Forest Resources:

A plant community predominantly of trees and other vegetation usually with a closed canopy is called forest derived from Latin word Foris meaning out of door. Today forest may be regarded as any land managed for the diverse purpose of forestry, whether covered with trees, shrubs, climbers, lianes or not.

3. Mineral Resources:

The term mineral resources refers to a wide variety of materials obtained from earth. Minerals are naturally occurring inorganic, crystalline solids having a definite chemical composition and characteristic physical properties. Most of the rocks are composed of a few common minerals like quartz, feldspar, biotite, dolomite, calcite etc. These minerals, in turn, are composed of some elements like silicon, oxygen, iron, magnesium, calcium and aluminium etc.

4. Food Resources:

The main food resources are wheat, rice, maize, barley, pulses, cereals, potato, sugarcane, sorghum, millet, oats, cassava, fruits, vegetables, milk and sea food etc. About 4 billion people in the developing countries have wheat and rice as their staple food. Fish and seafood contribute about 70 million metric tonne of high quality protein to the world's diet. But we have already surpassed sustainable harvests of fish from most of the oceans.

5. Land Resources:

India has total area of about 329 million hectares. The utilisation statistics available are for nearly 92.5% of the total area. About 162 million hectare of land is under agriculture cover. Nearly 5% of the land falls under fallow land. About 46 million hectare is under real forest as shown by satellites. A part of land is not in use.

CAUSES OF DEPLETION OF NATURAL RESOURCES:

1. Overpopulation:

The total global population is more than seven billion people. Still, there is a consistent increase in the overall earth populace and this has been a critical factor in accelerating the depletion of natural resources. An increase in the populace expands the need for resources and conditions necessary to sustain it. In addition, it contributes to increased ecological contamination. Research further indicates that developing countries are using more and more resources to industrialize and support their ever-increasing population. Hence, the depletion of natural resources will continue as long as the world population increases.

2. Poor Farming Practices:

Humans are causing a lot of stress to land resources due to the over-reliance on food production for daily nutritional requirements. Poor irrigation practices, for example, are a key contributing factor to salinization and alkalization of the soil that sustains plant growth. Poor soil management practices and the use of heavy machinery and farming equipment also destroy the soil structure making it unsuitable for plant growth. Some farming practices such as excessive use of pesticides, fungicides, and herbicides equally kill important soil micro-organisms that are essential in replenishing nutrients in the soil.

3. Logging:

The World Bank reported that the net loss of global forest between 1990 and 2016 was 1.3 million square kilometers. On the same note, tropical deforestation is estimated to occur at a rate of one percent annually, especially in

Latin America regions. People are clearing forests primarily for agricultural reasons due to the increase in the population pressure.

Humans are also cutting down trees to make space for residential complexes and multiplexes. Through deforestation, the planet not only loses trees but also thousands of animals and great plant biodiversity due to the destruction of their natural habitats. Moreover, increased logging activities lead to soil erosion that degrades natural soil minerals.

4. Overconsumption of Natural Resources:

The 1760 industrial revolution saw large-scale mineral and oil exploration and the practice has been gradually growing, leading to more and more natural oil and mineral depletion. And together with the advancements in technology, development, and research in the contemporary era; exploitation of minerals has become easier and humans are digging deeper to access different ore. The increased exploitation of different minerals has led to some of them entering into a production decline.

5. Pollution:

An increase in population and modern anthropogenic activities is a major contributor to the disposal of pollutants into the natural environment and as such, the value of natural environments is gradually exposed to degradation. The soil, air, lakes, and seas are being contaminated with sewage, radioactive, materials, and toxic chemicals among other pollutants. Uncontrolled release of carbon monoxide, nitrous oxide, sulfur oxide, and carbon dioxide, for example, have resulted in the degradation of the ozone layer and global warming – environmental changes with their resultant depletive impacts on different natural habitats. Millions of different animal and plant species have thus lost their natural habitats and are on the verge of extinction.

6. Industrial and Technological Development:

The present-day world is incessantly becoming industrialized as more and more countries make major technological breakthroughs. But as technological advancements continue, there is similarly a considerable growth in industries that release toxins and chemical by-products which are eventually deposited in

lakes, soils, and lands. As a result, the by-products and toxic materials alter natural habits such as aquatic systems and wildlife.

CONCLUSION:

Climate change has had a huge impact on water resources. The report shows a 24% decline in the area under snow and glacier in some states and also notes the impact of climate change on wetlands/water bodies in Himachal Pradesh, Sikkim and Jammu Kashmir. Moreover, unsustainable extraction of groundwater resources is causing a decline in the water levels in Tamil Nadu, Chhattisgarh, Goa, Odisha and Rajasthan. Down to Earth's State of India's Environment 2018 – In figures had talked about increasing dependency and unsustainable use of groundwater resources. It had revealed that in 2013, the country used 62 per cent of the net available annual groundwater, which is a 58 per cent increase from 2004.

REFERENCES:

1. <https://www.downtoearth.org.in/news/urbanisation/india-loses-natural-resources-to-economic-growth-report-61836>
2. <https://www.businesstoday.in/magazine/features/story/india-mining-rules-problems-government-policies-43026-2013-12-05>