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Lecture-1

(For B.Sc. (H) Life Sciences and Mathematics)

Chapter 6: Global Environmental issues and Policies

Topics to cover

UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME (UNEP)

United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) is a programme of the United Nations that coordinates the organization's environmental activities and assists developing countries in implementing environmentally sound policies and practices. It was founded by Maurice Strong, its first director, as a result of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment (Stockholm Conference) in June 1972 and has overall responsibility for environmental problems among United Nations agencies; however, international talks on specialized issues, such as addressing climate change or combating desertification, are overseen by other UN organizations, like the Bonn-based Secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification. The body has its headquarters at Kenya and Nairobi.

UNEP's activities cover a wide range of issues regarding the atmosphere, marine and terrestrial ecosystems, environmental governance and green economy. It has played a significant role in developing international environmental conventions, promoting environmental science and information and illustrating the way those can be implemented in conjunction with policy, working on the development and implementation of policy with national governments, regional institutions in conjunction with environmental nongovernmental organizations (NGOs).

UNEP has also been active in funding and implementing environment related development projects. UNEP frequently uses the alternative name UN Environment. UN Environment has aided in the formulation of guidelines and treaties on issues such as the international trade in potentially harmful chemicals, transboundary air pollution, and contamination of international waterways. Relevant documents, including scientific papers, are available via the UNEP Document Repository.

The World Meteorological Organization and UN Environment established the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) in 1988. UN Environment is also one of several Implementing Agencies for the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and the Multilateral Fund for the Implementation of the Montreal Protocol, and it is also a member of the United Nations Development Group. The International Cyanide Management Code, a programme of best practice for the chemical's use at gold mining operations, was developed under UN Environment's aegis.

STRUCTURE OF UNEP

UNEP has 8 substantive divisions:

Science Division: This division provides a reliable and descriptive environmental assessments and data for the programme division to make policies for sustainable development.

Policy and Programme Division: This division monitors the layout, structure and framework of policies and to be implemented for sustainable development. It also ensures coherence and coordination at strategic, policy and programmatic levels.

Ecosystems Division: This division focuses on sustainable development of the terrestrial, freshwater and marine ecosystems. It also takes into account the causes and conflicts of environment.

Economy Division: This division provides solutions for economic decision makers.

Governance Affairs Office: It assists the private sector to engage with UNEP's work. It strengthens the authoritative voice and actions of the assembly on environment.

Law Division: It works directly with countries to combat environmental crime. It tends to improve cooperation between the law makers and the ones trying to safeguard the environment.

Communication Division: It develops and disseminates UNEP's core messages. It delivers those messages to governments and citizens, stakeholders and partners, including media as well.

Corporate Services Division: This division safeguards UNEP's corporate interests by ensuring effective management of the programme.

Convention on International Trade in Endangered species of Wild flora and fauna (CITES) 1973

The Conference aims to control or prevent international commercial trade in endangered species or products derived from them. The Convention does not seek to directly protect endangered species, rather it seeks to reduce the economic incentive to poach endangered species and destroy their habitat by closing off the international market. India became a party to the convention in 1976. International trade in all wild flora and fauna in general and species covered under convention is regulated jointly 62 through the provisions of the

Wild life (protection) Act 1972, the import/ export policy of government of India and the Customs Act 1962.

CITES (the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora) is an international agreement between governments. Its aim is to ensure that international trade in specimens of wild animals and plants does not threaten their survival. Widespread information nowadays about the endangered status of many prominent species, such as the tiger and elephants, might make the need for such a convention seem obvious. But at the time when the ideas for CITES were first formed, in the 1960s, international discussion of the regulation of wildlife trade for conservation purposes was something relatively new. With hindsight, the need for CITES is clear. Annually, international wildlife trade is estimated to be worth billions of dollars and to include hundreds of millions of plant and animal specimens. The trade is diverse, ranging from live animals and plants to a vast array of wildlife products derived from them, including food products, exotic leather goods, wooden musical instruments, timber, tourist curios and medicines. Levels of exploitation of some animal and plant species are high and the trade in them, together with other factors, such as habitat loss, is capable of heavily depleting their populations and even bringing some species close to extinction. Many wildlife species in trade are not endangered, but the existence of an agreement to ensure the sustainability of the trade is important in order to safeguard these resources for the future.

Because the trade in wild animals and plants crosses borders between countries, the effort to regulate it requires international cooperation to safeguard certain species from over-exploitation. CITES was conceived in the spirit of such cooperation. Today, it accords varying degrees of protection to more than 35,000 species of animals and plants, whether they are traded as live specimens, fur coats or dried herbs. CITES is an international agreement to which States

and regional economic integration organizations adhere voluntarily. States that have agreed to be bound by the Convention ('joined' CITES) are known as Parties. Although CITES is legally binding on the Parties — in other words they have to implement the Convention - it does not take the place of national laws. Rather it provides a framework to be respected by each Party, which has to adopt its own domestic legislation to ensure that CITES is implemented at the national level.

CITES (the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, also known as the Washington Convention) is a multilateral treaty to protect endangered plants and animals. It was drafted as a result of a resolution adopted in 1963 at a meeting of members of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). The convention was opened for signature in 1973 and CITES entered into force on 1 July 1975. Its aim is to ensure that international trade in specimens of wild animals and plants does not threaten the survival of the species in the wild, and it accords varying degrees of protection to species of animals and plants. In order to ensure that the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) was not violated, the Secretariat of GATT was consulted during the drafting process.

Roughly 5,800 species of animals and 30,000 species of plants are protected by CITES against over-exploitation through international trade. They are listed in the three CITES Appendices. The species are grouped in the Appendices according to how threatened they are by international trade. They include some whole groups, such as primates, cetaceans (whales, dolphins and porpoises), sea turtles, parrots, corals, cacti and orchids. But in some cases only a subspecies or geographically separate population of a species (for example the population of just one country) is listed. Any type of wild plant or animal may be included in the list of species protected by CITES and the range of wildlife species included in the Appendices extends from leeches to lions and from pine trees to pitcher

plants. While the more charismatic creatures, such as bears and whales, may be the better known examples of CITES species, the most numerous groups include many less popularized plants and animals, such as aloes, corals, mussels and frogs.

Lecture-2

Topics to cover

India's National Action Plan on Climate Change and its major missions

The NAPCC incorporates India's vision of ecologically sustainable development and steps to be taken to implement it. It is based on the awareness that Climate Change action must proceed simultaneously on several intimately inter-related domains, such as energy, industry, agriculture, water, forests, urban spaces and the fragile mountain environment. They focus on promoting understanding of climate change, adaptation and mitigation, energy efficiency and natural resource conservation." The National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC) was adopted on Jun. 30, 2008, while India's Intended Nationally Determined Commitments (INDC) was submitted to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) on Oct. 2, 2015. The focus of the NAPCC is essentially domestic, while the INDC is a statement of intent on climate change action.

There are **8 NATIONAL MISSIONS** under NAPCC which represent multi-pronged, long term and integrated strategies for achieving key goals in climate change:-

NATIONAL SOLAR MISSION: The NAPCC aims to promote **the development and use of solar energy for power generation** and other uses with the ultimate objective of making solar competitive with fossil-based energy options.

NATIONAL MISSION FOR ENHANCED ENERGY EFFICIENCY: The initiative was undertaken to promote **the market for energy efficiency by fostering innovative policies and effective market instruments**. In 2009, it was approved 'in principle' by the PM's Council on Climate Change.

NATIONAL MISSION ON SUSTAINABLE HABITAT: Approved by the PM in 2011, it **aims to make cities sustainable through improvements in energy efficiency in buildings, management of solid**

waste and shift to public transport. The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs backs the mission.

NATIONAL WATER MISSION: The mission was put in place to ensure **integrated water resource management** helping to conserve water, minimize wastage and ensure more equitable distribution both across and within states.

NATIONAL MISSION FOR SUSTAINING THE HIMALAYAN ECOSYSTEM: The plan **aims to conserve biodiversity, forest cover, and other ecological values in the Himalayan region**, where glaciers that are a major source of India's water supply are projected to recede as a result of global warming.

NATIONAL MISSION FOR A GREEN INDIA: Goals include **the afforestation of 6 million hectares of degraded forest lands and expanding forest cover from 23% to 33% of India's territory.**

NATIONAL MISSION FOR SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE: The plan aims to support **climate adaptation in agriculture through the development of climate-resilient crops, expansion of weather insurance mechanisms, and agricultural practices.**

NATIONAL MISSION ON STRATEGIC KNOWLEDGE FOR CLIMATE CHANGE: To gain a **better understanding of climate science, impacts and challenges**, the plan envisions a new Climate Science Research Fund, improved climate modeling, and increased international collaboration.