ENVIRONMENT AND INCLUSIVE GROWTH: CONCERNS AND SOLUTIONS

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Abstract

The uncontrolled speed of development is taking a huge toll on the environment and its components in one way or another. The depletion of environment at this rate will affect mankind and its related fields. There should be constant and sincere efforts for sustainable development, so that the effects of growth should not push the environment in a state where it could not recover. Environment, mankind and economy constitute three pillars for ecodevelopment, and stable growth rate is required to achieve fair balance between them. As majority of the population depends on agriculture, it also affects environmental equilibrium. Therefore, for inclusive economical growth, we have to keep in mind the limits of environmental issues because every unplanned step towards development pushes us back in environmental front. Reduced deforestation, increased food security, conservative models of agriculture, use of biopesticides, and wise use of natural resources are the hope for sustainable development.

Keywords: Environment, Economy, Sustainable development, Agriculture,Food security.

Introduction

The term ‘inclusive growth’ means that everyone is considered and contained when it comes to growth, regardless of their economic status, gender, sex, caste, disability and religion. Inclusive growth approach works on long term perspective and the objective is to achieve productive employment rather than merely direct income redistribution as a means of increasing income for excluded groups. The growth is said to be inclusive when it is sustainable in long run and is broad based across the sector and includes large part of countries labour force and focuses on productive employment as a means of increasing the incomes of poor and excluded groups and raising their standards of living (Ianchovichina and Lundstrom, 2009). There has been drastic effect on the environment by natural and man-made activities. The unrestricted exploitation of resources in the name of development and growth, in a long run, is leading to depletion of environment. In this paper, we will review the factors which are causing this depletion and the ways by which we can achieve sustainable growth with healthy environment.

Ecology and Development

Ecology and development, often referred to as Eco development, means development at local and regional levels, with regular utilization of the potentials of the area involved, with attention given to the proper andwise use of natural resources, technology and organization forms. It should also respect the natural ecosystem and should abide by the regional and local social and cultural patterns.The term also describes a system that integrates developmental activities in consideration to the environment. The three pillars, environment, society, and the economy, are the tools we possess to generate eco development. This triad is efficient when each of the tools is sophisticatedly designed and used appropriately. Both the quantity as well as quality are important, an internal healthy assembly is needed to allow each pillar to play its part and act in symbiosis with the other two pillars. The environment provides all the products and facilities available in the world like energy, raw materials, food, etc. Our society and mankind, both are the beneficiary of thenature acting both as recipient and agent, whoseknowledge is required to determine thebalance between supply and demandand in developing new products. The third pillar of development is economy ismostly restricted to the market.As discussed in Zaman (2008)and Sen (2010), an overrelianceon or predominance of any onepillar will lead todisequilibrium or inefficient equilibrium.

As the economy grows and development proceeds, it consumes natural resources, produces wastes and increases the rate of pollution. It also leads to habitat loss, climate disruption and other environmental calamities. Countries which aim to achieve higher levels of economic development, imply structural change to substitute to industrial and agricultural technologies that are less harmfulto the environment.Resources that are freely available without restriction are more susceptible to unsustainable outcomes.

Biodiversity loss is considered as a special class of environmental degradation as it involves complex ecosystems and its several components. The loss to this system is more severe as it cannot be recovered by technological advances. It differs from other types of environmental degradation such as pollution and deforestation as the latter can possibly be reversed to some extent. While economic growth has an expected adverse effect on biodiversity, the structure of output can be important particularly in low-income countries. By use of appropriate institutional and macroeconomic policies, few aspects of biodiversity such as birds and mammal species have indicated some scope in reduction of the rate of species decline (Torras et al, 1998).

Agricultural growth

In addition to sustainable ecological development, we also need to focus on the aspect of agriculture and food security. The Indian economy has been growing at an impressive rate of seven percent per annum during the last decade, while the agricultural sector hasmaintained a growth rate just three percent during this period. In addition to this, high dependence of the population on agriculture has resulted in the widening of rural-urban income disparity. Therefore, it is necessary that Indian agriculture must grow faster for an inclusive economic growth. The current agricultural growth rate of more than three percent is not disappointing but this should be seen in terms of economic viability of small farmers and high incidence of rural poverty in some parts of the country(IPCC, 2007).

The directive of sustainable development program should focus on eradication of all forms of hunger and to enhance agricultural production. As the land resources are attenuating continuously, there is a huge necessity to produce more and more (Brahmanand et al, 2013). Though introduction of technologies like green revolution and use of pesticides and herbicides have enhanced the food production per acre, but have caused huge toll on the environment and the ecological system. The futuristic approach of sustainable development aims toend all types of poverty and hunger by the end of next decade, but presently,the world is on the verge of warning stage and is looking forward toinstantsteps towards solution.Proper studies are required in order to combat the issue related to agricultural synchronization.

Ray of Hope

The only thing mankind can achieve is afair equilibrium among all its members ifthere are equality, fairness, and freedom,notions that swift social revolutions.In the area of development, this would requirea balanced approach between needsand resources; involvement ofgovernment policies at alllevels, including the nationalgovernments, local and municipalauthorities andalso at the family level. It is most important to develop and exercise tools to monitor the firsttwo requirements (Connor, 2008).

Discrete utilization of natural resources, improvement of ecosystem facilities like reduction in green house gases, and building flexibility to climate change are essential for sustainable agricultural growth. These sustainability issues are additionallytough to handle in delicate and rainfed regions, therefore, these are very important for inclusive growth.Technological revolutions that promote conservation and efficient use of natural resources in addition to institutional reforms to adopt newer environment-friendly agricultural practices candefinitely lead to sustainable production schemes. Institutional reforms should carry out promotion of

incentives for cooperative solutions for shared natural resources and raw materials. These solutions should be such that they are cost effective. It can be attained by collective learning and implementation at small scale. Management of irrigation water resources is an old example and recognized reforms that are directed to provide efficientcrop irrigation can ease the pressure on groundwater resources and, hence could become a better option for joint use of surface as well as groundwater. It is observed that for outstanding performance, there is need for good governance, clear goals and objectives, appropriate scope, agreement with rules, and prudent use of resources. The efficiency of management body and adaptation to local conditions also affect the distribution of aids, especially among the rural poor and uneducated population. Recent times have seen an increasing awareness about ecosystem and environmental services and the susceptibility of Indian agriculture to climate change. Ecosystem services and farm income are adversely affected by unpredictableconditions and risky weather incidents, where semi-arid regions have higher magnitude of vulnerability. These regions have become more affected by climate change because of their greater exposure and sensitivity to climate change, especially temperature and rainfall, and the limited flexibility in adaptive capacity of the farmers (Adger et al, 2007).

Short-term needs have hampered potential long-term benefits, in addition to poverty inducing environmental degradation, which results in aggravated poverty. In this conceptual model, poor individuals act both as victims as well as agents of environmental degradation. Improvement in the well-being of thepoor population suggests increased consumptioncapacity, that includes more food, betterclothing, proper housing, etc. It has been observed that development is always accompanied with anincreased production and consumptionof products, resources and services. More than half of all the ecosystemfacilitiesisbeing degraded or used unsustainably.Small-scale agriculture with well-organized water and soil management possesses great potential for integrated poverty and environment policies. In many instances, it has been seen to reverse ongoing processes of land degradation, improve food security, and reduce the vulnerability of poor populations (Barbier, 1987; Holt, 2001).

Current efforts for reducing deforestation and forest degradation provide another opportunity with tremendous potential for successful poverty and environment policies. A sincere effort of improved land use practices and forested areas in combination with economic incentives and technical support is probably the best option currently available to alleviate frontiers in large sectors of developing countries and to minimize rural poverty. Such efforts alone are

not sufficient to reverse deforestation trends; they should be accompanied by efforts to confrontlarge-scale agriculture, real estate conjecture, and other forces that promote forest destruction.The integration of poverty and environment policies can have significant social benefits. Efficacious sustained interventions are those that keep all the structural realities infocus and also considers underlying impact on the poverty.These put together better governance and greater efficacy of public policy to deliver the transformations essential for anchoring sustainable development.

Acknowledgement

Author of this manuscript would like to acknowledge her colleagues for providing suggestions and useful insight during the preparation of this manuscript.

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