

Environmental Policy: An Overview

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Dhulasi Birundha Varadarajan

*Emeritus Professor, Senior fellow, ICSSR, New Delhi,
Department of Environmental Economics, School of Economics
Madurai Kamaraj University, Madurai, Tamil Nadu, India*

M Chitra

*Assistant Professor, Department of Econometrics School of Economics
Madurai Kamaraj University, Madurai, Tamil Nadu, India*

Abstract

On the eve of India celebrating 75 years of freedom, it is important to review the development of the nation's environmental policy. The earth planet has recently grown more prone to environmental issues, especially since the 1970s, and there is serious worry about whether the earth's life support system is at risk. India is a sizable nation with a large prospective labor force and high population density. It is a developing nation with an economy on track to reach \$5 trillion, a robust, thriving multi-party democracy, a highly independent court, and an open media. Numerous variables have an impact on environmental policies, which dictate how environmental resources are accessed, distributed, used, conserved, and controlled. The environmental laws of India have undergone a paradigm change. This paper analyses the nature and magnitude and ideological change of 75 years of Environmental polices of India in 7 different periods such as I: Period from 1947-1970: Post-independence Period, I: Period of 1970-1980: Decade of Environmental Obligations, III : Period of 1981-1990: Decade of Environmental Activism., IV: Period of 1991-2000 :Decade of cooperative Environmental governance , Period of 2001-2010: Decade of Decentralised Environmental Governance, VI: The Decade of Natural Resource Centralization from 2011 to 2020; and VII: The Decade of International Obligations from 2020 to 2030.

Keywords: Environmental Laws, Environmental Activism, Environmental Policies.

Introduction

Society confronts issues that have countless potential sources and call for various types of policy solutions. The longevity of a single cell organism, including humans, is linked to the context of existing in that sequence. Therefore, it is crucial to create rules that govern today's control of a peaceful environment. In this essay, the writers tried to illustrate the efforts made by the government in the shape of policies ever since independence.

We must retrace the development of India's environmental policy as the nation approaches its completion of seventy-five years of freedom. The astronomy and earth's environment are particularly discussed in the Arthashastra by Kautalya, which was composed between 321 and 300 B.C. and serves as the foundation for the majority of study and policymaking today. The earth globe has become more vulnerable to environmental issues in recent years, particularly since the first 1970s. These issues are dispersed across a number of fields and take place at various geographic dimensions. There is increasing strain on the ecosystem and resources as a result of the unprecedented population increase and advanced technology. As a result, there is a lot of worry these days about how fragile the earth's life support system is. India is a sizable nation with a large prospective labor force and high population density. It is a developing nation with an economy on track to reach \$5 trillion, a robust, thriving multi-party democracy, a highly independent court, and an open media.

The tension between environmental protection and socioeconomic development has frequently been discussed and responded to in India. It is frequently hypothesized that efforts to protect the ecosystem entail expenses that developing nations are unable to bear. According to the Environmental Kuznets Curve (EKC) paradigm, environmental pollution and per individual wealth have an inverted U-shaped connection. (G.M Grossman and Krueger, A.B., 1995). It argues that the inverted U-relationship is a combination of three factors – the scale effect which suggests an increase in pollution when an economy grows, the composition effect referring to structural changes in the economy consequent to growth over years and its long-term environmental effects and the technology effect which posits a reduction in emission due to technological advances from long-term growth.

Numerous variables affect environmental policies, which dictate how environmental resources are obtained, distributed, used, conserved, and controlled. The environmental laws of India have undergone a paradigm change. This paper analyses the nature and magnitude and ideological change of 75 years of Environmental polices of India in 7 different periods such as I: Period from 1947-1970: Post-independence Period, I: Period of 1970-1980: Decade of Environmental Obligations, III: Period of 1981-1990: Decade of Environmental Activism,, IV: Period of 1991-2000: Decade of cooperative Environmental governance, Period of 2001-2010: Decade of Decentralised Environmental Governance, VI: Period from :2011-2020: Decade of Centralisation of Natural Resources and VII: Period of 2020-2030 : Decade of International obligations.

Evolution of Environmental Governance in India Period from 1947-1970: Post-Independence Period

From 1947 to 1970, the focus of post-independence policy was on economic growth, with only minimal attention paid to environmental issues. After India gained its independence in 1947, many famished and ravenous Indians began to worry about their food security. The necessary issues that needed urgent consideration were those related to industrialization and development activities like

those involving irrigation and the production of hydropower. In 1950, the National Commission of India was established with a focus on economic growth. Its first job was to set up “Five-Year Plans” (FYP) to accomplish this ostensible goal. The FYPs initially placed more emphasis on growth than environmental control. Back then, commerce and agricultural goals were the primary goals of forest management. The last item on the thoughts of the government involved in forest administration was the needs of rural forest dependent people. The National Forest Policy Resolution of the Government of India from 1952 is an obvious echo of this attitude. As a result, during those times, woods were used for commercialization and developmental reasons.

Period of 1970-1980: Decade of Environmental Obligations

Environmental concerns on a global scale, international responsibilities, and strong political will helped shape the environmental policy landscape during the 1970s and 1980s through extensive legislative frameworks. Indra Gandhi, the country’s prime minister at the time, returned from the 1972 United Nations Conference on Human, Environment and Development in Stockholm, Sweden. Indra Gandhi established a National Environmental Planning and Coordination Committee. The Central Pollution Board was exposed in 1972, and then the regional bodies. The state agencies were established on November 1, 1980, after the department of the environment. Indra Gandhi was solely responsible for Project Tiger, the program for the survival of tigers, as well as a number of less well-known programs for the preservation of crocodiles, lions, hangul, cranes, Bustards, flamingos, deer, and other vulnerable species. Four new legislative entities were added to the Wildlife (Protection) Act of 1972 in 1972: the National Board for Wildlife and State Wildlife Advisory Boards, the Central Zoo Authority, the Wildlife Crime Control Bureau, and the National Tiger Conservation Authority. In 1975, 1977, 1978, and 1988, the Water (Prevention and control of Pollution) Act of 1974 was modified.

Additionally, during this time period, there were numerous environmental campaigns that eventually resulted in the adoption of democratic methods

to address environmental issues. The Chipko movement began in 1973 when Sunderlal Bahuguna asked women to wrap sacred threads around trees and embrace their stems to stop timber companies from cutting down woodlands in the Uttarakhand regions of Chamoli and Tehri-Garwal. The Kerala Sasthra Sahitya Parishad led the Silent Valley Movement in 1978 to express opposition to the Kerala State energy Board's plan to build an energy dam across the watercourse Kunthipuzha in Silent Valley, a verdant tropical forest in the Palakkad region. 1980 Forest (Conservation) Act prevents the conversion of forest property to non-forest uses without government permission and prohibits and controls the de-reservation of forests. States were forbidden from using forest property for non-forest purposes. The need for environmental preservation was highlighted in the fourth FYP (1969–1974), which also emphasized the significance of both environmental and economic factors.

Period of 1981-1990: Decade of Environmental Activism

India's environmental policy was extreme and exaggerated in the years following the 1984 Bhopal Gas Tragedy. This was a significant occasion in India's natural past. People became more conscious of environmental negligence as a result of the current governmental structure's inadequacy in avoiding the catastrophe and the inadequacy of the judicial processes affecting the victims.

1981 saw the passage of the Air (Prevention and control of Pollution) Act. Boards at the state and federal levels were created to monitor and control emissions. Another Air Act for Union Territories was proposed in 1983 and amended in 1983. Following the Bhopal Gas Tragedy in 1984, the Bhopal Gas Leak Disaster (Processing of Claims) Act was passed in 1985, giving the Indian government exclusive rights to represent all applicants and directing the government to file and establish victim claims. Established in 1985, the National Council for Environmental Policy and Planning later became the Ministry of Environment and Forests. In accordance with The Environmental Protection Act of 1986, (MoEF), now the Ministry of Environment, Forests, and Climate Change (MoEFCC), was established.

The National Coastal Zone Management Authority and the Genetic Engineering Appraisal Committee are two of its official organizations.

In 1986, changes were made to the Mines and Minerals (Regulation and Development) Act of 1957. Although the legislation encourages mining, it was modified by Parliament and clauses like license termination were added in order to protect the environment and manage pollution. The 1988 National Forest Policy prioritized 67% of forest area for the highlands and 33% of forest area for the lowlands. The Hazardous Waste (Management and Handling) Rules of 1989, which were made under the Environmental Protection Act, were revised in 2008 and titled The Hazardous Waste (Management, Handling and Transboundary Movement) Rules of 2008. Further changes came in 2009, 2010 and 2016. It states that responsibility for sanitization falls on refuse makers.

Throughout 1983, Appiko movement, galvanized by Chipko, in Shimoga and Uttar Kannada districts in Karnataka. Narmada Bachao Andolan, a movement by Medha Patkar and BabaAmte against giant dams on watercourse Narmada was held on 1985. Although all the dams except one were built, the movement had created more awareness among the people. Early 1990, Tehri dam was constructed on the river of Bhagirathi. Resistance to the dam centred around human displacement, environmental consequences and the dangers of it being located in the ecological fault Zone.

Period of 1991-2000: Decade of Cooperative Environmental Governance

This period additionally saw a gradual shift towards democratic natural resources management and collaboration between the state and the civil society. This is an era of cooperative engagement between the State and the native communities with respect to forest governance.

The environmental quality during this time period continued to decline despite the existence of a thorough environmental legal structure in the 1970s and 1980s. The mismatch between policy and its execution was largely to blame for this. therefore this decade witnessed Active role of the judiciary (Reich M.R. and Bowonder B. (1992).

The Environmental Protection Act's 1991 Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) notice (EPA). It designated a CRZ in an area up to 500 meters from the high tide mark on the shore, divided it into four categories, and restricted activities like building there. The CRZ has undergone 35 changes, making it the most frequently modified legislation, and each time, its authority has been reduced. 1992 saw the release of the Environment Policy and Strategy Statement for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development. A 1992 notice that covered 32 industries mandated environment impact assessments. For every sectoral evaluation, environmental approval panels were established, and the Center was given complete authority. The National Environmental Tribunal Act was a result of the Rio Summit in 1992, which called for legal and administrative remedies for environmental damage sufferers. The Act states that recompense is sought for harm done to people, property, and consequently the ecosystem.

Justice was delivered through public interest procedures under the Public Liability Insurance Act (PLIA) of 1991 and The National Environmental Tribunal Act, 1995, by the Supreme Court and high tribunals. The National Environmental Appellate Authority Act of 1997 was created to handle challenges involving limitations on the locations where businesses could be established. EIA governs how it runs.

The Bio Medical refuse (Management and Handling) Rules, 1998, which were updated in 2016, govern the segregation, disposal, collection, and handling of refuse in medical facilities.

In the Joint Forest Management and Watershed initiatives, alliances between the state and native groups were established during this democratic decade. (Guha R. 2001).

The 1998 National Zoo Policy aimed to improve zoo administration. According to the Environment (Siting for Industrial Projects) Rules of 1999, industrial growth projects must take environmental preservation into consideration when choosing a location. The National Environmental Appellate Authority (NEAA) Act of 1997 and the Panchayat Extension to Scheduled Areas (PESA) Act of 1996 are seen as steps in this direction. The manufacture,

sale, and use of ODS are regulated by the Ozone Depleting Substances (Regulation and Control) Rules, 2000.

Each local body is subject to the local Solid Wastes (Management and Handling) Rules of 2000 regarding the collection, segregation, storing, transit, processing, and disposal of municipal solid wastes. Rules for the regulation and control of noise pollution. 2000 expressed that the noise levels in any area/zone shall not exceed the Ambient Air quality standards in respect of noise as laid out in the Schedule and also the authority shall be answerable for the management of noise pollution control measures and also the due compliance of the ambient air quality standards in respect of noise.

Period of 2001-2010: Decade of Decentralised Environmental Governance

While the first ten years of the new century saw the emergence of decentralized rights-based strategies. The Energy Conservation Act of 2001 was passed, establishing energy consumption standards for equipment, user energy consumption guidelines, and energy conservation regulations for commercial structures. Under this Act, the Bureau of Energy Efficiency is a governmental entity. According to the Batteries (Management and Handling) Rules of 2001, every battery maker, importer, customer, and other vendor must dispose of batteries in a manner that is safe for the ecosystem.

The entry point for creating an appropriate, legal structure for the use of biological resources was India's endorsement of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). The Biological Diversity Act of 2002 seeks to protect biological resources, ensure their sustainable use, and ensure that they are equitably distributed to indigenous people. The distribution of those commodities is controlled by a three-tier system. The National Bio Diversity Authority, State Bio Diversity Boards, and neighborhood Bio Diversity Management Committees make up this organization. The 2003 Wildlife (Protection) Amendment Act was established. The changes strengthened penalties and punishments for offenses against threatened or endangered species of plants and animals as well as environmentally important regions. Additionally, it included rules for the

commercial exploitation of biological resources, as well as measures to safeguard local knowledge about them and ensure the fair and honest distribution of benefits.

In addition to the earlier regulations, the MoEF also introduced the National Environmental Policy (NEP) in 2006. With the passage of the Forest Rights Act in 2006 and the addition of inclusive bio diversity policies, decentralized administration and the rights-based strategy saw an advantage. The Forest Rights Act of 2006, which was passed into law in 2006, acknowledges the past injustice forest residents have endured as a result of the government's disregard for their rights. The Forest Department had problems with Adivasis and communities that resided in forests as a result of the misguided perception and poor execution. The Ministry of Environment and Forests sent notifications to all states in May 2002 ordering them to remove "encroachers" from forest areas. This led to the widespread eviction of woodland residents across thousands of hectares in several locations across the nation. Social group advocates, community groups, and scholars responded across the country as part of a national alliance. (Asher and Agarwal, 2007). The JFM strategy garnered widespread backing, favorable donor interest, and swift scale-up. Approximately 1,18,213 JFM groups were in charge of overseeing 23 million hectares of woods by 2011 (ENVIS, 2011).

The National Tiger Conservation Authority was established on the same day that the Wild Life (Protection) Amendment Act was modified in 2006. On the recommendation of the Tiger Task Force, this was created to restructure the administration of Project Tiger and Tiger Reserves and to combat animal offenses through the Crime Control Bureau. The 2006 Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act seeks to strike a compromise between human rights and protection.

In order to address issues related to climate change, the National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC) was introduced in June 2008. The NAPCC has eight missions: (i) the National Solar Mission, (ii) the National Mission on Enhanced Energy Efficiency, (iii) the National Water Mission, (iv) the National Mission for Green India, (v) National

Mission on Sustainable Habitat, (vi) National Mission for Sustainable Agriculture, (vii) National Mission for Sustaining the Himalayan Ecosystem, and (viii) National Mission on Strategic Knowledge for Climate Change.

The National Green Tribunal (NGT) was established in 2010 in accordance with the National Green Tribunal Act, on the recommendation of the Supreme Court, the Law Commission, and India's duties under international environmental law, as a specialized judicial authority to decide environmental cases in the nation. (Brara, 2018, Gill, 2019.) Despite having broad authority, the NGT is unable to adjudicate cases involving the Indian Forest Act of 1927 or the Wildlife (Protection) Act.

Period from: 2011 - 2020: Decade of Centralisation of Natural Resources

In the last ten years, there has been a resurgence of centralization in resource administration, which has caused many parties to dispute the area of policy development. Through policy efforts like "Make in India," "ease of doing business," and similar programs, the government's attention has shifted throughout this decade to boosting the Indian economy and creating employment. (Nagpal and religion, 2017). Civil society groups were opposing steps to limit woodland and environmental clearances at the time. (More, 2016).

The Environment and Forest Ministry was well-groomed throughout this decade in numerous expert groups. In order to identify environmentally vulnerable areas within the Western Ghats, the Gadgil committee was established in 2010. (Gadgil et al., 2011). According to the E-waste (Management) Rules of 2011, everyone involved with electronic and electrical instruments, from manufacturers to e-waste dismantlers, had to acquire a permit in order to disassemble them. This was modified in 2016 to clarify that only authorized dismantlers may conduct e-waste dismantling operations.

The job of updating the Net Present Value of the woods moved for development projects was given to the Indian Institute of Forest Management in 2012. (Verma et al., 2014). In the wake of the 2013 Kedarnath tragedy in the mountainous state of Uttarakhand in the Himalayas, the Chopra committee

was established to evaluate the effect of hydroelectric projects. (MoEF, 2014). To evaluate and recommend changes to India's environmental, forestry, and wildlife legislation, the government established a High-Level Committee (ET Bureau, 2014).

India officially acknowledges global warming and other climatic impacts in 2014 when the Ministry of Environment and Forests is changed to Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change. Green India Mission (erstwhile National Afforestation Programme) was launched in February 2014 with the objectives of (i) increasing forest cover by up to 5 million hectares and rising quality of forest cover on further 5 million hectares of land, (ii) enhancing eco-system services like capturing and storing atmospheric carbon to reduce global warming, and (iii) increasing forest-based livelihood income of about three million households.

With the support of 197 members to the treaty, the Conference of members approved the Paris Agreement in 2015. (including India). (Paris Accord, 2015) The Paris Agreement seeks to curb greenhouse gas pollution on a global scale and keep the rise in average world temperature to 1.5 to 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels.

The Compensatory Afforestation Fund Management and Planning Authority (CAMPA) Act 2016 seeks to mitigate the impact of diversion of forest land for non-forest purposes by making sure through a well-defined institutional mechanism, that the funds are released and utilized quickly, efficiently and transparently. The money can be used for fake plantings, wildlife and forest preservation, and development of infrastructure connected to forests, among other things.

The Plastic Waste (Management) Rules of 2016 required that plastic sheets must have a minimum thickness of 50 microns and that plastic tote bags must have a minimum thickness of 40 microns. By amending the regulations in 2021, single-use plastic items with a high possibility for littering and poor utility will be prohibited by 2022.

The 2016 Regulation of Lead Content in Household and Decorative House Paints Rules forbid the production, sale, import, and export of Household and Decorative paints with a lead or lead complex content of more than 90 parts per

million. Municipal Solid Wastes Rules of 2000 were superseded by the Solid Waste (Management) Rules of 2016. The 3 Rs-recovery, reuse, and recycling-were integrated into the new regulations, which are applicable outside of municipal boundaries. The Wetlands (Conservation and administration) Rules of 2017 gave States the ability to locate and observe wetlands by decentralizing administration of them.

As of 2019, India's total forest cover covers 71 million hectares out of its 329 million hectares of land. This represents 22% of the country's entire physical area. Lakshadweep (90%), Mizoram (85%), the Andaman and Nicobar Islands (82%), Meghalaya (76%), and Manipur (75%), among others, are among the states with a comparatively greater forest cover as a percentage of their geographical area. (2019 Forest Survey of Bharat). Despite India's general rise in forest cover, the Standing Committee on Science and Technology, Environment, Forests, and Climate Change (2018) stated that some of the North-Eastern states saw a drop in forest cover in 2017. Manipur, Arunachal Pradesh, and Mizoram were these republics. (Report 313 number). The National Clean Air Programme (NCAP) was introduced by the Ministry of Environment, Forests, and Climate Change in January 2019. (Press Information Bureau, 2019.) and establishes a national goal to reduce PM2.5 and PM10 concentration levels by 20% to 30% by 2024, using 2017 as the baseline for concentration levels. For each of the 102 non-attainment towns identified by the Central Pollution Control Board, a city-specific action plan must be created. (MEFCC (2019).

Period of 2020-2030: Decade of International Obligations

A decline in democracy forest administration, a move toward re-centralization, and a constant struggle between a strong state and a resilient civil society have all been observed in this decade. A high-level inter-ministerial Apex Committee for the Implementation of the Paris Agreement was established in December 2020 by the Ministry of Environment, Forests, and Climate Change. The Committee would act as India's primary supervisor for carbon markets. Its functions include: (i) developing policies and programmes to create India's

domestic Climate change compliant to international obligations, (ii) coordinating communications of Nationally determined contributions, and (iii) process responsibilities of involved ministries for achieving India's Nationally determined contribution goals under Paris Agreement. (2020–21 Economic Survey, (MEFCC, 2020 a)

The Environmental Impact Assessment notice, 2006 is intended to be replaced by the proposed notice released by the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change in March 2020. It suggests specific guidelines and benchmarks for both the development of new infrastructure projects and the expansion or upgrading of already-existing infrastructure projects. These initiatives include roads, mines, runways, and dams. (MEFCC (2020 b). An allotment of Rs 4,400 crore through the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs for pure air for big towns (population greater than one million) was made public under the Union Budget Speech for 2020–21.

The Green India Mission will receive Rs 250 crore in 2021–2022—a 14% yearly rise over what was actually spent in 2019–20. The National Afforestation Program's funding allotment had been deemed insufficient by the Standing Committee on Science, Technology, Environment, and Forests in its report on the "Status of Forests in India" (2019). It was made known that the Plastic Waste Management (Amendment) Rules, 2021 sought to phase out single-use plastic by 2022.

The National Hydrogen Mission, which aims to produce hydrogen using renewable energy sources, was announced by India as one of the other initiatives. The 26th United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP26), which brought together leaders and delegates from 197 nations to decide on the steps that should be taken to combat climate change, was held in Glasgow, Scotland in November 2021. The Indian Prime Minister announced some goals for India during the meeting. These include reaching net zero emissions by 2070 and bringing India's portion of green energy to 50% by 2030.

The Mantri Kisan Urja Surakshaevam Utthaan Mahabhiyan (PM-KUSUM) plan was introduced by India to provide energy and water security, de-dieselize the agricultural sector, and increase farming income by producing solar energy. A plan

for "Development of Solar Parks and Ultra Mega Solar Power Projects" is being implemented with a goal capacity of 40 GW by March 2024 in order to enable large-scale grid-connected solar energy projects.

Roof Top Solar Programme Phase-II was expedited with a goal of 40GW deployed capacity by December 2022 to utilize solar rooftop systems. The program offers funding assistance for up to 4 GW of rooftop solar capacity to the residential market. To take advantage of offshore wind energy along India's shoreline, the Indian government announced the Offshore Wind Energy Policy. Off the coasts of Gujarat and Tamil Nadu, the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy is creating a technique and a plan for the installation of offshore wind projects.

The 1980 regulations were updated in July 2022 by the Ministry of Environment, Forestry, and Climate Change, which also published new Forest (Conservation) Rules. This enables private companies to clear woodlands without the locals' permission. It blatantly violates the Forest Rights Act.

Budgetary Provisions for Environment

The following are some of the budget's 2021–2022 environmental highlights: 42 metropolitan areas with a population of more than 1,000,000 will each receive Rs 2,217 crore to address the issue of air pollution. A voluntary scrapping policy will be implemented to get rid of outdated and unsuitable cars. After (i) twenty years (personal vehicles) and (ii) fifteen years (other vehicles), cars can undergo a fitness review. (commercial vehicles). This aims to promote fuel-efficient cars and environmentally friendly transportation while lowering vehicle pollution and the cost of imported oil.

Urban Swachh Bharat Mission 2.0 was implemented with a capital expenditure of Rs. 1.4 billion spread over five years. (2021-26). Complete faecal waste management, a decrease in single-use plastics, source division of trash, and a decrease in air pollution are just a few of the mission's goals. The Ministry of Environment, Forests, and Climate Change has been given a budget of Rs 2,870 crore for 2021–22, which represents a 6% yearly rise over the real spending in 2019–20. The Ministry will receive 0.1% of the federal government's projected spending for 2021–2022.

The Ministry of Environment, Forests, and Climate Change has allocated Rs3,030 crore for 2022–23, which could represent a 20% rise over the updated projections for 2021–22. The Ministry will receive 0.1% of the federal government’s anticipated total spending for 2022–2023 in this allotment.

The Ministry’s spending increased by 2% annually on average between 2010–11 and 2022–23. Between 2010–11 and 2021–22, the Ministry’s real spending has generally been lower than what was anticipated in the annual budget. The Ministry of Environment, Forests, and Climate Change underutilized the money allotted to them, according to statistics from 2010–11 to 2020–21.(Table1& Figure 1).

India’s Environmental Policy Gaps

1. India, first The goal of development is to hasten societal and economic progress, but despite the numerous policies that have been put in place to reduce water and air pollution, 13 of the world’s 20 riskiest cities are located in India.
2. The draft EIA notice of 2020 expands the scope of the environmental impact assessment (EIA) letter from 2006, but there are issues with the project’s review, permitting, and tracking. The EIA 2020 project entirely omitted screening and scoping as a result of projects being approved quickly.
3. The National Clean Air Scheme’s Abatement, Elimination, and Substitution of Sources of Pollution and the Air Act’s requirements were not effectively implemented, which increased the number of workplace mishaps in India.
4. Supporting the extensive, badly thought-out intrusion of development projects into local wildlife and natural environments, undermining regulation frameworks. For instance, the Coastal Regulatory Zone (CRZ) was authorized despite strong resistance from the public, or the Conservation Act was bypassed to eliminate “development projects” from regions that were previously protected.
5. Neglecting to give local communities’ empowerment and use of customary knowledge for managing and utilizing climate change mitigation choices top priority.
6. The primary issue is that the Ministry of Environment, Forests, and Climate Change is underutilizing the majority of the funds allocated

to it. (Table 1 & Fig 1). This pattern demonstrates how poorly the Ministry’s planned programs have been carried out.

Recommendations

- Over time, India has crafted its environmental laws to comply with global standards for environmental safety. According to the geographical and cultural variety of the nation, Indian laws are well-crafted, and it appears that all facets and regions of the environment are fully covered. But there is a dearth of Effective Implementation. Therefore, the execution procedure needs to be simplified.
- Environmental sustainability should be prioritized in all planning, budgeting, and growth initiatives rather than being viewed as an afterthought or a formality for approval.
- India’s environmental protection system is not onerous in terms of regulations, and the administration must persuade business to shift its focus from sanction to compliance.
- Effective identification, monitoring, and management of environmental risks such as pollution and water stress by the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) and State Pollution Control Boards (SPCB) will reduce carbon dioxide emissions from industry, vehicles, etc. and improve preparedness to meet environmental standards. Additionally, it gives India resilience against economic losses brought on by the country’s rising regularity of extreme weather events.
- By tracking and analyzing the effects of these policies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and civil society organizations (CSOs) can improve India’s environmental protection system.
- Rapid climate change and increasing environmental destruction require effective reform of existing policies and revision of laws, such as the current Wildlife Act, which neglects the protection of marine ecosystems.
- The government should recognize its social responsibility to protect the environment and promote public health amid trade-offs between development responsibilities and environmental protection.

Conclusion

Environmental management is a theory of political ecology and environmental policy that promotes viability (sustainable development) as the most important component of the control of all political, social, and economic action. To ensure that the long-term conservation of natural resources is not hampered, official and non-institutional methods are all the more crucial. Performance is thought to be improved by streamlining the development management procedure in this situation. The development of new institutions, the improvement of already-existing institutions, the development of governmental frameworks, and efforts that promote the preservation of the ecosystem and its resources can all play a role in this. It is clear that India is making commendable efforts to safeguard the environment, and there are many environmental-related rules, policies, and laws in the nation. However, there is a dearth of appropriate monitoring and consistent policy changes based on pertinent input from the stakeholders, preventing effective execution of these measures.

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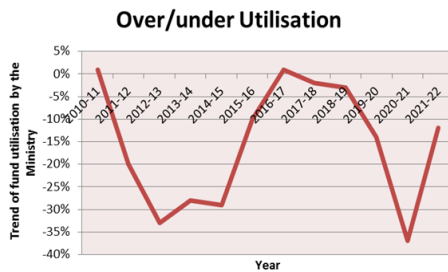
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Table 1 Trend of Fund Utilisation by the Ministry (in Rs crore)

Year	Budget Estimates	Actuals	Over/under Utilisation
2010-11	2351	2372	1%
2011-12	2492	1982	-20%
2012-13	2629	1753	-33%
2013-14	2630	1890	-28%
2014-15	2256	1599	-29%
2015-16	1682	1521	-10%
2016-17	2250	2627	1%
2017-18	2675	2586	-2%
2018-19	2675	2538	-3%
2019-20	2955	1967	-14%
2020-21	3100	2015	-37%
2021-22	2870	2,520	-12%

Figure 1 Trend of fund utilisation by the Ministry (in Rs crore)



- Source: Note: (+) indicates over-utilisation; (-) indicates under-utilisation. Sources: Union Budgets from 2010-11 to 2022-23; PRS.

Source: Table 1

Author Details

Dhulasi Birundha Varadarajan, Emeritus Professor, Senior Fellow, ICSSR, New Delhi, Department of Environmental Economics, School of Economics, Madurai Kamaraj University, Madurai, Tamil Nadu, India
Email ID: dhulasibirundha@yahoo.com

M. Chitra, Assistant Professor, Department of Econometrics School of Economics, Madurai Kamaraj University, Madurai, Tamil Nadu, India *Email ID:* chitra.eco@mkuniversity.org