

2016 Annual Conference of Indian National Association for The Club of Rome

“SECURING THE FORESTS, LAND, AND SOILS FOR ALL

Coherence in policies and actions for healthy ecosystems”

November 23-24, 2016 – India International Centre, New Delhi, INDIA

Background paper

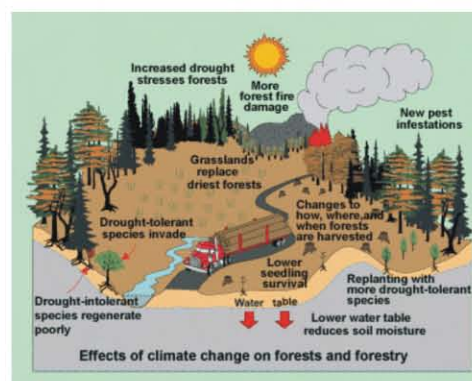
FUNDAMENTAL ISSUES:

Our Annual Conference 2014–“Securing Food for All” highlighted the concern that food production alone is not sufficient to guarantee future food security; the nexus of food, water-energy and ecosystems must be maintained as they are interconnected to each other. We cannot have food security without effective ecosystem resources and its services to sustain agriculture, and cannot conserve forests and ecosystems without thinking about how to feed the hungry population, and cannot grow sufficient food without enough water. The greatest challenge on our planet Earth would be to meet out the demands when the population will cross over 9 billion by 2050—which will require 50% additional power, access to 30% more water and availability of 50% more food. A considerable body of work suggests that forests support both food security and contribute to improved nutrition across the globe.

Estimates suggest that by 2025, 1.8 billion people will be living in regions with absolute water scarcity, with the possibility of two-thirds of the world’s population experiencing water-stress conditions. It is a well-known fact that water security depends on forests and wetlands, hence ecosystems and forests must be safeguarded.

Human impact on ecosystems of the earth is dominated by the heavy footprints of industrialization, urbanization and heavy infrastructure expansion. Increasing population, exploitation of mother earth, clearing of forests, intensive chemical based agriculture, etc., thereby weakening the quality of land, eventually, it will impact on water and food availability.

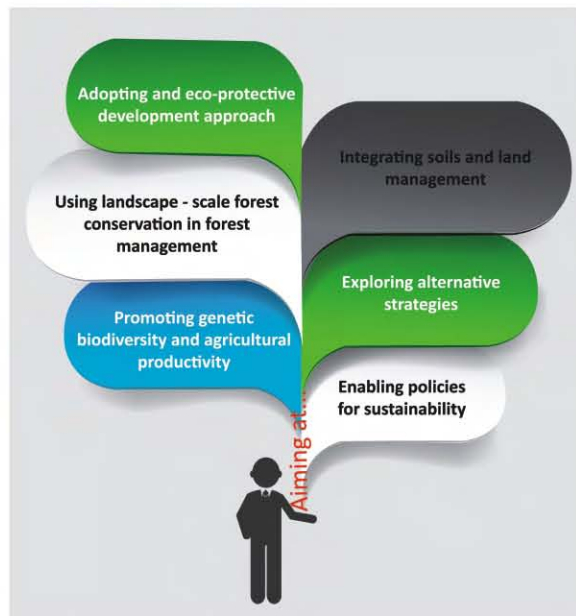
India's population and the economy will continue to grow at a rapid pace for the next few decades. This rapid transformation may be a vast threat to human well-being and the health of the planet. Each additional mouth to feed with the current development approaches will lead to additional strain on both our water and our food security systems. With the nation's rapid industrialization growth there are a number of environmental concerns that spikes the need for resources - lumber, fossil fuels, fertile soil, and water. It contributes directly to climate change. The effects of climate change on forest and forestry are worst and invite natural disasters, which human societies are often prominently experiencing nowadays.



POINTS TO PONDER ON:

Human society and the global economy are inseparably linked to forests and ecosystems. More than one-fourth of the world's population relies on forest resources for their livelihoods. Hence, it is needed to targets on:

1. Adopting an eco-protective development approach;
2. Using landscape approach in forest conservation and forest management;
3. Promoting genetic biodiversity and agriculture productivity, effective supply chain management;
4. Integrated soils and land management;
5. Exploring alternative strategies; and
6. Enabling policies for sustainability.



(Further ideas will also be collected through the speakers' views and participants before culminating the recommendations)

YESTERDAY'S DEBATE:



Till now, above cited approaches-Environmental Degradation, Extent of forest resources, Sea Level Increase, Greenhouse gases, Habitat Change, Pollution, Poverty and Community Participation, etc. produced countless proposals and initiatives; which are generally loosely connected; it is needed to tie them together. The Club of Rome - India stands firm on its ideology "The Limits to Growth", which is based on the study about the future of our planet, a computing model which took into account the relations between various global developments and produced computer simulations for alternative scenarios.

THE DEBATE NEEDED TODAY: TODAY'S DEBATE SHOULD RELATE TO THE ISSUES OF SUSTAINABILITY

Viable Economy:

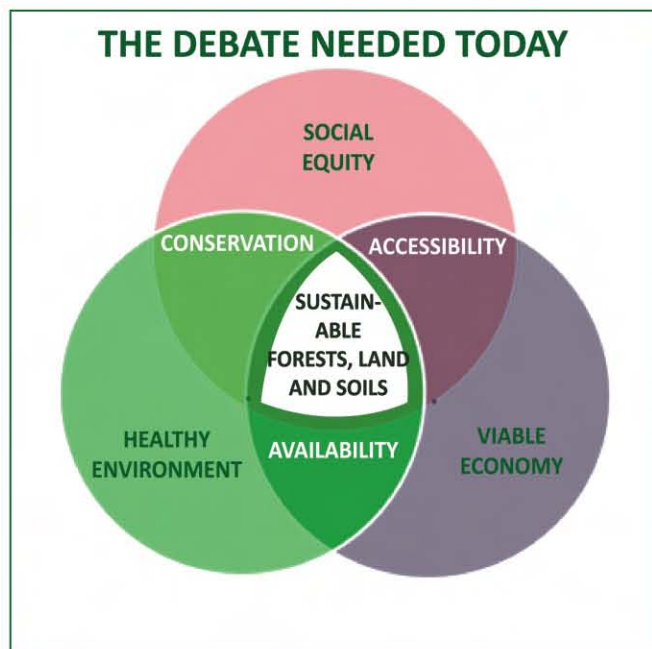
Macroeconomic decisions yield prodigious impact on overall natural resource utilization within the boundaries of the nation. Appropriate inputs from primary (extractive), secondary (manufacturing) and tertiary (service) sectors are vital for a viable economy. Economic development can undoubtedly go hand-in-hand with environmental conservation and social justice.

Social Equity:

Citizens must have equal status with respect to natural resources' benefit sharing along with environment consciousness. Economic incentives may motivate change of behavior.

Healthy Environment:

The harmonious relationship between man and environment is based on adaptation and adjustment. Once this balance is disturbed, maladjustment will restrict health of mankind, flora and fauna. Our security depends on a healthy environment.



THE NEED FOR POLICY COHERENCE

Stockholm Declaration (1972) and 42nd Indian Constitutional Amendment (1976) Act geared up the process of legislative reforms and embarked on many changes in policies. However, the nation has witnessed a huge difference in rhetoric and reality due to the poor service delivery mechanism.

Gigantic population impacts on the excessive utilization of natural resources which create numerous challenges for forests and ecosystems. The present policies need a retrospective analysis with a proactive, forward thinking approach and policy framework by keeping future challenges in mind. By enhancing responsibilities and increasing ownership among the communities towards forest protection so as to balance resource utilization and resource creation of ecosystems.

ISSUES TO BE COVERED DURING THE CONFERENCE:

Alternative Infrastructure Pathways and their Impacts:

The human activities consume resources and produce waste. The discussions would be focused on how natural infrastructure can be protected and developed. India is focusing on meet-out infrastructure gaps, which is needed, but we have to be careful for tomorrow.

Sustainable Ecosystems and Environment- addressing the vulnerability of Women, Children and Tribes:

We must meet out the challenges related to vulnerability and its extent, which is interlinked with the issues such as land degradation, climate change, water resources, farming, grazing practices, afforestation, deforestation, forest management, upgraded water management, institutional and policy reform for better land policies, growth and development.

Forests health and its restoration:

Forest health has a major impact on the atmosphere's composition. The biota influences the uptake and release of greenhouse gases through the photosynthetic process. Forests are home for wildlife, protect soil from erosion, reduce runoff, improve water quality as well clean and clear the air. Forests health must be ensured and provisions are needed for better restoration.

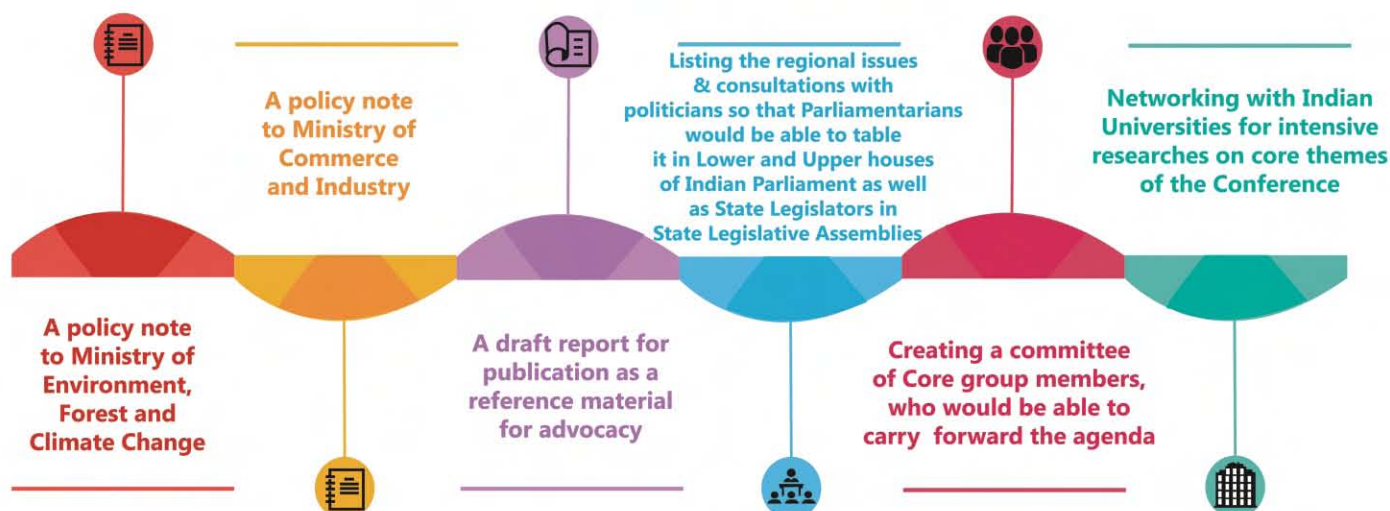
Land and soils' health and its restoration:

Under business as usual conditions, the growing demand for food and non-food biomass could lead to a gross expansion of cropland in the range of 320 to 850 million hectares by 2050. The implications of land degradation have upon agriculture productivity, the environment, and its effects on food security and as a result, the productive capacity of land has deteriorated.

Water to Connect Land, Soil and Forests Resources have an interrelationship bonding. Water supports aquatic life and vegetation; provides drinking water to human beings, their livestock and wildlife; influences the micro-climate; recharges groundwater; dilutes pollutants and purifies itself; sustains a wide range of livelihoods; transports silt and enriches the soils etc.

The legal and policy framework needs many provisions such as constitutional, legislative, regulations, tribunals, public litigation systems, etc. after the United Nations Conference on Human Environment in Stockholm (1972), thereafter the Constitution of India was amended to include protection of the environment as a constitutional mandate. Thereafter, a number of laws came up, but they have to be revisited as per present scenario and context; new financial provisions are already made under the new law, but they need to be handled with the long-sighted approach.

Outcome of the Conference



INDIAN NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE CLUB OF ROME - THEME FOR THE CONFERENCE **"SECURING THE FORESTS, LAND, AND SOILS FOR ALL - Coherence in Policies and Action for Healthy Ecosystems"**

The Club of Rome-India's Annual Conference (Delhi, 23-24 November 2016), will bring together top national and international experts, thought leaders, and policy-makers. It will look deeply into existing or proposed policies that have counter-intuitive or counterproductive implications for securing the forests, land, water and soils. Finally, it will highlight this needed coherence among these policies, and help formulation of converging strategies for revising or strengthening them.

CONTACT DETAILS FOR THE CLUB OF ROME:

For any further information or query please contact:

THE CLUB OF ROME-INDIA

B-32, TARA Crescent, Qutab Institutional Area, New Delhi-110016, India [9910296783]

Email: info@clubofrome.in/vmasse@clubofrome.in