



## Factors Responsible for Loss of Biodiversity

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Disasters and accidents lead to less in wild biodiversity. A recently added cause is the change in climate on global and regional levels, our own activities are leading to conditions whereby certain gases are being added in the atmosphere or their natural concentrations are increasing at unprecedented rate. Common examples are carbon dioxide, methane, CFCs (Chloro fluoro carbons), etc. Carbon dioxide is increasing in the atmosphere on account of high rate of burning of fossil fuel, deforestation, degradation of aquatic habitats and death of organisms which could otherwise use atmosphere carbon dioxide. Similarly, methane is increasing in the atmosphere due to use of fossil fuels, from aquatic habitats and discharge of methane with intestinal gases of certain types of animals. As for as CFCs are Concerned, Concentration of these chemicals, in industries and in certain household appliances. Various reasons can be assigned to the loss of biodiversity. Among these are: Habitat loss, Encroachment and degradation of natural ecosystems, unscientific and unsustainable exploitation of natural resources, Hunting of wild species, unscientific and our fishing, collection of wild species for various reasons, Introduction of exotic species which eliminate the naturally growing species and Pollution, Habitat destruction leads to reduction in areas covered by forests, grad lands, freshwater bodies, marine ecosystems, etc. Degradation of these ecosystems. Poaching and hunting, combined with habitat destruction have threatened the existence of several species of animals and birds. We can cite the examples of the lesser florican, This bird is a member of the busted family. These birds prefer to walk than fly. To facilita the same, they have long legs. Till recently, these beautiful birds could be seen in large number in the grasslands of the entire Indian subcontinent, Now, these birds are threatened due to fast concussion of grasslands in to agriculture are as, their large size also make them easy pray to hunting for table purposes, Similarly, overutilization and over harvesting have resulted in depletion of resources like medicinal plants, timber spices, fishes, marines flora and fauna, etc.

Conservation of bio-diversity is of immense importance for us. We obtain large a number of products and services from the biodiversity present around us. Almost everything that we require on, day-to-day basis including land, food, water, air, medicines, etc.

The biological recourse and ecosystems play an important role in providing for human security and human development. By way of agriculture, fishing, forestry, etc. The building up national economies and generate employment. Products obtained from different ecosystems are many such as food, water, fodder, timber, medicines, fibrous, leather, fuel etc.

Biodiversity has various other dimensions too is extremely important for people living with low technology lifestyles. They depend on land and water for a variety of products on which they sustain themselves. In the absence of such recourse and products their standard of living will suffer and finally their existence may be in jeopardy. This is a very important reason why it is not easy to assign exact economic values to any commodity only as per the standard economic principles. For example, we assign productive use value for commodities which are systematically harvested and sold in the market. Common examples related to wild biodiversity are construction timber, fuel wood, fodder, fish, marine products rattan, fibers, medicinal plants, honey, wax, natural, perfumes, dyes, gums, resins, certain

fruits, spices etc. But we need to understand that there could also be direct and consumptive values to a large number of products. Such products are unlikely to appear in national or international markets. Fodder, fuel wood, food materials.

To meet the long term goals of biodiversity conservation it is essential that the development process and priorities are oriented in such a way that ecological security and livelihood issues are taken into account livelihood issues can be addressed if the community rights are ensured and national, international and local interests are properly balanced Interests of the local community has to receive priority over national and international interests. Only then can the local communities be expected to protect and conserve the biodiversity. One more aspect which is of importance is that poverty-stricken people in any locality cannot be expected to protect the biodiversity. They may be forced to fell trees, harvest edible parts of plants or hunt animals for their survival Hence, it is essential that poverty is addressed and eliminated and an acceptable standard of living is provided to everyone.

If we discuss regarding degradation of fertile land into desert is from the present-day Iraq. History teacher us that the area between the two rivers Tigris and Euphrates was extremely fertile. It gave birth to the world dominating civilizations of Babylon and Sumer. Presently, the complete stretch is desert and it did not happen on account of natural phenomenon. Human activities, which were unfriendly to the environment, were responsible, Intensive agriculture; animal farming at large scale and extraction of natural resources beyond the limit of sustenance were some at the important factors. As a result, the area became a desert and the rich civilizations were wiped out. One can cite many other examples where mismanagement on the part of human race has resulted in conversion of highly productive ecosystems into deserts and wastelands. In our country itself there are vast stretches of wastelands in different parts. Historically, these areas were not wasteland, these have turned into wastelands on account excessive exploitation, deforestation, soil erosion, nutrient loss, Stalinization, etc. The next step after wasteland is only desert, if corrective measures are not adopted in time.

Obviously, this total scenario points to the real threat to the rich bio-diversity at the country with every passing year more and more species of plants, animals and other organisms are finding their place in the list of endangered or threatened species. But, We need not get disheartened. This is universal phenomenon. Most of us have the illusion that the developed world is very conscious about the environment, especially the biodiversity. The fact is not so. We have chopped down 93 percent of our old growth forests, ploughed under 98 percent of our native prairies, and filled in more than 50 percent of our wetlands. More or less similar is the situation with other developed nations. This is the reason that predictions are being made that up to two thirds of all the species present on this earth are likely to be exterminated by the end at this century. If this forecast comes true, a large number of plants and animals all over the world, which comprise the unique natural heritage of communities and countries, will disappear. Their place will be taken by opportunistic and globally adaptable creatures such as cockroaches, rats, pigeon, weeds of different type and so on. These species have the capability to readily adapt to disturbed environment and they tend to eliminate the species which are native to the area. It has been going on since life originated on this earth. A large number of species of plants and animals which existed in part became extinct. Simultaneously, new species evolved; however, the point of concern is that the present estimates indicate that the world is losing species at up to 10,000 times the natural rate of extinction. This rate is alarming as it is more than what resulted in the extinction of dinosaurs about 65 million years ago.

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