



PERSPECTIVE

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The Comprehensive Study on Water and Environmental Degradation

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Description

Environmental degradation, which includes poor soil, water, and air quality, ecosystem disruption, habitat loss, the extinction of wildlife, and pollution, is the deterioration of the environment as a result of resource depletion. This concept encompasses any environmental change or disturbance that is seen as detrimental or undesirable. Environmental issues are the negative effects of any human action on the environment. Environmental factors are taken into account on both a biological and physical level. Among the foremost causes of great worry are waste pollution, water pollution, natural environment pollution, air pollution, and other serious environmental challenges.

Biodiversity loss

Scientists believe that human activity has hastened the sixth great extinction event on earth. The loss of biodiversity has been attributed in part to human overcrowding, ongoing human population growth, and excessive resource use by the richest people on earth. A 2020 World Wildlife Fund study found that 68% of vertebrate species had perished since 1970 as a result of human activities, particularly excessive consumerism, population development, and intensive farming. Overfishing, expanding industrial agriculture, and increasing land use for livestock rearing are just a few of the anthropogenic factors putting an estimated one million species of plants and animals at risk of extinction, according to the Global Assessment Report on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, published by the United Nations' IPBES in 2019. Since more than 11,000 years ago, when agriculture was first practiced, almost 70% of the earth's land surface has undergone human transformation. Half of the world's vegetation biomass has been lost, while biodiversity in terrestrial animal populations has generally decreased by more than 20%. Just 3% of the plan-

et's surface area, or areas with robust populations of native animal species and little to no human traces, are ecologically and florally intact, according to a 2021 research. Many of these untouched ecosystems were discovered in areas where aboriginal people still lived. Regarding the implications of these losses on human livelihoods and wellbeing, grave concerns have been raised.

Impacts of environmental degradation on women's livelihoods

The Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations claims that in rural areas with degraded lands and ecosystems, both girls and women have heavier workloads, which has an effect on livelihoods owing to biodiversity loss and ecosystem degradation. Women's livelihoods, health, food and nutrition security, access to water and energy, and coping mechanisms are disproportionately impacted by environmental deterioration.

Water degradation

The diminishing supply of fresh water on Earth is a significant factor in environmental degradation. Just about 2.5% of the water on Earth is fresh water; the remainder is salt water. About 30% of the 2.5% of fresh water that is available for consumption is actually available because 69% of it is frozen in ice caps on Antarctica and Greenland. Given that life on Earth ultimately depends on fresh water, it is an incredibly valuable resource. Water sustains both plants and animals, distributes nutrients, minerals, and chemicals throughout the biosphere, and shapes the Earth's surface through the movement and deposition of materials. 95% of fresh water is currently used for its top three functions, which include irrigation of farms, golf courses, and parks, 6% for home uses like indoor bathing and outdoor garden and grass maintenance, and 4% for industrial applications like processing, washing, and chilling in manufacturing facilities.

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