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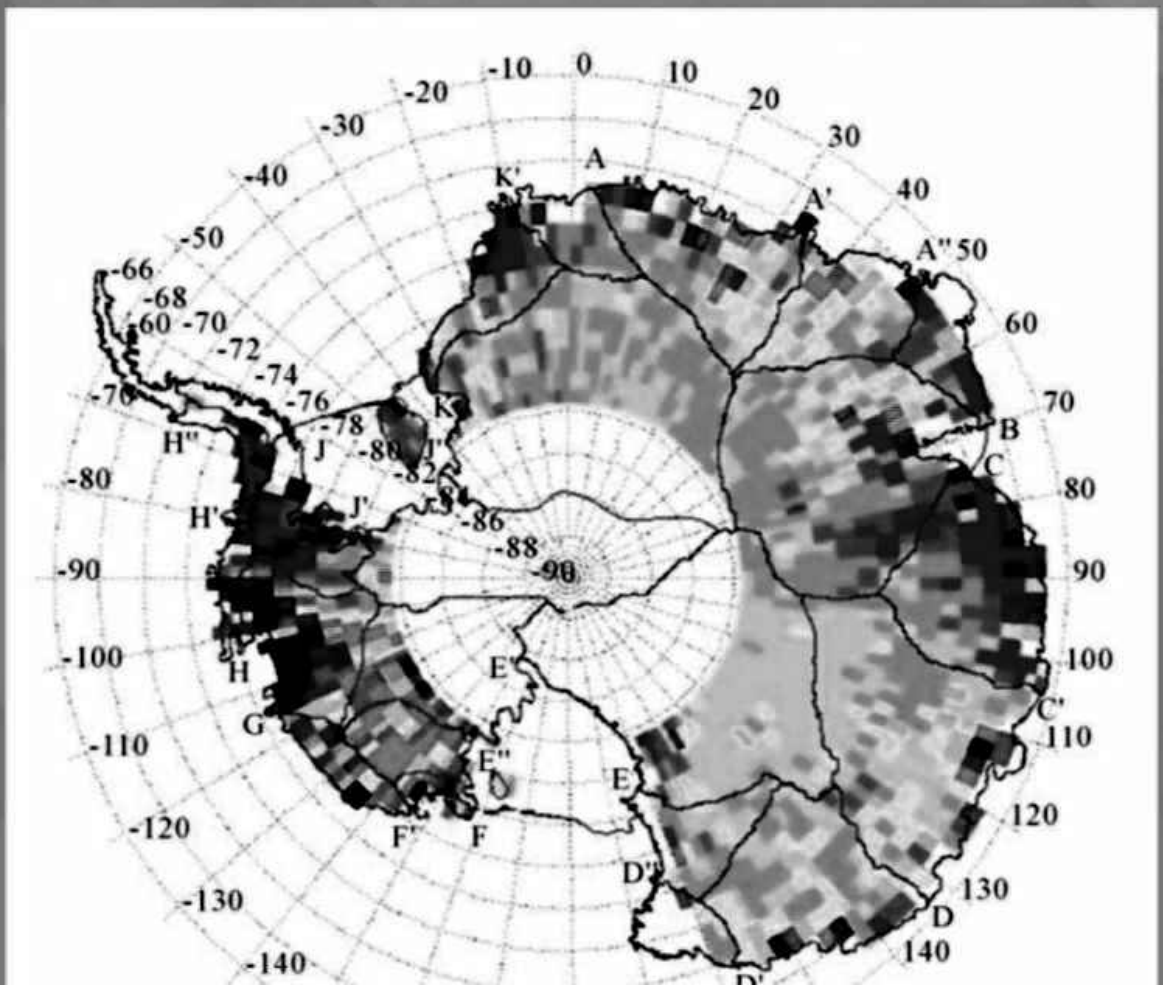

NATURAL RESOURCE EVE AND THE DEPLETION BY ERA OF TODAY IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES AS HOPE OF DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract

Resources depletion refers to the situation where the consumption of natural resources is faster than it can be replenished. The natural resources of a nation can be divided as renewable resources and non renewable resources. The natural resources contribute at large to the economic development of a nation. Current patterns of energy and natural resource use, agricultural practices, and urbanization appear to be largely unsustainable and require urgent remediation. The consumption pattern of natural resources did not seem to be justifiable which can have economic downfalls for the nation. Population Explosion is acting as a catalyst for resources depletion. Consumption pattern if not addressed will lead to irreversible climate change and declined economic growth, as a result of increased social, economic, and environmental costs and decreased productivity. In order to achieve economic growth, developing countries are abusing their lands on the grounds of economic interests. Whether is in the form of air and water pollution, deforestation and soil erosion or the extraction of natural resources itself, the fact is that developing countries are currently accounting for remarkable depletion of natural resources. It seems evident that much of the economic growth activities enforced by governments, account for significant resources depletion. Additionally, developing countries remain largely dependent on exports of natural resources to generate economic dividends. Withstanding, pulling raw material from forests to fulfill exportation needs is subject to enormous domestic and international pressure, causing overexploitation of the natural resource base. Furthermore, it is highly relevant to add that the disproportional level of resources exploitation being caused due to economic policies. Resource utilization has always been part of human history; however, the acceleration of economic growth activities together with the pursuit of an urgent economic development is the core cause of resources overexploitation. In conclusion, one may argue that economic growth and associated development usually results in increased levels of resources exploitation. However, that is not to say that an inevitable consequential relationship exists between these trends. It seems evident that developing countries pursuing rapid economic growth disregard environmental concerns.

Introduction

The pattern of resource consumption differs in economically developed and developing countries. The people in developed countries have higher demand for resources than necessary for reasonable living due to their aspirations for better quality of life. Therefore,

they exploit the resources to the level that degrade the global environment seriously. On the other hand people in developing countries have lesser demand for resources due to their simpler quality of life . However, their increasing population, less environmental awareness and aspirations for rapid upgrading their living conditions, causes reckless destruction of resources. The consumerism based pattern of resource use which is prevalent in developed countries, is also spreading fast in developing countries. Current patterns of energy and natural resource use, agricultural practices and urbanization appear to be largely unsustainable and require urgent remediation. Left unchecked, these patterns will lead to dangerous climate change and reduced economic growth, as a result of increased economic, social, and environmental costs and decreased productivity . The present paper discusses about the economic concerns of exploitation and depletion of resources. Resources depletion refers to the situation where the consumption of natural resources is faster than it can be replenished. The exploitation of natural resources is the use of natural resources for economic growth, sometimes with a negative connotation of accompanying environmental degradation. This creates a marginal res.victimation

Natural Resources and Sustainable Economic Growth

In the third quarter of the Twentieth Century, economists and policy makers were more concerned with economic growth with development, while during the last quarter, there was greater concern about the challenge o f economic development, specifically the challenge of sustainable development to secure human well-being forever. In the poor countries, economic growth viz. the acceleration of economic growth rate is the prerequisite for sustainable development. However, the challenge of sustainable development requires a paradigm shift in the economic growth process and broadening the base for economic development (inclusive economic growth), an understanding of the ecosystem-economy relationship, and the critical role of natural environmental resources in economic development as well as incorporating the environmental-ecological concerns in planning and programming sustainable development.

Movements of Economic Growth

In neo-classical economic growth model, man-made capital and technology played a vital role in accelerating economic growth and it was assumed that economic growth has a tendency to trickle down the gains of economic development on its own and so there would be growth with justice. Natural capital was assumed to be not a constraint for economic growth, and human capital and social capital were, by and large, assumed to be catalytic agents. So obviously, in this model sustainability of economic growth was not at all an issue to be bothered about! As against this, in the case of sustainable economic growth model, natural capital/ environmental resources, social capital and environment-friendly: 'appropriate technology' and methods of enhancing-augmenting resources are considered quintessential for sustaining economic growth. Besides, human development and human well-being are considered human rights This change in the perspective and objectives of economic growth and hence the change in development strategies, economic policies and governance mechanism aiming at sustainable development is now recognized as a paradigm shift in the economic growth model.

Role of Natural Resources in Economic Development and Human Well-Being

In 1970s, development economics was concerned with the issue of economic growth with justice i.e. growth with equitable distribution of the gains of economic development. But it has been observed that the gains of economic growth did not trickle down on its own and the problem of poverty - 'the pronounced deprivation of well being' - was found to be continually aggravating over time. Human development and human well-being now are considered human rights and, therefore, the challenge of sustainable development - to end poverty by breaking the vicious cycle of impoverishment and environmental degradation - can be met by a compact amongst nations. Thus, it becomes a "shared responsibility" of the developed and developing countries. It has been realized that the materialistic life style of the western world and their ever-increasing 'ecological footprints' to sustain their conspicuous consumption level are responsible for all the environmental ills. Also, it is now a resolved issue that the poor - the third world developing countries- are adding to the global environmental degradation and natural resource depletion and hence responsible for the hole in the ozone layer, global warming, climate change induced natural calamities etc. and doomsday scenario. Unless the vicious circle of impoverishment is taken care of, sustainable development may remain a far-fetched dream.

Ttc concepts of Development and natural resources

Nature - Economy Interaction # Movement of the classicals

The concept of the environment-nature is so wide, which includes the natural resource base which not only supports the life on earth, but also provides the **productive base for sustainable development. Nature, on the one hand, provides the stock of environmental resources, by and large non-renewable- exhaustible resources as well as the flow of environmental services, by and large renewable - non-exhaustible to the economy to produce material goods and services for consumption to reach the expected level of satisfaction and, on the other, regenerates the bio-mass most needed for a steady state as well as absorb or assimilate or recycle the 'high entropy' wastes generated through production-consumption externalities. Thus, nature or environment or natural resource base is both a 'source' of natural capital and a 'sink' for the economy. And there is two-way interconnection or interdependence or interconnectedness between these two systems: (1) Productive resources from nature to economy and (2) High entropy wastes from economy to the environment.**

Reasons for Resources Depletion and Exploitation

- Increase in the sophistication of technology enabling natural resources to be extracted quickly and efficiently. E.g., in the past, it could take long hours just to cut down one tree only using saws. Due to increased technology, rates of deforestation have greatly increased
- A rapid increase in population that is now decreasing. The current number of 7.132 billion humans consumes many natural resources.
- Cultures of consumerism. Materialistic views lead to the mining of gold and diamonds to produce jewelry, unnecessary commodities for human life or advancement.
- Excessive demand often leads to conflicts due to intense competition. Organizations such as Global Witness and the United Nations have documented the connection.

- Non-equitable distribution of resources.

Impacts of Natural Resource Depletion

A number of drivers suggest that the impacts of natural resource depletion will accelerate in the future, especially for resources outside or only partially within the marketplace, such as water, soil, ecosystem services, and climate. An increase in the world population by more than 2 billion people between 2010 and 2050 will place additional pressures on natural resources. Although environmental stresses brought about by population growth are significant, of even greater impact will be rising incomes. During the two decades since 1990, the size of the global middle class rose from 1 billion to 2 billion. In the coming two decades, it is probable that another 3 billion will join the middle class. This transition—in which the majority of the world will be able to afford a private motor vehicle, modern appliances and a diet that includes meat daily- represents an important threshold *in* human pressure on the natural world. Other major problems that will arise out of exploitation of natural resources are:

- Deforestation
- Desertification
- Extinction of species
- Forced migration
- Soil erosion
- Oil depletion
- Ozone depletion
- Greenhouse gas increase and Climate Change
- Extreme energy
- Water pollution
- Natural hazard/Natural disaster

The patterns of economic globalization havetween economy aw decades. This correlational trend is stressed on a debate between ecologists and economists regarding the impacts of economic development upon the resources exploitation. The ecologist argument is based on immediate consequences of economic growth. In order to achieve economic growth, developing countries are abusing their lands on the grounds of economic interests. Whether is in the form of air and water pollution, deforestation and erosion or the extraction of natural resources itself, the fact is that developing countries are currently accounting for remarkable environmental degradation. It seems clear that much of the economic growth activities enforced by governments, account for significant environmental damage. Additionally, developing countries remain largely dependent on exports of natural resources to generate economic dividends. Withstanding, pulling raw material from forests to fulfill exportation needs is subject to enormous domestic and international pressure, causing overexploitation of the environmental resource base.

Environmental exploitation has always been part of human history, however, the acceleration of economic growth activities together with the pursuit of an urgent economic development is the core cause of environmental overexploitation.

Notwithstanding, neoliberal economists argue on the contrary, claiming that environmental degradation is not a by-product of economic growth, rather being a phenomenon directly related to poverty. At a World Bank meeting, economists have publicly stressed their concerns regarding the relationship between the environment and poverty: "A world free of poverty is critical for the long-term effect of the planet. The struggle of the poor to survive is a core cause of problems such as deforestation, desertification, and unsanitary water. The poor exhaust nearby natural resources, such as fresh water, seafood, and wildlife. They cultivate unsuitable land to grow food and earn income. And they despoil local waterways with rubbish and sewage."

Concluding Remarks

The purpose of natural resource exploitation is generally to trigger economic growth and development. The controversial negative relationship between the abundance of natural resources and economic growth and development has been at the centre of several development research discourses. It is often explained that, natural resources when exploited can be used to generate economic growth and development. However, this assertion is often rebuffed by other explanations that, natural resource abundance rather create more difficulties than benefits. Governments in developing countries with large amounts of resource have pursued policies that seek to expand the exploitation of existing natural resources to generate income for economic development. Over the years not much attention has been paid to the negative effects of policies that centre on the exploitation of natural as the main tool for economic growth and development. Natural resource exploitation has proven of potentially causing irreparable distortion on the environment and the livelihood of the people in the affected communities.

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