

## Chapter III

# Approaches and Perspectives in Indian Environmental Thinking

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A number of socio-political thinkers, social activists and scholars have discovered pattern of analysis to interpret environment centric thought and ideas incorporating current scholarly issues of social science such as development, society, economics, politics and biodiversity conservation etc. Each ways or the pattern of analysis consists of specific criteria for selecting environment or ecology related problems and relevant data on several academic issues. Mostly the academicians, particularly of social sciences and other disciplines, have immensely contributed to develop the environmental thinking in India. Notably, Modern American environmentalism was firstly developed by Rachael Carson, a biologist, with the publication of *Silent Spring* (1962). On the other hand, in UK, radical social activists popularized environmental concern in a modern way through environmental direct action in 1990's. Even in India social activists played an important role as we have seen in the contributions of Sunderlal Bahuguna, Medha Patekar and others during *Chipko* and Narmada struggle. It is well known that, in Indian context, most of the social theorists have conceptualized the term 'environmentalism' mainly to secure the poor from the threats of environmental destruction.

Contemporary environment-development debate attracted scholarly attention to 'environmentalism' which gradually took a definite shape through the multifaceted ideological spectrum. Worldwide, even from the Indian experience, the study of environmentalism is basically a scientific analysis of the relationships between environment, development and society. Indian version of environmentalism is influenced by socio-political ideologies like Gandhism, socialism, feminism,

radicalism, conservationism, developmentalism, pragmatism, etc. Moreover, contemporary social resistance against huge economic developmental process highlights holism for environmental awareness campaign.

### **Indian Environmentalism: Ideological Plurality and Orientations**

Environmentalism of the first world is broadly of the managerial type of political and industrial-urban elite activism in which basically the elites seek to sort out all environment related problems with other technocratic economic interventions without requisite changes in the basic framework of the system. Therefore, such environmentalism is devoid of any socio-political linkages. First world environmentalism is reflected through the ecological knowledge and research study of many conservation ecologists. But Indian environmentalism is the product of people's movement for environmental protection and equitable sharing and sustainable use of natural resources.<sup>1</sup> Popular environmental movement in India is basically peasant movement draped in ecological colours.<sup>2</sup> However, the urban middle class people also organized environmental movement and actively take part into the movement. Highly influential elitist group prefers such a form of preservationist measure in which only the state authority will have its controlling power over natural resources. This elitist form of preservationist strategy ignores the intricate relationship between the nature and the poor and views that the poor (tribal communities) are ecologically profligates. In colonial India, influential lobbies and officials were safeguarding the forest resources for the construction of railway, continuation of hunting games and other requirements for the development of British military force. British successive generations and later Indian officials are of the

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<sup>1</sup> Sangvai, Sanjay, 2007, "The New People's Movements in India" in *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 42, No. 50, p. 113.

<sup>2</sup> Guha, Ramachandra, 1988, "Ideological Trends in Indian Environmentalism" in *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. XXIII, No. 49, p. 2579.

view that local tribal communities and land users are short-sighted and may deplete forest resources.<sup>3</sup>

N. Patrick Peritore measured environmental attitudes of Indian elites particularly among Indian Government, business and non-governmental personnel of 1990. Peritore found three different opinions on environmental attitudes: a) Greens, b) Eco-developers and c) Managers. Greens respect life and natural diversity and criticize the technological hubris of the Western developmental model. They do not rely on international developmental programmes, nuclear power and bio-technology because of their destructive nature. Greens advocate Gandhian tradition of environmentally sound grassroots economic developmental model. Such developmental model must be handled by the villagers, members of scheduled castes, women and tribal communities who will directly participate in native, grassroots and popular development included in the bio-regional and cultural diversity and will manage environment for production. Like Greens, the Eco-developers also criticize technological hubris and worried about the environmental risks due to use of nuclear power and bio-technology. Eco-developers favour small scale, environmentally appropriate, intensive developmental model. Such model must be based on a just distribution of resources, population planning, women's education and consensus among social classes. Lastly, the Managers prioritize on human needs and rational management of environmental processes. Unlike Greens and Eco-developers, they support the efficacy of large scale, high energy technologies such as nuclear, hydroelectric power and the bio-technological transformation of agriculture. Managers want to utilize Western technologies for development controlling their effects through planning. Peritore viewed that all the three types of opinions can be found within the environmental movements that

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<sup>3</sup> Rangarajan, Mahesh, 2000, "Beyond State and Market?: The Indian Environmental Debate" in Neera Chandhoke edited *Mapping Histories: Essays presented to Ravinder Kumar*, Tulika, New Delhi, pp. 367-368.

exhibit the Indian nature of environmentalism which is the mixture of cultural elements which are deeply rooted in political culture, society and ethos.<sup>4</sup>

Madhav Gadgil and Ramachandra Guha examined material, political and ideological expressions of Indian environmentalism. The material expression can be found in the wide ranging struggles and conflicts over natural resources. Such conflicts emerge centering around the question of development. Two distinct groups can be identified in these struggles; one belongs to industrialists, urban consumers and rich farmers and another group belongs to small peasants, pastoral nomads, tribal and fishing communities. The main assumption is that, the economic developmental process, using natural resources, will produce energy and commodities for the rich, whereas poor will be physically displaced and facing environmental pollution. Political expression is seen in the organizations formed by different social action groups of the victims of environmental degradation. These action groups follow several means and strategies for the struggle: a) action groups always try to prevent ecologically destructive economic practices; b) they promote the environmental messages using social media, awareness campaign etc.; c) they take as well as suggest to take several steps on environmental rehabilitation like, afforestation, soil conservation etc. to restore degraded ecosystem and enhancing the 'quality of life' of the inhabitants. Ideological expressions can be explored by the formulation of environment friendly developmental model rejecting the destructive one.<sup>5</sup>

Harsh Sethi found three broad ideological frameworks in the Indian environmental movements: a) rights over natural resources and distribution, b) legal and policy based change in the sphere of resource use and c) the rejection of the

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<sup>4</sup> Peritore, N. Patrick, 1993, "Environmental Attitudes of Indian Elites: Challenging Western Postmodernist Models" in *Asian Survey*, Vol. 33, No. 8, pp. 804-818.

<sup>5</sup> Gadgil, Madhav and Guha, Ramachandra, 1994, "Ecological Conflicts and the Environmental Movement in India" in *Development and Change*, Vol. 25, Blackwell Publishers, UK, pp. 119-120.

developmental paradigm.<sup>6</sup> Gadgil and Guha observed that there are three distinct groups who widely participate in environmental movements: a) the omnivores, b) the ecosystem people and c) the ecological refugees. Following the Western developmental model the omnivores consume the natural resources for the development of urban industrial regions. The ecosystem people are the inhabitants of village areas and generally not educated and they live in a more destitute situation. Therefore, they are not adjusted with the urban industrial system. As for the ecological refugees, they live a life of day labourers and servants evading the impoverished life of the countryside and masses to the cities. One-sixth of India's population are 'omnivores' (big land owners, entrepreneurs or urban workers), four-fifth of India's people are 'eco-system people' (common rural people) and one-third are 'ecological refugees' (migrants or farm labourers).<sup>7</sup> Guha viewed that the process of economic development of post-independent India has divided Indian population into the three socio-ecological classes of omnivores, ecosystem people and ecological refugees and natural resource based economic developmental model has been characterized by a basic asymmetry between the omnivores and the ecosystem people. Guha stated that, as omnivores were taking all the political decisions, by the name of development, they caused environmental degradation which makes the ecosystem people dispossessed from the natural resources. Due to the acceleration of the developmental process, like setting up of large dams and steel mills etc, being displaced from their natural habitat, ecosystem people were bound to move to the cities in search of a legitimate livelihood denied to them in the country side. Because of the two false assumptions, state initiated developmental model destroyed nature and also failed to reduce poverty: a) 'the fallacy of the romantic economists' – which views that, if we allow the market to play its role fully, each and everyone would be an omnivore. This is the illusion of globalization to which Indian ruling class has its

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<sup>6</sup> Sethi, Harsh, 1993, "Survival and Democracy: Ecological Struggles in India" in Ponna Wignaraja edited *New Social Movements in the South: Empowering the People*, Vistaar Publications, New Delhi, p. 128.

<sup>7</sup> Gadgi, Madhav and Ramachandra Guha, 1995, *Ecology and Equity: The Use and Abuse of Nature in Contemporary India*, Penguin Books India Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, pp. 3-5, 180-182.

blind faith. The idea does not recognize the ecological limits of the global consumer society; b) ‘the fallacy of romantic environmentalists’ – which claims that the ecosystem people want to remain as they are. The view came from the anti-modern, anti-western, anti-science position of the Indian environmentalists. But the false conception is that the poor want to enhance their own resource consumption with the help of science, modernity and developmental process. Guha viewed that, to diminish the asymmetry between the omnivores and ecosystem people, a charter of sustainable development can be offered rejecting these fallacies. The sustainable developmental model would amplify the social power of ecological refugees and ecosystem people and would simultaneously force omnivores to internalize the costs of their profligate behaviour. Land reforms, literacy, particularly female literacy and proper health care would be the best measure to enhance the social power of the ecosystem people and ecological refugees.<sup>8</sup>

Guha and Gadgil have identified five ideological strands within Indian environmental movements: a) Crusading Gandhians, b) Ecological Marxists, c) Appropriate Technologists, d) Scientific Conservationists and e) Wilderness Enthusiasts.

- a) Crusading Gandhians have anti-industrialist viewpoints. They believe that societies of ‘Eastern’ world are broadly non-materialist; hence modern industrialism cannot be a strategy of development. Crusading Gandhians have categorically explored the man-nature relationship highlighting how nature and natural substances are interrelated with each other. They frequently exemplify Hindu scriptures and encompass ecological and environmental values with ancient religious traditions.

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<sup>8</sup> Guha, Ramachandra, 1997, “Social-Ecological Research in India: A ‘Status’ Report” in *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. XXXIII, No. 7, pp. 348-349.

- b) Just in an opposite way of Crusading Gandhians, Ecological Marxists search for the problems in political and economic condition of a society and instead of the question of values, they severely question the notion of unequal access to resources to explain the patterns and process of environmental degradation in a radical way. They rely on the redistribution of economic and political power. Hence, they organize poor and make them more active to create an economically just society which is a logical precondition for social and ecological harmony.
- c) Appropriate Technologists believe in the synthesization of agriculture and industry, big and small industry and Eastern and Western technological tradition. They support generation and diffusion of resources conserving, labour intensive and socially liberating technologies. They put emphasis on demonstrating in practice a set of socio-technological alternatives to the centralizing and environmentally degrading technologies which are presently in operation.
- d) Scientific Conservationists focus on the efficiency and management.
- e) Wilderness Enthusiasts emphasis on the conservation of wildlife, forests and biodiversity.<sup>9</sup>

Guha argued that in the environment-development debate, Crusading Gandhians, Appropriate Technologists and Ecological Marxists represent most forceful strands. However, there are other two additional viewpoints in which one, Wildlife Protection Movement, advocates environmental protection and views that the high birth rates of the rural poor are the root cause of environmental degradation

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<sup>9</sup> Guha, Ramachandra and Gadgil, Madhav, 2008, "Ideologies of Environmentalism" in Archana Prasad edited *Environment, Development and Society in Contemporary in India: An Introduction*, Macmillan India Ltd., Delhi, pp. 347-349.

and another, Incurable Optimists, has a naive believe that there are no physical limits to economic growth and rapid industrialization following the Western model which can be brought about in a matter of decades.<sup>10</sup>

Joan Martinez-Alier explained Indian version of environmentalism with the following terms: a) the ‘cult of wilderness’, b) the ‘gospel of eco-efficiency’ and c) the ‘environmentalism of the poor’. The ‘cult of wilderness’ is concerned with the preservation of nature and wildlife but it has no opinion on industry and urbanization. It is opposed to economic growth but mostly worried about the population growth. It tends to be approved scientifically by conservation biology. The ‘gospel of eco-efficiency’ is concerned with the sustainable management or ‘wise use’ of natural resources. It suggests the pollution control not only for the industrial sectors but also for the other sectors such as agriculture, fisheries and forestry. It relies on the new technologies and the ‘internalization of externalities’ as instruments for ecological modernization. It has the propensity to be supported by industrial ecology and environmental economics. The ‘environmentalism of the poor’ or the environmental justice movement or the popular environmentalism or the livelihood ecology or the liberation ecology grows out of local, regional, national and global ecological distribution conflicts due to the process of economic growth and social inequalities. Examples can be observed in the conflicts over water use, access to forests, the burdens of pollution and ecologically unequal exchange.<sup>11</sup>

### **Environmentalism in Indian Context: Approaches and Apprehensions**

Early environmentalism emerged through social movements against industrialism in the Western countries, while conservation was seen as deriving from

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<sup>10</sup> Guha, Ramachandra, 1988, *ibid*, p. 2580.

<sup>11</sup> Martinez-Alier, Joan, 2002, *The Environmentalism of the Poor: A Study of Ecological Conflicts and Valuation*, Edward Elgar Publishing Limited, USA, p. 14.

a specifically North American context. However, anxieties about environmental change, climatic change and extinctions and even the fear of famine helped to motivate early environmentalism.<sup>12</sup> Wherever it may be, in contrast to the early one, the modern environmentalism was born out from the anxiety about the decline of human existence, crisis in the sphere of survival economy of human species and about the plausible danger of organic and inorganic environment. Each approach of environmentalism apprehend that environmental destruction will directly or indirectly affect the life situations of humans as well as the other creatures existed in the world. But how environmental degradation will take place? What would be the effects of environmental damage? How to halt the environmental destruction? To these questions different approaches have different answers and dominating ideological position.

According to Sumi Krishna, Indian environmentalism incorporates a variety of philosophical approaches and diversified viewpoints; these may be Gandhians, Marxists, conservatists, socialist, radicals, liberals, democrats, humanists etc. or any combination of these philosophical viewpoints. On the one hand, within the forum of environmental movement, network of contradictions can be found and on the other hand, outside the movement, ideological homogeneity can be measured. Among the various overlapping strands of environmentalism, three are most prominent: a) popular, b) managerial and c) progressive or radical. The popular approach mainly derives from Gandhism but here non-Gandhian appeals also can be observed. The popular Gandhian approach permeates the general public understanding of the environmental crisis. The popular approach often exhibits its progressive nature but has an intrinsic conservative political outlook. The managerial approach permeates government policy and functioning and supported by many administrators, scientists and environmentalists both within and outside the government. The managerial approach relies on the modern technology for the utilization of resources, side by

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<sup>12</sup> Grove, Richard, 1995, *Green Imperialism: Colonial Expansion, Tropical Island Edens and the Origin of Environmentalism, 1600-1860*, Cambridge University Press, USA, pp. 2, 14.

side it suggests for the minimization of adverse environmental consequences. The approach of NGOs can be categorized as managerial. The progressive course on the environment originates out of the wide area of the left wing studies. The progressive or radical discourse has an extreme militant attitude towards socio-political activism but does not consider environmental crisis as a primary problem. This approach often supports and agrees with the philosophical strands of other two approaches but is less articulated. However, the ideological boundaries among the three approaches remain fuzzy because it has been observed that some NGOs have shown populist, managerial and radical ideological strands in different perspectives.<sup>13</sup>

Emma Tomalin explored three major philosophical thought or approaches in Indian environmentalisms: a) managerial, b) romantic and c) local pragmatic. Tomalin's work was based on India's religious traditions. Both the managerial and romantic approaches to environmentalism are supported by India's big land owners, entrepreneurs or urban workers but the 'empty belly' environmentalism or the 'environmentalism of the poor' of the global south is more local pragmatic type. The managerial approach is more concerned about the conservation of the resources for the global economic expansion. Romantic approach is very apprehensive with the wilderness preservation because of drastic changes in the global environment. But the local pragmatic approach is anxious about the destruction of the environment from a perspective of basic survival, rights over access to resources and concerned about health and disease caused by pollution.<sup>14</sup> Major approaches of Indian environmentalism are: Gandhian, Socialist, Feminist, Radical, Developmentalist, Conservationist and Pragmatist.

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<sup>13</sup> Krishna, Sumi, 1996, *Environmental Politics: People's Lives and Development Choices*, Sage Publications, New Delhi, pp. 36-37; Krishna, Sumi, 1996, "The Environment Discourse in India: New Direction in Development" in T. A. Sathyamurthy edited *Class Formation and Political Transformation in Post-colonial India*, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, pp. 411-412.

<sup>14</sup> Tomalin, Emma, 2009, *Biodivinity and Biodiversity: The Limits to Religious Environmentalism*, Ashgate Publishing Limited, England, pp. 79-80.

***Gandhian Approach:***

‘Environmentalism of the poor’ or the grassroots or the popular environmentalism in the Indian context was developed through the broad ideological spectrum of Gandhian socio-political and economic thought. Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi’s moral criticism of modern industrialization and suggestion to lead a simple life made him a vanguard of the ‘first wave of environmentalism’.<sup>15</sup> Gandhian views on economic development and social transformation have vitalized the Indian environmental movement where rural peasants, tribals and other subaltern people are the real participants. The movement participants have followed Gandhian way of non-violent social resistance like *satyagrah* (truth force), *pradarshan* (gathering in a public place), *dharna* (sit-down strike), *gheraos* (surrounding public official) and *aamaran anashan* (indefinite hunger strike).<sup>16</sup>

Gandhian version of environmentalism acquired a concrete shape through an intense debate between Gandhi and Nehru on the pattern of economic development or industrialization. Here lies the conflict between the industrial economy and agricultural economy, rich and poor and ‘pack type cultures’<sup>17</sup> and ‘herd type cultures’<sup>18</sup>. Joseph Cornelius Kumarappa, one of Gandhi’s disciples, made a distinction between the agriculture civilization and industrial civilization, keeping in view its relation with nature. In agricultural civilization, system is maintained through a cordial relationship with nature. In case of variation, the agricultural society follows a natural mutation. The agriculturalist assists nature or intensifies in a

<sup>15</sup> Guha, Ramachandra, 2000, *Environmentalism: A Global History*, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, pp. 5-6.

<sup>16</sup> Baviskar, Amita, 2001, “Environmental Movements in India: The South Forges its Own Discourse” in James E. Nickum and Kenji Oya edited *New Regional Development Paradigm*, Vol. 4, CT: Greenwood press, Westport, p. 100.

<sup>17</sup> The culture of industrial society is based on the centralization and concentration of power, concentration and limited sharing of benefits, disregards of the welfare of workers, collective action for aggressive purpose etc. (see Guha, Ramachandra, 1992, “Prehistory of Indian Environmentalism: Intellectual Traditions” in *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. XXVII, No. 1-2, p. 58).

<sup>18</sup> The culture of agrarian society is based on social control overproduction and the decentralization of power, attempts to safeguard the weak and helpless, encouragement of individual growth, collective action only for internal safety and consolidation etc. (see Guha, Ramachandra, 1992, *ibid*, p. 58).

short period of time what takes place in nature in a long period. But in the industrial civilization, system is maintained by the primitive hunter and feudal baron. Here variations from nature are violent. It produces and supplies a large number of goods and demand is artificially created for goods by means of clever advertisements.<sup>19</sup> It is argued that, Gandhian model of economic development is eco-friendly and Nehruvian model is environmentally destructive in nature. Gandhian model is based on enhanced biomass production and this model can be applicable to all situations from ecosystem to industrial societies. On the contrary, Nehruvian model of industrial development is relevant and suitable only for industrial economic sector. From J. C. Kumarappa's viewpoint, Gandhian model of economic development is the 'Economy of Permanence' which leads to decentralized economic planning, whereas in the Nehruvian model rich may become richer and poor poorer.<sup>20</sup> According to J. C. Kumarappa, Gandhiji divided utilization of natural resources into two groups, i.e. current economy and reservoir economy. Current economy resources are unlimited but reservoir economy resources are limited. At the increasing pace of competition for the possession of short supply of goods, violent reaction may come to be a reality. Violence may increase if state system or society runs into reservoir economy abandoning current economy. To Kumarappa, hydro electricity is largely a reservoir economy; the actual power of turning the wheel comes from water. The excessive amount of expenditure on the hydro-electric scheme is in the generating equipment which is therefore mainly of reservoir economy. Ultimately the electric group may be classified as belonging to the reservoir economy.<sup>21</sup> Kumarappa, like Gandhiji, was an ardent supporter of village society and concerned about the sustainable use and management of natural resources, hence, he recommended that the government should formulate particular policies on soil, water and forest

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<sup>19</sup> Kumarappa, J. C., 1938, *Why the Village Movement?*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, Hindusthan Publishing Corporation, Rajahmundry, pp. 27-28.

<sup>20</sup> Khoshoo, T. N., 1999, "Gandhian Environmentalism" in George Alfred James edited *Ethical Perspectives on Environmental Issues in India*, A. P. H. Publishing Corporation, New Delhi, p. 277.

<sup>21</sup> Kumarappa, J. C., 1951, *Gandhian Economic Thought*, Vora & Company Publishers Ltd., Bombay, pp. 14-16.

management. Most importantly he recommended that the forest planning must be based on the requirements of the villagers and the forests should be divided into two main classes: a) forests, those supplying timber to be planned from the long range point of view and b) forests, those supplying fuel and grasses which should be made available to the public either free of cost or at nominal rates. On the contrary, village industries, like palm gur, paper making, pottery etc., should be developed incorporating with the forest management.<sup>22</sup>

Gandhian approach to environmentalism has its roots in the cultural and religious rubric of India's traditionalism. Gandhi's speculation on Ram Rajya or the egalitarian self sufficient rural republic would be the best model to lead a simple life where economic development can be achieved through the sustainable use of natural resources. Mahatma Gandhi's few direct comments like "The earth provides enough to satisfy every man's need, but not every man's greed", "the minimum is maximum" etc. made him an 'early environmentalist'. Nodoubt, Gandhi was a profound environmentalist as he talked about many foregoing issues of environment which modern society discusses under a systematic study.<sup>23</sup> But Ramachandra Guha argued that Gandhiji was only a prophet who was aware about the ecological crisis that can be seen as an adverse impact of modern industrialization and he was expecting our environmental concerns but he did not demonstrate that where and in what ways environmental attitudes should be developed. Therefore, he was not an 'early environmentalist'.<sup>24</sup> On the contrary, Gandhi did not show any high value judgment on the wilderness preservation which is the core tenet of contemporary romantic environmentalism.<sup>25</sup> However, in case of *Chipko* movement, it is factual

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<sup>22</sup> Kumarappa, J. C., 1948, *The Economy of Permanence*, Part – II, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, All India Village Industries Association, Wardha, p. 55.

<sup>23</sup> Khoshoo, T. N., 1995, *Mahatma Gandhi: An Apostle of Applied Human Ecology*, Tata Energy Research Institute, Bombay, p. 14.

<sup>24</sup> Guha, Ramachandra, 1998, "Mahatma Gandhi and the Environmental Movements in India" in Arne Kalland and Gerard Persoon edited *Environmental Movement in Asia*, Curzon Press, New York, pp. 67-68.

<sup>25</sup> Guha, Ramachandra and Juan Martinez-Alier, 1997, *Varieties of Environmentalism: Essays North and South*, Earthscan, London, p. 167.

that both environmental actions were taken implementing the Gandhian principle of non-violent direct action. But the *Chipko* has both 'public' and 'private' faces, that is, a sharp distinction between the environmental activism and popular participation. The personal commitment and personal lifestyle of C. P. Bhatt and Sunderlal Bahuguna exemplify the highest traditions of Gandhian constructive work. Such characterization is not altogether incorrect but at the level of popular participation the Gandhian label was less appropriate. The movement was basically a fight for survival and role of external ideologies were severely limited. Like many Gandhian movements, *Chipko* has an ethical dimension and its underlying notions of morality and justice are the inherent to a history of resistance against the state restrictions on peasant access to forest.<sup>26</sup> To Medha Patkar, chief exponent of *Narmada Bachao Andolan*, like the Gandhian type of protest movements, *Narmada Bachao Andolan* also had no particular class base. The strength of *Narmada Bachao Andolan* was the cooperative effort of the people belonging to the different sections of society.<sup>27</sup> Therefore, Gandhian ideology and strategies have motivated the *Narmada Bachao Andolan* as it had an abiding faith in the moral force of non-violent action but once Medha tiredly remarked that, 'the days of moral pressure are gone'.<sup>28</sup>

### ***Socialist Approach:***

In India, the term socialism is primarily equated with planning and national development. For the attainment of the 'good society', the socialist ideals have been used with national development planning. But in most instances, socialism is merely a vague term for modernization ideology with an inherent stress on equality as a goal

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<sup>26</sup> Guha, Ramachandra, 1989, *The Unquiet Woods: Ecological Change and Peasant Resistance in the Himalaya*, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, p. 176.

<sup>27</sup> Patkar, Medha, 1992, "The Strength of a People's Movement" (in conversation with Dunu Roy and Geeti Sen) in Geeti Sen edited *Indigenous Vision: Peoples of India, Attitudes to the Environment*, Sage Publications, New Delhi, p. 285.

<sup>28</sup> Baviskar, Amita, 1995, *In the Belly of Rivers: Tribal Conflicts over Development in the Narmada Valley*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, p. 224.

for primary planning objective.<sup>29</sup> The planners of newly independent India claimed that the construction of mega dam and its multipurpose project would be one of the finest strategies of socialist development planning. Hence, Jawaharlal Nehru, a Fabian socialist, hailed big dams as ‘temples of modern India’. But Ram Manohar Lohia, one of Nehru’s contemporary Gandhian socialist, was against big dams and river valley schemes. Today’s anti-dam people are the wide follower of Lohia.<sup>30</sup> He advocated the redistribution of national wealth, major sharing of power for the depressed castes. Furthermore, he fought for the dignity and equality of common people, their language, knowledge and culture. Lohia also suggested for the appropriate technology, small scale machine for the sustainable production and livelihood for the people.<sup>31</sup> Nehru’s approach to the problem of poverty and unemployment was indirect and his concern was to initiate a process of large scale industrialization through the introduction of modern science and technology. To Nehru, such strategy of development would provide a permanent and enduring solution to the problems of poverty and employment. The central argument was that the India was poor and backward because of her disability to adopt modern science and technology. Therefore, to modernize her socio-economic structure, a socialist pattern of society had to be evolved with modern technology. But it was possible only with the growing capacity to produce such machines which make machines with the adoption of the latest and most efficient techniques and to make original scientific and technological research.<sup>32</sup>

Nehru’s critics argue that Nehruvian ‘demonization’ policy (policy on huge industrialization and mega dam project) has aggravated Indian environmental movements as seen during damming River Narmada. Nehru’s policies of ‘pseudo-

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<sup>29</sup> Myrdal, Gunnar, 1972, *Asian Drama: An Inquiry into the Poverty of Nations*, Penguin Books Ltd., UK, p. 134.

<sup>30</sup> Sethi, Harsh, 1993, *ibid*, p. 124.

<sup>31</sup> Sanghvi, Sanjay, 2003, “The New Politics of Environmental Socialism in India” in P. G. Jogdand and S. M. Michael edited *Globalization and Social Movements: Struggle for a Humane Society*, Rawat Publications, Jaipur, pp. 220-221.

<sup>32</sup> Bhatt, V. V., 1982, “Development Problems, Strategy and Technology Choice: Sarvodaya and Socialist Approaches in India” in *Economic Development and Cultural Change*, Vol. 31, No. 1, p. 92.

secularism and state planning was similarly responsible for communal conflict and economic stagnation, while the left effortlessly traces the roots of economic inequality and environmental degradation to the same man's (Nehru's) practice of pseudo-secularism and ecological arrogance'.<sup>33</sup> On a number of grounds, state socialism is averse to environmentalism. Because of the characteristics; like worshiping of technology, arrogant desire to conquer nature, system of central planning; state socialism inhibited environmentalism by throttling democracy by denying basic liberties of individuals.<sup>34</sup> Focusing on the industrial growth, Indian planners (Nehru-Mahalanobis policies) treated Indian agriculture as a 'bargain sector' which would provide cheap raw materials, cheap labor and cheap food for industry so as to lowering the cost of production for capitalists which is a means to extract resources from agriculture, which is called "incremental primitive socialist accumulation".<sup>35</sup> Gail Omvedt observed that, in India, the movements on ecology and environmental issues, at the beginning, had their social base in peasant or farming communities and among the tribals. These movements were basically the fight for livelihood on the issues of forests, famine and fishing not only to confront the state and imperialist penetration but also raised new issues about the nature of economic development itself and the very meaning of socialism.<sup>36</sup>

According to Sanjay Sanghvi, in India, various movements, particularly from 1980's, are raising the issues of democracy, human rights, equality, justice, environmental sustainability and development. These movements can be designated as the "movements for environmental Socialism". Centering around these 'new' kind of movements, new and conventional groups have emerged, viz., the socialists, neo-

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<sup>33</sup> Guha, Ramachandra, 2007, "Mahatma Gandhi and the Environmental Movement in India" in Mahesh Rangarajan edited *Environmental Issues in India: A Reader*, Dorling Kindersley, New Delhi, p. 124.

<sup>34</sup> Guha, Ramachandra, 2000, *ibid*, p. 134.

<sup>35</sup> Omvedt, Gail, 2005, "Farmers' Movements and the Debate on Poverty and Economic Reforms in India" in Raka Ray and Mary Fainsod Katzenstein edited *Social Movements in India: Poverty, Power and Politics*, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, p. 182.

<sup>36</sup> Omvedt, Gail, 1984, "Ecology and Social Movements" in *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 19, No. 44, p. 1865.

communists, environmentalists, sarvodayis, peace groups, anti-communal, women's groups, people's science groups, dalit and backward caste organizations, minorities and unorganized labour at various levels. The revolutionary politics of these groups or of the movements, either socialism or communism, primarily emphasize on the distribution and redistribution of the social assets and production. These movements are questioning the process and technology of production and assets that the production process and its technology have inbuilt disposition which determines the ways of utilization of resources, labour and organization of production. Thus these movements have illustrated the socialist type of consumption pattern where sustainable and equitable production and distribution would be possible.<sup>37</sup>

***Feminist Approach:***

In India, feminist environmentalism investigates the reasons and the effects of environmental destruction over the 'sustenance' perspective of rural women. According to the feminist version of environmentalism, the environmental destruction is the product of the ongoing traditional patriarchal social practices and the introduction of the modern economic developmental model in the Indian rural settings. Ecofeminists often argue that, women are very close to nature than the men and also state that male ownership of land and male domination on economic structure of a society have led to patriarchy. In the patriarchal societies women remain disadvantaged due to the gap between legal and actual land ownership rights, patrilocal marriages, the segregation of public space and social interaction by age, class and gender, female illiteracy, high fertility, male control over agricultural technology and over dissemination of information.<sup>38</sup> As a result of these propensities a separation between women and environment is taking place. It is also argued that the use of modern science and technologies for agricultural and industrial development are also creating severe problems on the physical health of rural as well

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<sup>37</sup> Sanghvi, Sanjay, 2003, *ibid*, pp. 219-227.

<sup>38</sup> Agarwal, Bina, 1994, *A Field of One's Own: Gender and Land Rights in South Asia*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, p. 475, Jackson, C., 1993, "Women/Nature or Gender/History?: A Critique of Ecofeminist Development" in *The Journal of Peasant Studies*, Vol. 20, No. 3, p. 409.

as urban women. In such a condition, social practices, economic processes and all the political relations should have to be controlled, managed and initiated concerning gender justice and equality.

Vandana Shiva, an ecofeminist, criticized the western modern science and technology, patriarchy and colonialism for perpetuating violence against women and nature. The process of modernization and technological development devour the 'feminine principle' which considers nature as living and creative process. Shiva highlighted that, during green revolution how women became disempowered from the crop production. Use of chemicals and pesticides was prevalent due to the green revolution. Such developmental action with the combination of patriarchal values excluded and devalued women from the agriculture which led to a new violence in the form of female foeticide. Thus it created gender discrimination and made the women dispensable for agriculture and reduced food security.<sup>39</sup> Interacting with nature, women are producing and reproducing wealth which is the consequence of their own right of holistic and ecological knowledge of nature's processes. But capitalist-reductionist paradigm does not support these processes as it fails to perceive the interconnectedness of nature or the connection of women's lives, work and knowledge with the creation of wealth.<sup>40</sup> Shiva also argued that, in biodiversity conservation and utilization, women's work and knowledge play a vital role as they work between 'sectors' and perform multiple tasks. But Shiva alleged that, their contribution in agriculture remained invisible. Shiva viewed that, 'their production tends not to be recorded by economists as 'work' or as 'production' because it falls outside the so-called 'production boundary'.'<sup>41</sup> Shiva measured a difference between women's biodiversity conservation and dominant patriarchal notions of biodiversity conservation. To Shiva, a dominant patriarchal notion of biodiversity conservation

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<sup>39</sup> Shiva, Vandana, 1988, *Staying Alive: Women, Ecology and Survival in India*, Kali for Women, New Delhi, pp. 113-114.

<sup>40</sup> *ibid*, p. 23.

<sup>41</sup> Shiva, Vandana, 1992, "Women's Indigenous Knowledge and Biodiversity Conservation" in Geeti Sen edited *Indigenous Vision: Peoples of India, Attitudes to the Environment*, Sage Publications, New Delhi, pp. 208.

sees diversity as a numerical and arithmetic factor, not an ecological one. It tries to relate arithmetic variety not to relational symbiosis and complexity, but usually refers biodiversity as nature's variety including both the number and frequency of ecosystems, species and genes in a given assemblage. On the contrary, women's biodiversity conservation considers biodiversity as a web of relationships, where culture and economies are intertwined that ensures balance and sustainability.<sup>42</sup>

Meera Nanda rebuked Vandana Shiva for considering modern science as Western patriarchal form of domination and destructive. Shiva stated that women are subordinated only because of colonial tradition and the imposition of destructive Western developmental model. Shiva failed to understand the source of inequalities which is embedded in the caste, class, power, privilege and property relations linked with colonialism.<sup>43</sup>

Bina Agarwal stated that, it is widely perceived that the women's relation to environment is both socially and historically variable. They are the victims of environmental degradation and forerunner of environmental movements for the protection and regeneration of environment as seen in the *Chipko* movement. Agarwal viewed that the women's and men's relationship with the nature is to be understood in terms of the material reality, i. e., the division of labour, property and power that effects environmental change and their responses to it. Feminist environmentalism is a concept which describes the relationship between gender and environment magnifying production relations and distributions on feminist perspective. To Bina Agarwal, 'on the feminist front there would be a need to challenge and transform both notions about gender and the actual division of work and resources between the genders. On the environmental front there would be a need to challenge and transform not only notions about the relationship between people and nature but also the actual methods of appropriation of nature's resources

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<sup>42</sup> *ibid*, pp. 214.

<sup>43</sup> Nanda, Meera, 1991, "Is Modern Science a Western Patriarchal Myth?: A Critique of the Populist Orthodoxy" in *South Asian Bulletin*, Vol. 11, No. 1-2, pp. 32-61.

by few. Feminist environmentalism underlines the necessity of addressing these dimensions from both fronts'.<sup>44</sup> The class-gender effect of environmental degradation can be seen in several spheres like women's time, income, nutrition, health, social support network, indigenous knowledge etc. The growing degradation of natural resources increasing appropriation of resources, decline in the community resource management system, increasing population and the mechanization of agriculture are reducing the income status of women, reducing available time for crop production (due to male outmigration) and resulting in the erosion of local knowledge systems.<sup>45</sup>

Sumi Krishna opined that there are several approaches which delineate the women-nature/environment relationship in various ways. The contribution of such approaches including ecofeminism is twofold: a) they viewed women as victims of resource degradation to valorize them as resource managers and b) they have emphasized on the linkages between the problems of local resource management and the penetration of a global capitalist economy. Women-environment-development (WED) approach and women-in-development (WID) approach highlight women's knowledge and skills of resource management but depoliticize this using women's time and labour to increase the effectiveness of Natural Resource Management Programmes and interventions. The main problem of these approaches is that they simply premised on the sexual division of roles and responsibilities which have been treated as essential and universal. Sumi Krishna also categorized another three approaches: a) conventional, b) celebratory and c) gendered. In conventional approach, women are included in national resource management and or conservation. The celebratory approach romanticized the women-nature relationship. But these two approaches are based on the traditional sexual division on labour. The gendered

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<sup>44</sup> Agarwal, Bina, 1992, "The Gender and Environment Debate: Lessons from India" in *Feminist Studies*, Vol. 18, No. 1, p. 127.

<sup>45</sup> *ibid*, pp. 136-143.

approach focuses both on men and women but from the equity perspective it judges the social role of women and challenges the existing hierarchical dichotomies.<sup>46</sup>

***Radical Approach:***

Francis Sandbach distinguishes two types of environmentalism: a) ecological or scientific environmentalism and b) radical environmentalism. Ecological or scientific brand of environmentalism gives its first priority to the sustenance of a viable physical and biological environment and claims that any technological or economic changes are to be determined by this principle. On the contrary, radical type of environmentalism has a more anti-establishment character and less concerned with the environmental systems but more aware whether or not science and technology are compatible with humanistic principles. Such form of environmentalism has been deeply influenced by the new left, anarchism and the counter-culture.<sup>47</sup> Radical environmentalism relies on the environmental direct action and the radical environmentalists produce an ideology of human superiority which resists feeling of kinship with other form of life. They believe that the earth and all forms of life are sacred and worthy of passionate defense.<sup>48</sup>

In India, radical environmentalism is expressed through several micro movements on environmental protection and survival related movements of the poor which can also be termed as radical environmental movements. This type of social movement often claims that the modern development with huge industrialization and the like causes environmental deterioration and as a result poor suffer the survival crisis. On the basis of the nature of the movements and the participants, two types of radical environmental movements can be found in the horizons of environmental movements in India. The first type of environmentalism, ‘environmentalism of the

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<sup>46</sup> Krishna, Sumi, 2004, “A ‘Genderscape’ of Community Rights in Natural Resource Management” in Sumi Krishna edited *Livelihood and Gender: Equity in Community Resource Management*, Sage Publications, New Delhi, pp. 18-21.

<sup>47</sup> Sandbach, Francis, 1980, *Environment: Ideology and Policy*, Basil Blackwell, Oxford, p. 22.

<sup>48</sup> Taylor, Bron, 2008, “The Tributaries of Radical Environmentalism” in *Journal for the Study of Radicalism*, Vol. 2, No. 1, pp. 27-28.

poor', is based on the politics of survival and expresses itself in terms of 'old community property rights'. 'Environmentalism of the poor' as an ideology of social movement endeavours to ensure grassroots democracy by the development of self-sufficient village economy managed by use of local resources for local consumption, most importantly, with the help of human labour power and small technologies. Thus 'environmentalism of the poor' seeks to establish social justice and instructs for the sustainability of resources. The second type of radical environmentalism in India is known as ecological Marxism and progressive environmentalism. This type of radical environmentalism is espoused by the forms of actions as an alternative to modernity, the people's science movements, appropriate technology movements and the Centre for Science and Environment are the pioneers. Unlike the 'environmentalism of the poor', progressive environmentalism do not argue all forms of industrialization rather they contend that the process of industrialization and penetration of modern science and technology become destructive and create inequality as they are embedded in iniquitous social and productive relations. It is argued that a vast number of people are excluded from the property, technology, the process of decision making and all these are managed, maintained and done by a few for the profits of production and capital extraction which is the main cause of environmental destruction. This environmental activism suggests for the establishment of modern industry concentrating on the social needs and regulation of unsustainable practices. This type of environmentalism disagrees that the state needs to withdraw altogether from the natural resource management. Therefore, the basic idea of radical environmentalism is that it is not the human use rather the unsustainable use of natural resources is the root cause of environmental crisis which can be prevented through the promotion of sustainable use patterns.<sup>49</sup>

Radical environmentalists are 'recycled communists' in the American context where radical environmentalism arose as a form of environmental justice

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<sup>49</sup> Prasad, Archana, 2008, the introductory part of the Archana Prasad edited *Environment, Development and Society in Contemporary India: An Introduction*, Macmillan India Ltd., New Delhi, pp. 4, 8-9.

movement.<sup>50</sup> Environmental direct action in Britain as a form of anti-road movement expressed its radical nature for the ecological and environmental protection.<sup>51</sup> When speaking radical environmentalism in India, scholars paid their attention to environmental justice movement as most reactionary form. Guha and Martinez-Alier viewed that ‘environmentalism of the poor’ originates as a clash over productive resources; it is another kind of class conflict. It is the struggles of peasants, tribals on the issues of ecology where the questions of human rights, ethnicity and distributive justice are interconnected with each other. These struggles are in defense of the locality and the local community against the nation. It has close connection with the survival imperatives and prompted a thoroughgoing critique of consumerism and of uncontrolled economic development.<sup>52</sup>

Indian environmental movements advocate the ideology of the ‘environmentalism of the poor’. Such ideology has concentrated on making a critique of modern development and reviving the traditional ‘self-sufficient village economy’. It is a shift away from the conventional environmentalism of the Indian State which believes in the preservation of the natural habitat through purging it of all human contact. This conventional type of environmentalism was reflected in the formation of national parks and sanctuaries with the objective of preserving wildlife and biodiversity in the post-colonial period.<sup>53</sup> The ideology of the ‘environmentalism of the poor’ reflected through a number of publication by Centre for Science and Environment. Anil Agarwal, former director of Centre for Science and Environment, collecting data from different parts of the Indian Territory, highlighted several examples that how poor manage their both ends meet depending upon natural environment and how they face survival crisis as a result of environmental

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<sup>50</sup> Martinez-Alier, Juan, 2002, *ibid*, pp. 115, 200.

<sup>51</sup> Doyel, Timothy, 2005, *Environmental Movements in Majority and Minority Worlds: A Global Perspective*, Rutgers University Press, New Jersey, p. 103.

<sup>52</sup> Guha, Ramachandra and Juan Martinez-Alier, 1997, *Varieties of Environmentalism: Essays North and South*, Earthscan, London, p. 18.

<sup>53</sup> Prasad, Archana, 2008, “Environmentalism and the Left” in Archana Prasad edited *Environment, Development and Society in Contemporary India: An Introduction*, Macmillan India Ltd., New Delhi, p. 360.

destruction. He concludes that, our first lesson is that ‘the main source of environment destruction in the world is the demand for natural resources generated by the consumption of the rich (whether they are rich nations or rich individuals and groups within nations)’ and our second lesson is that ‘it is the poor who are affected the most by environmental destruction’. Therefore, ‘eradication of poverty in a country like India is simply not possible without the rational management of our environment and that, conversely, environmental destruction will only intensify poverty’.<sup>54</sup>

***Developmentalist Approach:***

Indian version of environmentalism got a definite shape through a passionate debate on environment and development. Several environment related ‘conflicts’, ‘struggles’ and ‘battles’ grown up in context to India centering around the determination of a developmental paradigm. Environmental historians, environmentalists and social scientists often argue that the craze for modern development in India has widened the alleyway of environmentalism as a contradictory ideology of modern development. However, the ideology of developmentalism, which has been developed concerning the entire environment of the Third World countries, advocates for the synchronization of environment/ecology and development that justifies both the requirements of the country as well as of the poor.

Sumi Krishna observed that the ‘development is about people, about enhancing their ability and power to direct their own lives, in the context of their environment, their history and aspirations for the future. Development is not about catching up with other people... the process of development involves structural transformations in the organization of society and the economy. Such a process cannot take place without altering relationships of dominance and subordination, or

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<sup>54</sup> Agarwal, Anil, 1999, “Human-Nature Interactions in a Third World Country” in George A. James edited *Ethical Perspectives on Environmental Issues in India*, A. P. H. Publishing Corporation, New Delhi, p. 41.

affecting the interests of different groups within society. Therefore, the questions regarding the character, direction and pace of development are fundamentally political questions'.<sup>55</sup> In the name of development, national elites have appropriated natural resources – land, minerals, forests and water through the institutions of state and market and often in collaboration with the foreign capital for the conversion into commodities. In the name of development, the people have been pushed off the land, their forests and water that have been taken by the state and the market. Thus the poor people became deprived and alienated from the natural resources except their labour power. Considerably, struggle against national development emerged where the politics of social movements got a new significance in the hands of the protest organizations of the deprived sections.<sup>56</sup>

Extracting natural resources, state initiated developmental model intensified natural resource conflict as highlighted in the studies of environmental movements. Forest, water and land use conflicts are most historic and still going on whenever developmental actions are taken by central and or state governmental authority. Vandana Shiva explored that the forest struggles and forest Satyagrahas of late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century were the reactions against the commercial exploitation of the British Government. Forest conflict of post-colonial India were the rapid expansion of forest based industry, large-scale clear felling of natural forests and their conversion to monocultures of commercial species; *Chipko* movement is one of the examples. Response to the growing public criticism of the commercial exploitation of forests, response to the crisis in the supply of raw materials for wood based industry – industrial plantations expanded on farmlands and village commons under 'social forestry' and 'wasteland development programmes' created a new source of conflicts during 1980's. Due to the process of globalization, like changes in biotechnologies and biomass conversion into chemical and energy substitutes for

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<sup>55</sup> Krishna, Sumi, 1996, *Environmental Politics: People's Lives and Development Choices*, Sage Publications, New Delhi, p. 8.

<sup>56</sup> Baviskar, Amita, 1995, *ibid*, pp. 36-39.

petroleum based products, India would face different kind of conflicts in the future.<sup>57</sup> Gadgil and Guha asserted that the forest conflicts in pre-independent India emerged out of the competing claims of state and people over a relatively abundant resource but the conflicts of post-independent India originated against the backdrop of a rapidly dwindling forest resource base.<sup>58</sup> Anil Agarwal and others viewed that, in modern India, forest is a dramatic area where government policies have consistently increased conflicts. The entire tribal population and other forest dwellers depend on the forests for their very existence. In such a condition, destruction of forests (for the developmental actions) means the social, cultural, and economic destruction of the tribal populations in particular.<sup>59</sup>

Secondly, like forest resources, land is another part of natural resources for the survival economy of the poor. Generally poor people do not possess huge amount of land, hence, they always either search for land which is common to all or they work in other's land on daily wage basis. Marginal farmers and landless poor use land for fodder, fuel, grazing and other subsistence needs. Notably, reduction of common lands adversely affects the daily requirements and survival economy of the poor.<sup>60</sup> Land related conflicts were seen between the village community or the internal village class groups and government agencies mainly when the agencies converted the common land into government property.<sup>61</sup> Shiva has drawn several pictures of the conflicts over land use for food production and land use for commercial wood production. After the transfer of land from food crops to Eucalyptus plantation, food production decreased in Kolar district of Karnataka. Due

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<sup>57</sup> Shiva, Vandana, 1991, *Ecology and the Politics of Survival: Conflicts over Natural Resources in India*, Sage Publication, New Delhi, p. 77.

<sup>58</sup> Gadgil and Guha, 2007, "Ecological Conflicts and Environmental Movements in India" in Mahesh Rangarajan edited *Environmental Issues in India: A Reader*, Dorling Kindersley India Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, p. 390.

<sup>59</sup> Agrawal, Anil and Sunita Narain, 1985, *The State of India's Environment 1984-1985: The Second Citizen's Report*, Centre for Science and Environment, New Delhi, p. 370.

<sup>60</sup> Agrawal, Anil and Sunita Narain, 1989, *Towards Green Villages: A Strategy for Environmentally Sound and Participatory Rural Development*, Centre for Science and Environment, New Delhi, p. 15.

<sup>61</sup> *ibid.*, 39-41.

to the negative ecological impact of Eucalyptus plantation on the farmland, smaller peasants have shifted from food to wood production. This is one of the drawbacks of 'social forestry programme' in India.<sup>62</sup> Guha and Gadgil viewed that the traditional land rights of the Indian tribal communities were usurped by the colonial regime. During colonial domination, British administrators criticized shifting cultivation as a 'primitive and unremunerative form of agriculture' and also viewed it as a destructive practice. Hence, Britishers encouraged shifting cultivators to stop such practice. Consequently, there were the possibilities of intense resistance on behalf of the cultivators.<sup>63</sup>

Thirdly, water conflicts came into existence with building of big dams included in the national planning following the Nehruvian path of development. Construction of multipurpose dam causes human displacement, environmental degradation including destruction of forests, large tracts of area submergence of arable land and natural habitations, earthquakes in the dam area, disruption of fish life and extinction of other living creatures residing in the project area, spread of water borne diseases etc.<sup>64</sup> Large dams, intensive irrigation and large diversions create three types of conflicts: a) large scale displacement and uprooting of people from their ancestral homelands leading to ecological refugees. Such conflict arises due to the violation of human rights of displaced people, b) conflicts related to water projects which arise from the ecological impact of impounding large quantities of water, transporting it across drainage boundaries and using it for intensive irrigation. This is the direct conflict between the displaced people and the people who are likely to be benefited from the large dams and c) regional conflict over water rights as an

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<sup>62</sup> Shiva, 1991, *ibid*, pp. 157-167.

<sup>63</sup> Guha and Gadgil, 1989, "State Forestry and Social Conflicts in British India" in *Past and Present*, No. 123, pp. 151-152.

<sup>64</sup> Sethi, Harsh, 1993, *ibid*, p. 132, Gadgil and Guha, 1994, "Ecological Conflicts and Environmental Movements in India" in *Development and Change*, Vol. 25, Blackwell Publications, UK, pp. 107-108; Ramaswamy, V., 2005, "Socio-Economic Environmental Impact of Large Dams" in S. N. Pawar et al edited *Environmental Movements in India: Strategies and Practices*, Rawat Publications, Jaipur, p. 172.

outcome of large river diversions. This is the conflict between two or more regional governments taking the issue of sharing of river water.<sup>65</sup>

Population-environment-development debate is also another perspective of the studies on Indian environmentalism. Indira Gandhi rightly observed that poverty is the real polluters in the contemporary India, therefore without poverty alleviation environment cannot be developed and without the application of science and technology poverty eradication is not possible. In Stockholm Conference on Environment and Development (1972) Indira Gandhi, the then Prime Minister of India, stated that:

‘On the one hand the rich look askance at our continuing poverty – on the other, they warn us against their own methods. We do not wish to impoverish the environment any further and yet we cannot for a moment forget the grim poverty of large numbers of people. Are not poverty and need the greatest polluters? For instance, unless we are in a position to provide employment and purchasing power for the daily necessities of the tribal people and those who live in or around our jungles, we cannot prevent them from combing the forest for food and livelihood; when they themselves feel deprived, how can we urge the preservation of animals? How can we speak to those who live in villages and in slums about keeping the oceans, the rivers and the air clean when their own lives are contaminated are the source? The environment cannot be improved in conditions of poverty. Nor can poverty be eradicated without the use of science and technology’.<sup>66</sup>

If the marginalized and the vulnerable sections of population do not get opportunities to come out of the ‘poverty trap’, efforts to preserve the environment will remain an unrealistic dream. The process of marketization and liberalization will affect them; therefore state should provide safety nets for the vulnerable sections.

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<sup>65</sup> Shiva, 1991, *ibid*, p. 203.

<sup>66</sup> Cited in Swaminathan, M. S., May 2012, “Do Ecology – Pathway to a Green Economy” in the issue Environment and Development, *Yojana* (A Development Monthly), p. 5.

Simultaneously sustainable development will be meaningful only when the interests of these sections are safeguarded and their standard of living is improved.<sup>67</sup>

India contributes 18 million people to this planet every year.<sup>68</sup> Population explosion would also pose a severe threat to India's natural resource base. Anil Agarwal said, keeping in view the problem of growing population increase, food production should be amplified at a balance rate. India's rural agro-economy should have to be developed. But India's agricultural management system is less developed due to the insufficiency of soil and water management measures. Therefore, with social cooperation, national 'ecodevelopment' programmes are highly required for the high carrying capacity against competition and personal acquisition of natural resources.<sup>69</sup>

Anil Agarwal viewed that, environmental destruction in India results in the survival crisis of the poor. The poor citizens are the worst sufferers of the environmental degradation because they do not benefit much from the Gross National Product instead they survive due to the Gross Nature Product. He further noticed that waste and want are the greatest problem of the contemporary period. He accused that affluent people are the polluters and destroyers of the environment. Agarwal suggested that for the country's development, there should be three main objectives; growth, equity and sustainability. He recommended that some action plan should be taken for environmental protection like protection of natural resources from irrational pressures of development, environmentally sound planning built around concepts of equity and sustainability, employment guarantee built around programmes for ecological regeneration, rural development must become equitable

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<sup>67</sup> Vyas, V. S. and V. Ratna Reddy, 1998, "Assessment of Environmental Policies and Policy Implementation in India" in *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 33, No. 1/2, p. 54.

<sup>68</sup> Swain, Ashok, 1996, "Environmental Migration and Conflict Dynamics: Focus on Developing Regions" in *Third World Quarterly*, Vol. 17, No. 5, p. 960.

<sup>69</sup> Agarwal, Anil, 1985, "Population and Environment" in *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 20, No. 24, pp. 1035-1037.

and holistic enrichment of village ecosystems, resource-rational urbanization, conservation oriented education and national rehabilitation policy.<sup>70</sup> Similarly Gopal K. Kadekodi viewed that population growth and environmental degradation increases poverty, on the other hand, poverty can negatively deteriorate natural environment. Therefore, we cannot ignore the indiscriminate relationship between environment and poverty. However, such problem can be sorted out by the formulation of economic and environmental policy corresponding with these two institutions.<sup>71</sup> In the context of environment and population connection, Ramachandra Guha argued that massive population is not the responsible factor for resource depletion from the earth rather the consumption pattern of the developed nations, like United States of America which consume a greater proportion of world's resources for material development.<sup>72</sup>

### ***Conservationist Approach:***

The conservationist approach can be found in the manuscript of Kautilya, the early Indian realist thinker. From the political perspective, Kautilya's *Arthashastra* highlighted the importance of forests and wildlife conservation for the necessities of king as well as for the country. Kautilya advised the king to protect forests, water reservoirs, mines and wildlife by enacting and enforcing appropriate laws and regulations with the help of appointed honest and efficient officials (superintendent). On the contrary, Kautilya also suggested that king should follow specific punitive measures in case of the violation of environmental laws and regulation.<sup>73</sup> To

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<sup>70</sup> Agarwal, Anil, 1987, "Between Need and Greed – The Wasting of India: The greening of India" in Anil Agarwal, Darryl D'Monte, Ujwala Samrath edited *The Fight for Survival: People's Action for Environment*, Centre for Science and Environment, New Delhi, pp. 169-195.

<sup>71</sup> Kadekodi, Gopal K., 2007, "On Linkages between Population and Environment: Some Evidences from India" in C. P. Prakasham and R. B. Bhagat edited *Population and Environment Linkages*, Rawat Publications, Jaipur, pp. 3-19.

<sup>72</sup> Guha, Ramachandra, 2006, *How Much Should a Person Consume?: Thinking Through the Environment*, Permanent Black, USA, pp. 220-228.

<sup>73</sup> Shamasastri, R., 1967, *Kautilya's Arthashastra* [Translated into English], Mysore Publishing and Printing House, Mysore, pp. 62-71.

Kautilya, game forests (where conservation of specific wildlife and hunting are allowed for the necessities of the king), timber forests (where valuable timber species should be conserved for the necessities of the country) and elephant forests (specifically reserved forests for the conservation of elephant) are ‘forests’.<sup>74</sup> Superintendent of forests shall be appointed to look after the management; more importantly for the efficient and effective management, wild tracts shall be separated from the timber forests and elephant forests. Capital punishment shall be sentenced to those who will kill elephants.<sup>75</sup> For wildlife conservation, king should create separate animal parks keeping in view the suitability of land where all animals are welcomed and should be given its full protection.<sup>76</sup> After the Indian independence, National Planning Commission (NPC) formulated its national plan where soil conservation, afforestation, grassland management, flood control and river management and improvement of inland navigation and transport, improvement of livestock and fodder, supply etc. had prime importance. NPC determined that ‘forest must be preserved as a national heritage and forestry should be judged by the long term financial results rather than the immediate surplus.’ Forests should be developed for the sufficient supply of raw materials for industries including cottage industries. NPC also recommended for a ban on organized large scale hunting of wildlife and suggested for the creation of national parks and sanctuaries in different parts of the country to protect and preserve wildlife.<sup>77</sup>

Ramachandra Guha explained that the biologists have a greater contribution for the emergence and development of modern environmentalism. The arguments popularized by the biologists were accepted by the policy makers of the country for the well being of nation and the development of science. Therefore, their viewpoints

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<sup>74</sup> *ibid*, p. 78.

<sup>75</sup> *ibid*, p. 65.

<sup>76</sup> Kangle, R. P., 1997, *The Kautilya's Arthashastra*, Part – II [an English translation with critical and explanatory notes], Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi, pp. 67-68.

<sup>77</sup> Sinha, Jagdish N., 2007, “Congress and Conservation: A Look at the NPC Reports” in Ranjan Chakrabarti edited *Situating Environmental History*, Manohar Publishers and Distributors, New Delhi, pp. 282-286.

on the protection of endangered species are ‘authoritarian’ in nature. Authoritarian biologists demand the elimination of human activities from the areas of conservation or protected areas and deny the rights of local communities over the protected areas, thus the arrogance of anti-humanism revealed by the authoritarian biologists. In the Third World countries, national park, sanctuaries and protected areas have been created evicting a large number of forest dwellers and other subaltern people. For a long period of time tribals and tigers were coexisted but urban conservationist ideology dispossessed tribals from their customary rights and due to the poachers, planters, politicians and profiteers tribals are bearing the blame.<sup>78</sup> Apparently, it seems that, because of the tribal culture and their dependence on nature, India’s forests, wildlife and the entire natural resource base is under serious threats but in reality several developmental projects are the underlying causes of endangering wildlife and displacement of tribals. For instance – tourism projects have been proposed in the name of wildlife conservation in the areas where tribals are being displaced. Even, India’s Wildlife Protection Act prohibits people to live within the areas of national park and extinguishes traditional rights of the people relating to the use of the forests and all other forest resources.<sup>79</sup> On the contrary, another fact is that the India’s ordinary middle class visitors are being neglected in policy formulation and academic analyses of wildlife conservation because of three reasons: a) due to the historical origins of conservation areas and policies in the hunting zones and traditions of the rulers of medieval and British India and their management in the postcolonial period by scientific, administrative often social elites encultured, b) due to the financial structures with tourist revenues flowing to general state funds sometimes combined with the insulting effects of revenues from major international conservation organizations. These may altogether dampen economic incentives to improve the visitor experience, c) due to the discursive positioning of tourists by the

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<sup>78</sup> Guha, Ramachandra, 2003, “The Authoritarian Biologist and the Arrogance of Anti-humanism: Wildlife Conservation in the Third World” in Vasant Saberwal and Mahesh Rangarajan edited *Battles over Nature: Science and the Politics of Conservation*, Permanent Black, New Delhi, pp. 139-157.

<sup>79</sup> Sekhsaria, Pankaj, 2007, “Conservation in India and the Need to Think Beyond ‘Tiger vs. Tribal’” in *Biotropica*, Vol. 39, No. 5, pp. 575-577.

scientific-administrative elite as frivolous picnickers who go away from the proper conduct of conservationists and nature lovers.<sup>80</sup>

The conservationist ideology of post-independent India primarily uses two traditions for the exclusion of humans from the axes of conservation interest: a) from the mythical point of view, the philosophical tradition justifies conservation as ‘natural wilderness’ areas where human resource use has never occurred. Most importantly this tradition extensively criticized modernization ideology, b) the ecological tradition claims that the human land use practices invariably destabilize ecosystems; hence, such practice should be minimized to keep people out of the protected areas.<sup>81</sup> In contrast to these traditions, pragmatic conservationists raise their standpoints in support of the poor or forest dwellers. Pragmatic conservationists are concerned about the livelihood issues of the rural poor and see no future for wildlife without informed and sensitive steps to reassure cultivators or stock keepers of their own security and prosperity. Pragmatic conservationists state that wildlife like lions and or elephants are not the endangered or vulnerable species rather different groups of humans like grain cultivators, labourers and cattle keepers may come in the list of the endangered species or groups as a result of the creation of protected areas.<sup>82</sup>

Contemporary environmentalism deals with ideological conflicts on the issues of wildlife conservation, people’s survival needs and economic development; for example – human rights vs. protection of wildlife and forests, exclusion of humans from the protected areas vs. the probability of human coexistence with wildlife, conservation priorities vs. developmental programmes etc. come under the

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<sup>80</sup> Mawdsley, Emma, Deepshikha Mehra and Kim Beazley, 2009, “Nature Lovers, Picnickers and Bourgeois Environmentalism” in *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. XLIV, No. 11, p. 56.

<sup>81</sup> Saberwal, Vasant, Mahesh Rangarajan and Ashish Kothari, 2000, *People, Parks and Wildlife: Towards Coexistence*, Orient Longman Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, pp. 44-48.

<sup>82</sup> Rangarajan, Mahesh, 1996, “The Politics of Ecology: The Debate on Wildlife and People in India, 1970-95” in *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 31, No. 35/37, pp. 2395-2396.

scope of environmentalism. The proponents of human rights put emphasis on human needs and basic requirements. To them, human being exists at the utmost level of entire ecosystem and for the interest of people's basic needs and livelihood they have the right to use natural resources. On the other hand, environmentalists are so concerned about the conservation of wildlife and natural resources that generally they ignore the matters of human needs and requirements for their subsistence. Again developmentalists are interested to use natural resources for economic development. They offer little importance to man-nature relationship. Here lies the contradiction between the advocates of human rights, environmentalists and developmentalists. Another source of conflict between exclusive state controls over protected areas and increased local participation in protected area management comes when several policy measures and programmes failed. However, it is to be noted that in Gir National Park in Junagadh district of Gujarat is an example of human wildlife coexistence. In this national park several tribal communities, like Maldharis, Siddis and others, are residing with the wild animals.<sup>83</sup>

For the coordination of conservation, development and human welfare the words like 'Community-based Conservation', 'Integrated Conservation and Development' and 'Ecodevelopment' became very popular among the conservationists, environmentalists and social activists.<sup>84</sup> Ashish Kothari and others have argued that a reconciliation between the elitist state-controlled conservation and human rights perspective which is possible if local communities and government agencies evolve a partnership in conserving the habits with critical support from NGOs and independent researchers. The model of ecodevelopment has been applied but in most of the cases it failed to fulfill its ultimate goal. The main objective of

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<sup>83</sup> Singh, H. S. and Gujarat Ecological Education and Research Foundation, 2001, *Natural Heritage of Gujarat: Forests and Wildlife in Gujarat*, Gujarat Ecological Education and Research Foundation, Gujarat, p. 69.

<sup>84</sup> Karanth, K. Ullhas, 2008, "Sacred Groves for the New Century" in Archana Prasad edited *Environment, Development and Society in Contemporary India*, Macmillan India Ltd., New Delhi, pp. 275-276.

ecodevelopment is to protect wildlife with the help of local communities so as to ensure both the improved livelihood status of the local communities as well as the protection of wildlife. But it has many shortcomings, for example – during the formulation of the plan, authorities have failed to identify the local communities to whom they should integrate and compensate.<sup>85</sup> Baviskar also argued that the programme of ecodevelopment provides employment to the local communities outside the protected areas and the programme minimizes the dependence on natural resources for their very survival. But she pointed out that in the Great Himalayan National Park of Himachal Pradesh, the Forest Department was failed to recognize the existence of a plurality of ‘local communities’, failed to develop village programmes based on extensive open discussions with different sections of affected local communities. As a consequence, local resistance emerged from the local villagers and NGOs. Local villagers opposed ecodevelopment on two principle grounds: a) villagers claimed that the programme will impoverish an economic system which was based on the natural resources within the park and b) this dependence is legitimized by their traditional rights as codified in the colonial settlement report.<sup>86</sup> Therefore, conservation and development conflict is a long-standing fact. There is no such alternative which would enhance a villager’s (poor’s) capacity to reduce his or her dependence on the natural resources for their very existence.<sup>87</sup>

***Pragmatist Approach:***

Another group of scholars detected major environment related problems and then suggested specific policy measures to sort out the problems. This pattern of

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<sup>85</sup> Kothari, Ashish, Saloni Suri and Neena Singh, 1995, “Conservation in India: A New Direction” in *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 30, No. 43, pp. 2755-2766.

<sup>86</sup> Baviskar, Amita, 2003, “States, Communities and Conservation: The Practice of Ecodevelopment in the Great Himalayan National Park” in Vasant Saberwal and Mahesh Rangarajan edited *Battles over Nature: Science and the Politics of Conservation*, Permanent Black, New Delhi, pp. 279-295.

<sup>87</sup> Chhatre, Ashwin and Vasant Saberwal, 2006, *Democratizing Nature: Politics, Conservation and Development in India*, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, p. 13.

analysis also highlighted environment-development debate and various organizational activities. However, in this form of analysis, relation between man and other living creatures got equal importance than the unilinear discussions on environment and poor. According to Biplab Dasgupta, the relation between man and environment can be analyzed from three perspectives where we can measure how our natural environment is performing several functions for the very existence of man: a) environment provides some basic amenities like suitable landscapes, facilities for recreation and variety of living creatures of every shape and colour which make human life qualitatively rich, b) environment is full of resources which people use directly and indirectly for common consumption, c) environment assimilates wastes produced by man, on the other hand, environment makes a balance between oxygen and carbon-dioxide emission and respiration etc. Thus environment act as a 'sink' so as to assimilate carcasses and garbage and to purify natural environment. Our environment is in severe threat only because of humans. Human beings are creating several stresses on environment: a) *eutrophic* stress – this is the task of decomposing human body and wastes produced in the production and consumption process, b) *exploitative* stress – this is cropping of plants, extraction of minerals, hunting of animals, c) *disruptive stress* – which is the physical changes brought about by such activities like forest clearance, construction of a highway or the setting up of new township etc., d) *chemical and industrial* stress – which results from technological development – like heavy construction of lead, mercury or radioactive substance. To reduce the stress – India's development planning should be based on the cost-benefit analysis of projects; broad policy choices like poverty alleviation, pollution control etc. should be followed; environmentally sound technologies should be implemented and environmental consciousness should be generated etc.<sup>88</sup>

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<sup>88</sup> Dasgupta, Biplab, 1978, "The Environment Debate: Some Issues and Trends" in *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 13, No. 6/7, pp. 385-400.

Rashmi Mayur observed that in the developing countries, like India, an increasing number of people are seeking to be urbanized, they continue to consume natural resources for the survival and to utilize them at an accelerated pace. Consequently, our environment is facing severe stress. On the contrary, industrial activities of man are producing vast quantities of pollutants. As a result, massive environmental degradation is taking place. For example – life preserving ecosystem is in constant risk. Acid rains, disappearance of plant and animal species, desertification, smog, destruction of coastal areas, dirty waterways, poisoned foods and blaring noises are the common environmental problems. India is facing several environmental problems like air, water, noise and land pollution; simultaneously wildlife is also facing threats due to deforestation. Mayur suggested that to confront environment related problems, decentralized urban development planning is highly required. Besides, government should impose certain legal actions to control and prevent environmental pollution and its drastic effects. Apart from that, conservationist measures should be followed for the beaches, parks, lakes, rivers and streets. We should develop ecological conscience disseminating environmental education through television, films, radio, newspapers and schools. For the development of ‘quality of life’ issues we should utilize technology at the proper way and we must treat environment with cooperation and as sense of commitment; more importantly wasteful use of resources must be discontinued.<sup>89</sup>

Renu Khator highlighted several organizational response or activities to tackle environmental crisis in India. Khator viewed that ‘organizational response refers to the efforts by people or by the governmental authority to establish a system (or systems) primarily responsible to deal with the crisis.’ There are major types of organizations: governmental, non-governmental and international organizations. Governmental organizations are created by the government and have legal authority, non-governmental organizations are established by the people and have the

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<sup>89</sup> Mayur, Rashmi, 1979, “Environmental Problems of Developing Countries” in *American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 444, pp. 89-101.

potentiality to influence the social and political behaviour of the society and the international organizations emerge from the outside of territorial boundaries and have some persuasive powers. National Committee on Environmental Planning and Coordination (NCEPC), 1972; The Central Board for the Prevention and Control of Water Pollution (CBPCWP), 1974; The Department of Environment (DOE), 1980; Ministry of Environment and Forest (MoEF), 1985 are major governmental organizations which were created to look after all the issues related to environmental planning, development, pollution control, forest management etc. It is to be noted that on behalf of governmental organization, Mr. B. B. Vohra, former Chairman of NCEPC, started environmental movements in 1970's. However, in 1982 NCEPC was abolished. Due to several legal, structural, political, bureaucratic and socio-economic limitations, sometimes environmental administration became inadequate. Recent environmental battles are going on more exponentially in the social ground than in the political ground. NGOs, like several voluntary organizations, are fighting against environmental destructions. For example – during *Chipko* and Silent Valley movement, Dasholi Gram Swarajya Sangh (DGSS) and Kerala Sastra Sahitya Parishad (KSSP) played a significant role. But in general the responses from the NGOs were informal, adhoc, scattered and unstructured and politically less influential due to more dependence on the parochial and traditional culture. In the international sphere, United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, 1972, was a major landmark for the creation of environmental bureaucracy in Third World countries. A number of developing countries have responded positively, but societies of developing countries lack the 'civil culture' because of the absence of the differentiated political system, traditional societies depend heavily on their leaders for incentive and public participation in political processes is ignored. Hence, environmental governance is not running smoothly like the developed nations. Political economists and the proponents of rational behaviouralism argue that politicians as well as individuals will create environmental organizations if they receive any benefit. Politicians will search for any political interest and individual

person will look for own self interests. Therefore, environmental organizations do emerge in any society, as long as individuals find it rational to form them.<sup>90</sup>

Shekhar Singh critically examined the nature of ecological crisis in India. Singh focused on the forests and genetic resources that are available in India. He argued that the forest management of India, in the name of 'social forestry programme', has often failed to provide forest resources to the poor for their survival, whereas, unfortunately, forest based industries and urban elite persons have been benefited by this programme. On the contrary, despite the enactment of water and air pollution control act, monitoring functions were very negligible in many cases. Again, no significant policy measure has emerged from the government to reform the degraded land for the development of Indian agro-economy. Singh observed that legitimate environmental debate does not lie in contradiction with issues of economic development rather ought to be seen as an integral part of the question of development. In the short-term politics of Indian parliamentary democracy, elected governments often feel impelled to demonstrate tangible gains within a five year period and effectively exclude a consideration of the environment which is essentially a matter of long term perspectives. Therefore, there exists no essential difference between short-term and long-term interests, especially as regards forests and land. Singh recommended that for the afforestation programme, government must indentify wastelands which should be given to landless labourers who can be helped to plant trees and maintain them. The government should immediately identify most degraded land for its reformation so that cultivation can be done. 'Water' and 'air' acts should be amended to give right to intervene (*locus standi*) to the individuals so that action can be taken against polluting industries.<sup>91</sup>

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<sup>90</sup> Khator, Renu, 1988, "Organizational Response to the Environmental Crisis in India" in *The Indian Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 49, No. 1, pp. 14-39

<sup>91</sup> Singh, Shekhar, 1985, "Some Aspects of the Ecological Crisis in India" in *Social Scientist*, Vol. 13, No. 7/8, pp. 82-89.

## **Towards a Holistic Environmental Approach: Social Resistance against POSCO and Tipaimukh Project**

Development must be inclusive and should not be a course of benefit for the people of a particular section. The primary objective of development should be the satisfaction of human requirements and aspirations with the enjoyment of basic amenities of food, clothing, shelter and available means to earn money or better employment. In the present era of population increase and growing poverty, human needs should get more priority than the requirements of global markets. Five-year plans introduced several policies; like industrialization, dam project etc. and approaches; like land acquisition, resource utilization etc. for the development of nation, perhaps in an abstract phenomena. But from the newly independent India to till today, such conventional strategies have intensified numerous social tensions mostly at the grassroots level. Moreover, there was hardly any step on sustainable resource management. In reality, conceivably, the Five-year plan sees 'economic growth' as a single part of the entire developmental process. From the reductionist outlook, the planners and political elites of independent India constructed a particular model of development only to fulfill or capture the succession of global markets. Thus such model excluded the grassroots socio-cultural realities and economic lifestyle of the marginalized masses. As a result, incessantly, tendency of popular resistant, against developmental action initiated by the state, are increasing in contemporary India. The movement organizations claim that society, economics, culture and environment should be viewed as inseparable part of 'development'. When preparing the model of development, human needs; production and its equitable distribution; maintenance of traditional cultures; conservation of forests and wildlife; customary rights of marginalized communities; environmental sustainability all these parts should not be neglected or ignored and should be viewed as a whole or inalienable part. During the movements against POSCO and Tipaimukh project, the movement participants reiterated that all these parts were not under the auspices of development, therefore, POSCO should go back from Odisha

and the Government of India should withdraw its sanction from Tipaimukh dam project of Manipur.

Neoclassical economists argue that if we behave in egoistic, individualistic ways, the invisible hand of the market will guide us to efficient and sustainable futures. Similarly, most of the contemporary greens view that if we behave in holistic ways, the invisible hand of ecology will guide us to healthy and sustainable futures. However, primarily, environmental ethics would have to be understood beyond science even beyond economics and ecology to ground environmental protection.

#### Death Ground of Olive Ridley Sea Turtles in Paradip



**Source:**

<http://www.boloji.com/index.cfm?md=Content&sd=Articles&ArticleID=13962>

regarding concepts like equilibrium, homeostasis, stability and community.<sup>92</sup> The state government and pro-POSCO people expressed that Odisha Government should take the necessary steps for POSCO as early as possible because in respect of the employment growth, Odisha is one of the backward region; after the setting up of POSCO, the percentage of employment will increase. In its opposite, emphasizing on the issues of livelihood and the protection of forests, aquatic life and environment,

We must shift to a 'hierarchical holism', that is, dependence on the biotic whole which must be based on some metaphysical presuppositions about the value of various processes, systems, relationships and species and dependence on anthropocentric accounts of ethical behaviour, because ecology is not sufficiently precise and predictive

<sup>92</sup> Shrader-Frechette, Kristin, 1996, "Individualism, Holism and Environmental Ethics" in *Ethics and the Environment*, Vol. 1, No. 1, pp. 55-69.

anti-POSCO people are opposing POSCO project for the defence of traditional livelihood system of the local people and for the purity of natural environment. *Paan, Dhan* and *Mina*, i. e., betel leaf and rice cultivation and fishing are the main sources of income for the villagers of proposed POSCO project site. Around 5,000 betel vines are there in the three village Panchayats and approximately 10,000 cultivators were calculated. Rs. 15,000-20,000 per acre is the standard investment for the *Paan* cultivation and the average annual income is Rs. 1 Lakh per acre with another Rs. 1 Lakh of ancillary employment being generated. It has been apprehended that the proposed POSCO project would disrupt traditional system of

**Women holding a Protest against the POSCO Steel Project in Patana Village, Paradip**



**Source:**

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/indiahome/indianews/article-2354949/Tensions-rise-Orissa-villagers-battle-steel-plant-land-grab.html>

betel cultivation and cause economic crisis. Another tension is that, the project is needed to build a port at Jatadhari estuary which is known as the fishing site for the local people and natural habitat for many aquatic species. The conservationists have pointed out that the construction of port would pose a threat to the nesting habitat of the endangered Olive Ridley turtles identified in the proposed place.<sup>93</sup> Therefore, numerous drastic effects of the industrialization will be seen both in the livelihood system of the people and in the natural environment. The social resistance against POSCO uttered the importance of natural environment for the security of humankind and animal welfare; therefore, question of holism is undeniable when evaluating environmental activism against POSCO.

<sup>93</sup> Asher, Manshi, 2009, *Striking While the Iron is Hot: A Case Study of the Pohang Steel Company's (POSCO) Proposed Project in Orissa*, National Centre for Advocacy Studies, Pune, pp. 13-19.

On the contrary, the model of Tipaimukh dam has been prepared for the purpose of power generation, flood control and irrigation. But it is estimated that, the amount of anticipated loss due to the dam project is very high. It is difficult to find out a viable solution for the obvious problems that would emanate as adverse consequence. Therefore, development through both huge industrialization and or river project is environmentally and socially destructive in nature. From the claims and arguments of the protestors, it is presumed

#### Resistance against Dam in India



Source: <https://www.internationalrivers.org/blogs/271/day-of-action-for-rivers-celebrated-around-the-world>

that such destructive models of development have been formulated keeping in mind the individualistic human interests and holistic environmental interests have been neglected. This is the fact that ‘when holistic environment-oriented duties are in conflict with individualistic human-oriented duties and the holistic environmental interests at issue are significantly stronger than the individualistic human interests at issue, the former take priority’.<sup>94</sup> State government of Odisha has abandoned the project due to the popular protests from the potential oustees and other activists.

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<sup>94</sup> Callicott, J. Baird, 2005, “Holistic Environmental Ethics and the Problem of Ecofascism” in Michael E. Zimmerman and Callicott, J. Baird edited *Environmental Philosophy: From Animal Rights to Radical Ecology*, 4<sup>th</sup> edition, Upper Saddle River, N. J. Prentice Hall, pp. 129.

Vehement protests are coming from several micro organizations of India and Bangladesh against the construction of Tipaimukh dam in Barak valley. Md. Saidul Islam has listed out the potential far-reaching environmental and social devastation of the dam to the local people of the project site from the Indian context. These are: (i) a total of 286.20 sq km area of land will be submerged, (ii) local historical monuments and places will be forever underwater, (iii) more than 40,000 people will be rendered landless, (iv) eight villages situated at the Barak valley will be underwater, (v) more than 90 villages of Tamenglong district of Manipur will be affected, (vi) about 27,242

hectares of cultivable land will be lost, (vii) the township of Nungba sub-division headquarters and the villages along the NH-53 will be harshly affected, (viii) due to increase of water surface, the dam will bring several water borne diseases, industrial pollution and environmental and ecological problems, (ix) ground water will be saline

which is unsafe for drinking, (x) there will be the possibility of frequent destructive earth quake in the project area, (xi) economic and financial crisis will come up as a negative consequence of the loss of livelihood depending upon the natural products, (xii) right to live will be threatened by the construction process and massive displacement will occur, (xiii) loss of biodiversity will take place, (xiv) there will be problems of rehabilitation, resettlement, repatriation and development, (xv) there is the possibility of violation of democratic rights of the indigenous people, (xvi) loss of cultural diversity may come – for instance Zelangrong ancient indigenous heritage of Manipur will come to an end, (xvii) not only the Barak basin, rather other

#### Resistance against Tipaimukh Dam in Bangladesh



Source: <http://www.snwbd.com/news/>

tributaries of Barak will be affected.<sup>95</sup> In case of the construction of Tipaimukh dam, physical rearrangement will be somewhat low, but the loss of livelihood will be high.<sup>96</sup> This construction will affect the man-nature relationship; mainly two tribal communities Zeliangrong Nagas and the Hmars who will be confronted with instant conflict. These two tribal groups are very close to nature for their livelihood, as observed. After the construction of Tipaimukh, which the government is considering as development project, these tribal groups will be displaced from their ancestral livelihood.<sup>97</sup>

Even the environmentalists, social researchers and political leaders of Bangladesh are highlighting several plausible adverse influences of the dam for which the people of Bangladesh will suffer. These are: (i) problems will occur in matters of supplies of water to several water bodies through the international river, (ii) it would dry up the Meghna river which is the greatest river of Sylhet and nearby districts<sup>98</sup>, (iii) the Tipaimukh dam will affect the life of cetaceans in downstream water of the Surma and Kalni-Kushiyara distributaries<sup>99</sup>, (iv) flow alteration of the Barak will adversely affect biodiversity of the freshwater wetlands and will increase the probability of flash floods that will cause damage to the Boro rice and retard the drainage systems of wetlands in the post-monsoon season<sup>100</sup>, (v) the dam would

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<sup>95</sup> Islam, Saidul Md., 2010, a conference paper on *Tipaimukh Dam in India: Environmental Resistance beyond Borders* presented in International Sociological Association World Congress, pp. 5-6.

<sup>96</sup> Fernandes, Walter, 2009, 'Displacement and Alienation from Common Property Resources' in Lyla Mehta edited, *Displaced by Development: Confronting Marginalisation and Gender Injustice*, Sage Publications, New Delhi, p. 115.

<sup>97</sup> Hussain, Monirul and Pradip Phanjoubam, 2007, *A Status Report on Displacement in Assam and Manipur 2007*, Calcutta Research Group, Kolkata, p. 18.

<sup>98</sup> Islam, Md. Saidul, 2013, *Development, Power and the Environment: Neoliberal Paradox in the Age of Vulnerability*, Routledge, New York, p. 157.

<sup>99</sup> 'Report on the Workshop on the Effects of Water Development on River Cetaceans', 26-28<sup>th</sup> February, 1997 in Rajendrapur, Bangladesh in Randall R. Reeves, Brian D. Smith & Toshio Kasuya edited *Biology and Conservation of Freshwater Cetaceans in Asia*, International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources, 2000, p. 18.

<sup>100</sup> India Infrastructure Report 2011, 2012, *Water: Policy and Performance for Sustainable Development*, Infrastructure Development Finance Company, Oxford University Press, January 26, p. 37.

destroy the natural monsoon flooding pattern and as a consequence it would destroy the natural integrity of the ecosystem, losing riparian habitat and species and a lack of enrichment of land with nutrient full silt, (vi) it will increase warming due to methane degassing from the reservoir and causing carbon dioxide emission, therefore always there is the possibility of climate change<sup>101</sup>, (vii) it would disrupt irrigation, agriculture, drinking water supply and navigation, (viii) it will devastate fisheries and wildlife in numerous wetlands, (ix) due to loss of employments and livelihoods, poverty can take place, (x) a huge number of people will face food crisis, (xi) huge number of people will be migrated, (xii) it will also upset the ecological balance and will disrupt environmental purity, (xiii) Bangladesh may lose up to 30 billion US dollar a year<sup>102</sup>, (xiv) there are specific international rules and conventions through which countries in the riparian regions share the water from rivers which naturally flow through two or many countries. The construction of dam would cause inequitable sharing of river water through international river Barak.<sup>103</sup> However, in 2010 and again in 2011, the then Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh assured Sheikh Hasina, Prime Minister of Bangladesh, that nothing would be done on Tipaimukh that harm the interest of Bangladesh.<sup>104</sup>

The first citizen's report of Centre for Science and Environment correctly experimented that the 'environmental degradation and social injustice are two sides

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<sup>101</sup> Banu, Nargis A., 2009, a seminar paper on *Protect People and Nature from Controversial Tipaimukh Dam* presented in the Australian National University, 3<sup>rd</sup> July, pp. 2-3.

<sup>102</sup> *Tipaimukh Dam: The Consequence for Bangladesh*, a presentation by Dr. J. Ahmed, Environment Specialist, available at [www.farakkacommittee.com/Tipaimukh%20Dam-social%20damage.pdf](http://www.farakkacommittee.com/Tipaimukh%20Dam-social%20damage.pdf), accessed on 21<sup>st</sup> January, 2011, pp. 2-5.

<sup>103</sup> Rashid, S. M. A., Anisuzzaman Khan and A. B. M. Sarowar Alam, 2014, "Trans-boundary Sanctuary between Bangladesh and India for Gharial (*Gavialis gangeticus*) Conservation" in Ravindra Kumar Sinha and Benazir Ahmed edited *River for Life: Proceedings of the International Symposium on River Biodiversity: Ganges-Brahmaputra-Meghna River System*, IUCN, p. 131; Kumar, Satish, 2010, *India's National Security: Annual Review 2010*, Routledge, New Delhi, p. 415.

<sup>104</sup> Pandey, Punam, 20<sup>th</sup> December, 2011, "Water Sharing Between India and Bangladesh: Old Confusion and New Realities", *IDS Comment*, available at [http://www.idsai.in/idsacomments/WaterSharingbetweenIndiaandBangladesh\\_ppandey\\_201211](http://www.idsai.in/idsacomments/WaterSharingbetweenIndiaandBangladesh_ppandey_201211) accessed on 2<sup>nd</sup> April, 2016.

of the same coin'.<sup>105</sup> It is pertinent to recommend that, if the state authority desires to ensure social justice, any action on environmental destruction should be stopped. People's rights over natural resources or, noticeably, the propensities of nature-centric survival and subsistence, maintenance of traditional lifestyle pattern, desire for pollution free environment, preservation of forests and wildlife all should be justified as the parts of social as well as environmental justice. From these claims and demands, environmental protection and justice movements are emerging as 'new social movement' all over the country. Laura Westra proposed that the holistic environmental ethics promotes a balancing ethic of justice among human beings. Human beings are first biological beings because cultural, intellectual and spiritual aspects of human beings exist in and through actual living individuals and communities. Holistic environmental thought emphasizes on the integrity of all biotic systems which supports life along with all other life forms.<sup>106</sup> Westra recommended for the 'principle of integrity' that makes the ecosystem both morally considerable and primary in respect to other human preferences and rights beyond the right to life. The ecosystem is genuinely basic 'survival unit' and the basis of all life support system. Therefore, if primary moral considerability lies with ecosystem, our first obligation transcends both individuals and groups and both nationalism and democracy may have to be reevaluated.<sup>107</sup>

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<sup>105</sup> Agarwal, Anil, Sharma, Kalpana and Chopra, Ravi (eds.), 1982, *The State of India's Environment, 1982: A Citizen's Report*, Centre for Science and Environment, New Delhi, p. 190.

<sup>106</sup> Westra, Laura and Bill E. Lawson, 2001, *Faces of Environmental Racism: Confronting Issues of Global Justice*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, USA, p. xix.

<sup>107</sup> Westra, Laura, 1993, "The Ethics of Environmental Holism and the Democratic State: Are they in Conflict?" in *Environmental Ethics*, Vol. 2, No. 2, pp. 125-126.