

Environment and Natural Resources

TEXTBOOK QUESTIONS SOLVED

1. Which among the following best explains the reason for growing concerns about the environment?

- (a) The developed countries are concerned about projecting nature.
- (b) Protection of the environment is vital for indigenous people and natural habitats.
- (c) The environmental degradation caused by human activities has become pervasive and has reached a dangerous level.
- (d) None of the above.

Answer. (c) The environmental degradation caused by human activities has become persuasive and has reached a dangerous level.

2. Mark correct or wrong against each of the following statements about the Earth Summit:

- (a) It was attended by 170 countries, thousands of NGOs and many MNCs.
- (b) The Summit was held under aegis of the UN.
- (c) For the first time, global environmental issues were firmly consolidated at the political level.
- (d) It was a summit meeting.

Answer. (a) Correct (b) Wrong

(c) Correct (d) Wrong

3. Which among the following are true about the Global Commons?

- (a) The earth's atmosphere, Antarctica, ocean floor and outer space are considered as part of the Global Commons.
- (b) The Global Commons are outside sovereign jurisdiction.
- (c) The question of managing the Global Commons has reflected the North-South divide.
- (d) The countries of the North are more concerned about the protection of the global Commons than the countries of the South.

Answer. (a) The Earth's atmosphere, Antarctica, ocean floor and outer space are considered as a part of global commons.

4. What were the outcomes of Rio-Summit?

Answer. 1. Rio-Summit produced conventions dealing with climate change, biodiversity, forestry and recommended a list of development practices called Agenda 21.

2. It gave the concept of sustainable development to be combined economic growth with ecological responsibility.

3. Rio-Summit developed various contentious issues like Commons, Global Commons in global politics of environment.

5. What is meant by Global Commons? How are they exploited and polluted?

Answer. The areas or regions located outside the jurisdiction of any one state and region, common governance by international community are Global Commons i.e. Earth atmosphere, Antarctic Ocean floor and outer space. They are exploited and polluted due to

1. Vague scientific evidences, their lack of consensus on common environmental issues.

2. North-South inequalities and their exploitative activities and competition lack proper management area out space.

3. Technological and Industrial development have also affected the earth's atmosphere and ocean floor.

6. What is meant by 'Common but differentiated responsibilities'? How could we implement the idea?

Answer. Common but differentiated responsibilities mean that the state shall cooperate in the spirit of global partnership to conserve, protect and restore the health and integrity of the earth's ecosystem. As the states have common but differentiated responsibilities over various contributions of global environmental degradation. The developed countries acknowledge that the responsibility that they bear in the international pursuit of sustainable development in view of the pressures their societies place on the global environment and of the technological and financial resources they command.

We could implement the idea with the help of conventions and declarations:

1. The Rio-Summit held in June 1992 produced conventions dealing with climate change, biodiversity, forestry and recommended a list of developed practices called Agenda 21.
2. The 1992 United Nations Framework convention on climatic change (UNFCCC) also emphasised that the parties should act to protect the climate system on the basis of common but differentiated responsibilities;
3. An international agreement known Kyoto Protocol set targets for industrialised countries to cut their greenhouse gas emissions which support for global warming.

7. Why have issues related to global environmental protection become the priority concern of states since the 1990s?

Answer. Issues related to global environmental protection became the priority concern of states since the 1990s because at global level, the environmental issues drew attentions of various states at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development held in Rio-de-Janerio, Brazil in June 1992 through Agenda 21:

1. Rio-Summit 1992 dealt with climatic change, bio-diversity and forestry.
2. Agenda 21 combined economic growth with ecological responsibilities.
3. Kyoto Protocol set targets for greenhouse emissions. The above mentioned conferences and summits raised the environmental issues at the global level to take steps by various states to check environmental degradation in a co-operative manner.

8. Compromise and accommodation are the two essential policies required by states to save Planet Earth. Substantiate the statement in the light of the ongoing negotiations between the North and South on environmental issues.

Answer. Compromise and accommodation are the two essential policies to save Planet Earth by the states but the states from North and South have different notions towards environmental issues:

1. The Northern States (Developed) are concerned with ozone depletion and global warming whereas southern states (Developing) want to address the relationship between economic development and environmental management.
2. The developed countries of the North want to discuss the environmental issues which stand equally responsible for ecological conservation.
3. The developing countries of the south feel that much of the ecological degradation in the world is created by developed countries through their industrial projects.
4. And if developed countries cause more environmental degradation they are supposed to take more responsibility onwards.
5. The developing counties are under process of industrialization and they should be exempted from restrictions imposed on developed countries through various conventions like protocol etc.

6. The special needs of developing countries must be taken into considerations in the process of development, application and interpretation of rules of International Environmental Law. All the above mentioned provisions were accepted in Earth Summit, 1992 while adopting common but differentiated responsibilities.

9. The most serious challenge before the states is pursuing economic development without causing further damage to the global environment. How could we achieve this? Explain with a few examples.

Answer. The economic development can be achieved even without damaging global environment by following practices:

1. In June 1992, Earth Summit provided some conservative measures for sustainable growth without damaging environment anymore.
2. The Antarctic Treaty of 1959 covered Global Commons for mutual economic development.
3. Kyoto protocol cut greenhouse emissions from industrialised countries to protect environment and to develop industries also.
4. Resource Geopolitics allocates and ' distribute natural resources among the nation states of global arena for sustainable development of nations. Hence, the above mentioned practices protect the global environment and even though the states are developing we could achieve this challenge only if we follow the provisions and practices mentioned in all these conferences and summits.

MORE QUESTIONS SOLVED

Very Short Answer Type Questions [1 Mark]

1. What does the UNEP stand for?

Answer. UNEP stands for the United Nations Environment Programme to hold international conferences to promote coordination to effective response to environmental problems.

2. What is Agenda 21?

Answer. Agenda 21 is a list of developed practices ecological responsibility to promote sustainable development.

3. What do you mean by Global Commons?

Answer. Global Commons are the common governance by international community over the areas or regions which are located outside the sovereign jurisdiction of any one state or authority.

4. What is UNFCCC?

Answer. The 1992 United Nations Framework Convention Climate Change (UNFCCC) provides that the parties should act to protect the climate system on the basis of equity and in accordance with the common but differentiated responsibilities.

Very Short Answer Type Questions [2 Marks]

1. Suggest any two steps to be taken by the government to check pollution and save environment.

Answer. (i) India's National Auto-fuel Policy mandates cleaner fuels for vehicles. The Energy Conservation Act, passed in 2001, outlines initiatives to improve energy efficiency.
(ii) The Electricity Act of 2003 encourages the use of renewable energy.

2. Mention any two outcomes of Rio- Summit.

Answer. 1. It provided a consensus to combine economic growth with ecological responsibility for sustainable development.
2. It recommended a list of development practices called Agenda 21 which induced climatic change, bio-diversity, forestry and development practices.

3. Give any two environmental concerns of global politics.

Answer. 1. Ozone layer depletion is an alarming concern for ecosystem.
2. Loss of fertility of agricultural land • due to extreme use of fertilizers and overgrazed grasslands.

4. Explain the most obvious threat to the survival of indigenous people.

Answer. The most obvious threat to the survival of indigenous people is the loss of land which was occupied by their ancestrals. The loss of land referred to a loss of their economic resource also.

5. How did Earth Summit draw attention of global politics towards environmental issues?

Answer. The Earth Summit drew attention of global politics towards environmental issues because it produced conventions to deal with climate change, biodiversity, forestry and recommended a list of development practices called Agenda 21 which combined economic growth with ecological responsibility known as 'Sustainable Development' as well as Earth Summit laid stress on the cooperation of states to conserve, protect, restore the health and integrity of the earth's ecosystems.

6. Mention the major problems of ecological issues.

Answer. 1. Common environmental agenda could not get common consensus due to vague scientific methods.
2. Management of outer space is influenced by North-South inequalities.
3. Technology and industrial development are also the issues over earth's atmosphere and ocean floor.
4. Ozone hole over Antarctic also revealed the opportunity as well as dangers inherent in tackling global environment problems.

7. What is Kyoto Protocol?

Answer. 1. Kyoto Protocol is an international agreement signed in 1997 in Kyoto for setting targets for industrialised countries to cut their greenhouse gas emissions.
2. Certain gases like Carbon dioxide, Methane, Hydro-fluoro Carbons etc. are considered responsible for global warming.
3. This global warming may rise the global temperature to have catastrophic consequences for life on earth.

8. What do you mean by common property?

Answer. Common property refers to the rights and duties of a group together over a natural resources with the following norms:
1. The group members enjoy rights and duties both over nature, levels of use and the maintenance of a given resource.
2. In India, many village communities have defined members' rights and responsibilities through mutual understanding.
3. The institutional arrangement for the actual management of sacred groves on state owned forest land appropriately fit the description of common property.

9. What is 'Resource Geopolitics'?

Answer. 'Resource Geopolitics' is concerned with allocation of distribution of natural resources among the nation states of global arena:

1. It is about who gets what, when, where and how.
2. Inter state rivalry and western geopolitical thinking about resources have been dominated by the relationship of trade, war and power.

10. Is there any difference between the prospectives adopted by the rich and the poor nations to protect the Earth? Explain.

Answer. Yes, the rich and the poor nations adopted different prospectives to protect the earth at Rio-Summit:

1. The rich countries were known as Global North whereas the poor countries were called Global South.
2. Northern states showed concern with ozone depletion and global warming whereas southern states showed
? concern for economic development and environmental management.

Short Answer Type Questions [4 Marks]

1. What is meant by common property resources? Explain with examples.

Answer. Common property refers to the rights and duties of a group together over natural resources with the following norms:

1. The group members enjoy rights and duties both over nature, levels of use and the maintenance of a given resource.
2. In India, many village communities have defined members' rights and responsibilities through mutual understanding.
3. The institutional arrangement for the actual management of sacred groves on state owned forest level appropriating fit the description of common property.

2. Explain the meaning of global commons. Give any four examples of global commons.

Answer. The areas of regions located outside the jurisdiction of any one state and require common governance by international community are Global Commons i.e. Earth atmosphere. Antarctic Ocean Floor and outer space. They are exploited and polluted due to:

1. Vague scientific evidences, these lack of consensus on common environmental issues.
2. North-South inequalities and their exploitative activities and competition lack proper management over outer space.
3. Technological and Industrial development have also affected the earth's atmosphere and ocean floor.

3. Describe any four steps taken by India to improve the environment.

Answer. The Indian government is participating in global efforts through a number of programmes:

1. India's National Auto-fuel policy mandates cleaner fuels for vehicles.
2. The Energy Conservation Act, 2001 outlines initiatives to improve energy efficiency.
3. Electricity Act, 2003 encourages the use of renewable energy.
4. Recent trends in importing natural gas and encouraging the adoption of clean coal technologies show that India is making real efforts.
5. India is also keen to launch a national mission on Biodiesel using about 11 million hectares of land to produce biodiesel by 2011-12.

4. Define indigenous population. Highlight any two problems of such people.

Answer. The UN defines indigenous population as comprising the descendants of people who inhabited the present territory of a country at the time when persons of a different culture or ethnic origin arrived there from other parts of the world and overcame them. The following problems are faced by such people:

1. They lost their lands which belonged to them only for a long time.
2. The loss of land refers to a loss of an economic resource base.
3. Issues related to the rights of the indigenous communities have also been neglected in domestic and international politics for long.

5. Explain the importance and role of concept common but differentiated pertaining to environment.

Answer. Compromise and accommodation are the two essential policies to Save Planet Earth by the states but the states from North and South have different notions towards environmental issues:

1. The Northern States (Developed) are concerned with Ozone depletion and global warming whereas Southern States (Developing) want to address the relationship between economic development and environmental management.
 2. The developed countries of the North want to discuss the environmental issues which stands equally responsible for ecological conservation.
 3. The developing countries of the South feel that much of the ecological degradation in the world is created by developed countries through their industrial projects.
 4. And if developed countries cause more environmental degradation they are supposed to take more responsibility onwards.
 5. The developing countries are under process of industrialization and they should be exempted from restrictions imposed on developed countries through various conventions like Kyoto Protocol etc.
 6. The special needs of developing countries must be taken into considerations in the process of development, application and interpretation of rules of International Environmental Law.
- All the above mentioned provisions were accepted in Earth Summit, 1992 while adopting common but differentiated responsibilities.

6. Explain India's stand on environmental issues. What steps have been suggested by India in this respect?

Answer. India plays a dominating role among the Asian countries on environmental issues:

1. India signed and ratified the 1997 Kyoto Protocol in August 2002 which emphasised to follow the principle common but differentiated responsibility.
2. India feels this contravenes the very spirit of UNFCCC. Neither does it seem fair to impose restrictions on India when the country's rise per capita carbon emissions by 2030 is likely to still represent less than half the world average.
3. The Indian government is also keen to launch a National Mission on Biodiesel which makes India to have one of the largest renewable energy programmes in the world.
4. The Indian government is also participating in global efforts through a number of programmes i.e. National Auto fuel Policy, Electricity Act 2003, Energy Conservation Act, 2001 etc.

7. What is meant by environment? Suggest any two steps for the environmental improvement.

Answer. Environment refers to surroundings of a region which can be improved by taking following steps:

1. More focus should be on afforestation
i. e. planting more trees to maintain ecological balance, prevent soil erosion and enhance water

cycle also.

2. Eco-friendly industries should be set up as well as industries adherent should be disposed with scientific methods and industries should be established at far away places from populous/residential areas.

8. What do you mean by environmental movements? Explain.

Answer. Environmental movements are the movements of a group which are environmentally conscious to challenge environmental degradation to work at both the national and international levels or local levels:

1. These movements raise new ideas and long term vision of what we should not do in our individual and collective lines.
2. These environmental movements may be diverse in nature i.e. the forest movements of the south, in Mexico, Chile, Brazil, Malaysia, Indonesia, continental Africa and India are faced with enormous pressures.

Categories of Environmental Movements:

1. Forest Movements
2. Movement against mining corporation and mineral industry (water pollution)
3. Anti Dam Movements against the construction of mega dams riot to disturb channels of rivers.

9. Oil is an important resource in global strategy that affects the geopolitics and global economy. Comment.

Answer. Oil is the resource which generates immense wealth, hence it creates political struggles involving industrialised countries to adopt various methods to ensure steady flows of oil:

1. These include deployment of military process near exploitation sites and along sea lanes of communications.
2. The stockpiling of strategic resources.
3. They support multinational companies by making favourable international agreements.
4. The global economy relied on oil as a portable and indispensable fuel, hence, the history of petroleum is the history of war and struggle.
5. It created conflict between Iraq and Saudi Arabia as Iraq's known reserves are second only to Saudi Arabia and since substantial portions of Iraqi territory are yet to be fully explored, there is a fair chance that actual reserves might be far larger.

10. Water is a crucial resource to global politics. Explain with examples.

Or

Explain the water wars with examples.

Answer. Water is a crucial resource relevant to global politics. Regional variations and increasing scarcity of fresh water in some parts of the world point to the possibility of disagreements over shared water resources as a leading source of conflicts in 21st century, which is known as water wars:

1. Water wars may create violent conflict due to disagreement of countries over sharing rivers i.e. a typical disagreement is a downstream state's objection to pollution, excessive irrigation, or construction of dams which degrade the quality of water available to downstream states.
2. States have used force to seize fresh water resources i.e. 1950, struggle between Israel, Syria and Jordan and 1960s over attempts by each side to divert water from the Jordan and Yarmuk rivers.
3. The more recent threats between Turkey, Syria and Iraq over the construction of Dams on Euphrates river.

Passage Based Questions [5 Marks]

1. Read the following passage carefully and answer the questions:

The Indian government is already participating in global efforts through a number of programmes. For example, India's National Auto-fuel Policy mandates cleaner fuels for vehicles. The Energy Conservation Act, passed in 2001, outlines initiatives to improve energy efficiency. Similarly, the Electricity Act of 2003 encourages the use of renewable energy. Recent trends in importing natural gas and encouraging the adoption of clean coal technologies show that India has been making real efforts. The government is also keen to launch a National Mission on Biodiesel, using about 11 million hectares of land to produce biodiesel by 2011-2012. And India has one of the largest renewable energy programmes in the world.

Questions

1. How India has participated in global efforts to protect environment?
2. What are Energy Conservation Act and Electricity Act?
3. Mention the efforts made by Indian government for biodiesel.

Answer.

1. It has launched a number of programmes i.e. Auto Fuel Policy, Energy Conservation Act 2001, Electricity Act 2003 to protect environment.
2. The Energy Conservation Act was passed in 2001 to outline initiatives to improve energy efficiency and Electricity Act, passed in 2003 to encourage the use of renewable energy by the Indian government as a conservation programme.
3. The Indian government is keen to launch a National Mission on Biodiesel using about 11 million hectares of land to produce biodiesel by 2011-12.

2. Read the following passage carefully and answer the questions:

The global economy relied on oil for much of the 20th century as a portable and indispensable fuel. The immense wealth associated with oil generates political struggles to control it, and the history of petroleum is also the history of war and struggle. Nowhere is this more obviously the case than in West Asia and Central Asia, West Asia, specifically the Gulf region, accounts for about 30 per cent of global oil production. But it has about 64 per cent of the planet's known reserves, and is therefore the only region able to satisfy any substantial rise in oil demand. Saudi Arabia has a quarter of the world's total reserves and is the single largest producer. Iraq's known reserves are second only to Saudi Arabia's. And, since substantial portions of Iraqi territory are yet to be fully explored, there is a fair chance that actual reserves might be far that actual reserves might be far larger. The United States, Europe, Japan, and increasingly India and China, which consume this petroleum, are located at a considerable distance from the region.

Questions

1. Which region has much potential for oil production?
2. Which area is supposed to have far larger reserves than actually it has?
3. Why the history of petroleum is called the history of war and struggle?

Answer.

1. West Asia especially the Gulf region enjoys much more potential for oil production. larger. The United States, Europe, Japan, and increasingly India and China, which consume this petroleum, are located at a considerable distance from the region.
2. Iraqi territory is supposed to be fully explored.
3. The global economy relied on oil for much of 20th century as a portable and indispensable fuel. The common wealth associated with oil generates political struggles to control it.

Long Answer Type Questions [6 Marks]

1. Explain the meaning of 'global commons'. How are environmental concerns becoming important in global politics?

Answer. 'Commons' are those resources which are not owned by anyone but rather shared by a community. This could be a 'common room', a 'community centre', a park or a river. Similarly, there are some areas or regions of the world which are located outside the sovereign jurisdiction of any one state, and therefore require common governance by the international community. These are known as 'global commons'. They include the earth's atmosphere, Antarctica, the ocean floor and outer space.

Although environmental concerns have a long history, awareness of the environmental consequences of economic growth acquired an increasingly political character from the 1960s onwards. The Club of Rome, a global think-tank, published a book in 1972 entitled *Limits to Growth*, dramatising the potential depletion of the earth's resources against the backdrop of rapidly growing world population. International agencies began holding international conferences and promoting detailed studies to get a more coordinated and effective response to environmental problems. Since then, the environment has emerged as significant issue of global politics.

The growing focus on environmental issues within the arena of global politics was firmly consolidated at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in June, 1992.

This was also called the Earth Summit. The Summit was attended by 170 states, thousands of NGOs and many multinational corporations. The Summit produced conventions dealing with climate change, biodiversity, forestry and recommended a list of development practices called 'Agenda 21'. But it left unresolved considerable differences and difficulties. There was a consensus on combining economic growth with ecological responsibility. This approach to development is commonly known as 'sustainable development'.

2. Explain the concept of "common but differentiated responsibilities". How and where was it emphasised upon?

Or

States have common but differentiated responsibilities towards environment. Analyse the statement giving suitable examples.

Answer. Common but differentiated responsibilities mean that 'the states shall cooperate in the spirit of global partnership to conserve, protect and restore the health and integrity of the earth's ecosystem. As the states have common but differentiated responsibilities over various contribution of global environmental degradation. The developed countries acknowledge that the responsibility that they bear in the international pursuit of sustainable development in view of the pressures their societies place on the global environment and of the technological and financial resources they command. We could implement the idea with the help of conventions and declarations:

1. The Rio Summit held in June 1992 produced conventions dealing with climate change, biodiversity, forestry and recommended a list of developed practices called Agenda 21.
2. The 1992 United Nation's Framework Convention on Climatic Change (UNFCCC) also emphasised that the parties should act to protect the climate system on the basis of common but differentiated responsibilities.
3. An international agreement known by its Protocol set targets for industrialised countries to cut their greenhouse gas emissions which support for global warming.

3. Analyse India's stand on any three environmental issues. Or Analyse India's stand on environmental issues.

Answer. India plays a dominating role among the Asian countries on environmental issues:

1. India signed and ratified the 1997 Kyoto Protocol in August 2002 which emphasised to follow the principle common but differentiated responsibility.
2. India feels this convention is the very spirit of UNFCCC. Neither does it seem fair to impose

restrictions on India when the country's rise in per capita carbon emissions by 2030 is likely to still represent less than half the world average.

3. The Indian government is also keen to launch a National Mission on Biodiesel which makes India to have one of the largest renewable energy programmes in the world.
4. The Indian government is also participating in global efforts through a number of programmes i.e. National Auto Fuel Policy, Electricity Act 2003, Energy Conservation Act, 2001, etc.

4. Explain any three environmental concerns in global politics.

Answer. Some environmental issues have been considered as the global issues:

1. Natural resources are being depleted i.e. cultivable area has not been sustained any more, agricultural land lost fertility and grass lands have been overgrazed.
2. Waterbodies have suffered a depletion and pollution both.
3. A steady decline in ozone layer also poses a threat to ecosystem and human health.
4. Natural forests stabilize the climate, moderate water supply and habitat various species also which are also being lost creating destruction to biodiversity through industrial pollution etc.
5. Due to land based activities, coastal pollution is also increasing which affects fisheries.

5. Mention the rights of indigenous peoples.

Answer. The UN defines indigenous population as the descendants of people who inhabited the present territory of a country at the time when persons of a different culture or ethnic origin arrived there from other parts of world and overcome them. The rights of indigenous people can be summarised as follows:

1. Indigenous people speak of their struggles, agenda and fights like social movements.
2. Their voices in world politics call for the admission of indigenous people to the world community as equals.
3. Many of the present day island states in the Oceania region (including Australia, New Zealand) were inhabited by various indigenous people over the course of show for thousands of years.
4. Indigenous people appeal to government to create indigenous nations with an identity of their own.
5. The World Council of indigenous people was formed in 1975. The council became the first of 11 indigenous NGOs to receive consultative status in the UN.

Picture/Map Based Questions [5 Marks]

1. Study the picture given below and answer the questions that follow:



Questions

1. What does the picture represent?
2. Why do you think the fingers are designed like chimneys and the world made into a lighter?
3. What message does this picture convey?

Answer.

1. It represents 'Industrial Pollution' commenting on 'Global warming'.
2. Fingers denote pollution coming out of chimneys from industries and the lighter represents burning and depleting of natural resources.
3. This picture draws the attention of the world towards industrial pollution, if it continues on, flora and fauna will be depleted which will create an imbalance to ecosystem.

2. Study the picture given below and answer the questions that follow:



Questions

1. What does the cartoon represent?
2. Which countries are being shown here?
3. What message does this picture convey?

Answer.

1. The cartoon represents the methods adopted by industrialised countries to fulfil their essentials from weaker sections.
2. The stronger country like the USA and the weaker nation like Iraq.
3. Resources are the real strength of a nation and neo-colonialism play politics to obtain it.