

# IMPACT OF DEFORESTATION ON ENVIRONMENT

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## Introduction:-

Deforestation is the conversion of forested areas to non forest land for the purpose of growth and development of human society. Since forest support greater number of animals and more species than arable land, destruction of significant areas of forest cover has resulted in degradation of environment with reduced biodiversity. The clearing of forest is not a recent activity. Deforestation has been practiced by humans since ancient time before the beginning of civilization. As a result most of the world's tropical forests which is of increasing environmental concern. It is estimated that every year 6.3 million hector of tropical wood land is cleared. Hence an effort is made in the present paper is to throw light on impact of deforestation on environment.

## Historical Causes of Deforestation:-

Deforestation has been practised by humans for thousands of years before the beginning of civilizations. The first evidence of deforestation appears in the merolithic period. Fire was the first tool that allowed humans to modify the landscape. It was probably used to convert closed forests into more open eco systems favorable to graze animals with the prime tool to clear land.

A typical progress trap is that cities were often built in a forested area providing wood for some industries (e.g. constuction, ship building, and potter). When deforestation occurs without proper replanting, local wild supplies become difficult to obtain near enough to remain competitive leading to the city's abandonment as happened repeatedly in ancient Asia Minor. The combination of mining and metalurgy often went along this self destructive path.

Mean-While most of the population remaining active in the agriculture sector, the main pressure in most areas remained land clearing for crop and cattle forming. Fortunately enough wild green was usually left standing for wildlife to remain viable and the hunting priviieges of the elite often protected significant wood lands.

**Major Causes Of Deforestation:-** Deforestation is a consequence of over exploitation of our exploitation of our natural ecosystems for space, energy and materials. The basic reasons for such extensive deforestation are:

**1. Expansion of agricultur :** Expanding agriculture is one of the most important causes of deforestation. As demands of agriculture products rise, more and more land is brought under cultivation for which forests are cleared, grass lands are ploughed, uneven grounds leveled and even land under water is reclaimed. However, this expansion is usually marred with more ecological destruction than rationality.

**2. Extension of cultivation of Hill Slopes:** Outside humid tropical zone the most of the third world countries, major forest often occur on hill tops and slopes. Though agriculture, has nearly always been concentrated on plains and floors of valleys, farming on narrow flat steps cut one after another across the slope or terrace farming in as an age old practice. It has been extensive because of the grueling labour and low productivity.

**3. Shifting Cultivation:** Shifting cultivation is always blamed for destruction of forest. In fact it is poor fertility of soil which has given rise to such a pattern of farming. A small patch of tropical forest is cleared; vegetation is slashed, destroyed and burned. Crops are grown as long as the soil is productive. After which the cultivation is abandoned and cultivators move on fresh patch of land. So that for long periods during which re-growth of vegetation took place and natural ecosystem was restored.

**4. Timber Harvesting:** Timber resources are important asset for country's prosperity . Commercial wood finds ready national as well as international markets. As a consequence of which natural forest are being mercilessly exploited. Logging or felling of forest trees for obtaining timber is an important cause of deforestation in the third world countries.

**Impact on Environment:-**

Generally the removal or destruction of significant areas of forest cover has resulted in a degraded environment with reduced biodiversity. In many countries , massive deforestation is ongoing and is reshaping climate and geography. Deforestation is a substantial contributor to global warming. The world's rain forest are widely believed by layman to contribute a significant amount of world's oxygen although it is now accepted by scientists that rainforest contribute little net oxygen to the atmosphere and deforestation will have no effect whatsoever on atmospheric oxygen level. However , the incineration and burning of forest plants in order to clear land release tones of CO<sub>2</sub> which contributes to global warming.

Deforestation reduced the content of water in the soil and ground water as well as atmospheric moisture. Deforestation reduces soil cohesion, so that erosion, flooding and landslides often ensue, destroying forest support and considerable biodiversity providing valuable habitat for wild life. Deforestation can destroy genetic variations such as crop resistance irretrievably.

**Need for Environmental Awareness with Reference to Deforestation-**

Environment is defined as a surrounding or conditions influencing development of growth. It can be understood as a system which includes all living and non living things i.e., air, water, soil, flora and fauna. Man is a slave of environment . The child may have all kinds of abilities , but they can't be developed fully without proper environment.

Natural environment is being neglected by man and adoption of artificial environment has taken a prominent place in the life of individual. Human being like other living creatures living independently on and influence the environment on a global level. Increasing population pressure , urban development, industrialisation and over growing technology are creating more demands on every factor of the environment. In this backdrop , those who work to protect and improve the natural environment including river, forest and wild life should be deeply concerned with environment challenges and possible remedies.

**Conclusion:-**

In the urban/rural areas environmental education about deforestation should be reach the masses and people must be aware about such things, with reference to deforestation. Role of trees alone is quite significant in maintaining and improving environment . Deforestation and loss of plants covers to earth are responsible for atmospheric pollution, thermodynamic imbalance resulting in excessive heat , cold soil degradation and loss , drought, floods , acid rains, and green house effect , diseases, pests, and so on. WE are also facing today pollution of mind and pollution of thought. Poverty is definitely the greatest factor in the country responsible for deforestation.

**References –**

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