

Environmental issues in asia

[Environment](#), [Ecology](#)



Developing countries face severe environmental issues as the rapid economic and population growth had created serious social and environmental problems which if left unattended can bring about very serious consequences. Some of these burning environmental issues faced by these Asian regions are the deforestation, global warming, air and water pollution, limited safe drinking water etc. apart from this manipulation of the natural resources and using unhealthy ways and means for developmental purposes is slowly destroying the resources of these nations which are of serious concern and needs immediate steps by the government and non governmental organizations to protect and rescue them from extinction.

Two main problems that I wish to discuss in this research paper is air pollution and the increasing deficit in drinking water supply which is a great threat to the nations overall economic development. India is a fast developing country and its growth in the IT and industrial sector over the years is abundant. With the per capita income increasing with the sudden boom in industrial and technological sectors purchasing power has increased. Easy EMI and retail option enable almost anyone to get a vehicle and as the result traffic congestion, air pollution and noise pollution etc have increased thereby endangering the whole atmosphere and paving way to global warming.

Water is the elixir of life we all know but although the world is third filled with water drinking water is available in limited quantity. India largely depends on monsoon rains for its agriculture and underground drinking water resources. Due to environmental issues like global warming, air pollution, industrial wastes, use of fertilizers etc result in less rainfall. Moreover the little rainfall

received is wasted as it reaches the ocean without any proper preservation methods. The existing dams and water reservoirs are maintained poorly and hence little water collected due to seasonal rains are wasted. Hence an emergency plan to preserve this resource is necessary and steps to minimize air pollution should also be undertaken.

Land usage in India:

- Area of the country: 3287260sq. kms
- Cultivable area: 1839560sq. kms
- Cultivated land area: 1697000sq. kms

Population:

- Total population 1038056000
- Rural: 71% urban – 29%

Water resources:

- Internal renewable water: 1260540 million cubic meters
- Total renewable water 1907760 million cubic meters

Water use:

- Total withdrawal: 500000 million cubic meters
- Agriculture: 92%
- Domestic: 5%
- Industrial: 3%

Irrigation:

- Irrigation potential: 1135120 sq. kms

- Land under irrigation: 501010 sq. kms
- Surface irrigation: 493300 sq. kms
- Area irrigated with surface water 40. 5%
- Area irrigated with ground water 53% (research paper on survey of Indian resources – 2005)

The above facts clearly state the environmental condition of this great nation. The need for ground water for irrigation alone is almost 53% and this ground water level is diminishing today due to lack of rains and improper irrigation methods. The surface water again is becoming polluted because of unhygienic and improper maintenance and preservation methods. Further use of chemicals and pesticides for industry and agriculture has highly polluted both surface and ground water. When agriculture uses highly toxic pesticides it destroys not only the soil but also the water underneath.

Some of the reasons for water scarcity in India are

- rising demand for water as population increases
- over extraction of surface and ground level water
- delay in completion of developmental projects due to lack of funds and political pressure or instable governments
- contamination of water resources due to the increased human impact
- globalization and industrial development polluting air and water thereby altering urban climate Etc.

There is a huge demand for water in the years to come especially keeping in mind the population the demand seems to be a nightmare.

Government role to curb further water shortage: from time to time government plays a major part in implementing measures to check this water scarcity. Development projects like building dams, reservoirs, cleaning tanks and increasing awareness to store and use drinking water sensibly is being undertaken. State and central governments join together and use the allotted funds to implement such projects. But political pressure, unstable government and lack of funds create a void in these projects which is either dropped or not put into practice wholly. Moreover bribery in all fields curbs the growth and development of these projects.

Although many NGO'S and non governmental organizations and business establishments try to fund these projects the funds are highly misused or mishandled by faulty politicians. Balanced growth in both agriculture and industry is needed for a countries overall performance and development. But industry is developing in India in a faster pace and it looks like agriculture is neglected. Plans to curb air pollution are needed desperately as it affects the rain and overall climatic condition of the nation. More plants should be planted and forests should be conserved and all measures to save rain water undertaken. Rain water harvesting was seriously implemented in some states and the result is yet to be seen. The roads and the infrastructure is very poor and even the slightest rain causes flash floods. Proper drainage and town planning is missing in cities like Mumbai and Chennai.

Great awareness of the results of such negligence should be spread around and people should be educated as to the affects of global warming and air pollution. Individuals should take this mission in their hands to ensure safety

for future generation. Every successful business concern should adopt one area or town to implement development projects like planting trees, cleaning drinking water reservoirs and dam's etc. individuals for their part should maintain hygiene and prevent wastage of water.

Governments should curb the vehicles promotion by making strict laws against easy availability of driving license and fine or punishment if driving unchecked vehicles against air and noise pollution. Industries should be made to dispose their chemicals and smoke safely so as not to pollute the air and water. Strict laws and cancellation of their industrial license should be enacted. If everyone could use water sensibly and avoid polluting substances India would become a super power rich in natural resources and hygiene.

Short term practical solutions:

- Keeping the surroundings clean and maintaining a social responsibility to preserve and conserve our natural resources is every individual's imminent responsibility
- Creating social awareness of this burning issue among the general public by conducting seminars, student programs and through entertainment to educate even the uneducated and down trodden
- To keep water bodies clean and check for pollution from nearby factories and industries
- Proper recycle of industrial wastes
- Undeterred implementation of government development schemes
- Strict implementation of anti pollution laws

- Increasing facilities in public transport and curtailing the use of private transport facilities
- Planting more trees

Singapore is the world's second free economy and second most competitive Asian economy. It is the best connected countries with a robust infrastructure to suit another century or so. Globally connected, top ranking business environment, with stable infrastructure and diverse world class business solutions has made Singapore the top ranked and most preferred business ground. Free trade will definitely enable people from all over the world to throng Singapore but how does it maintain its resources against the growing demand, how is it possible for this small nation to keep its streets and water bodies clean and vehicles free from polluting the atmosphere.

With a total land area of only 699. 0 sq. km together with the mainland and other small islands surrounding it has a annual rainfall of about 2, 136 mm. the resident population is 4, 483, 900 and mainly consist of immigrants from neighboring Asian countries like china and India. The literacy rate above 15 years is 95% and the per capita GDP is S\$ 44, 666. Labor force in this country is 2, 367, 300 and the unemployment rate is just 3. 4%.

The country synthesis report on urban air quality management conducted in 2006 clearly states the measures taken by Singapore to prevent or restrict air pollution. The ambient AQ is regularly monitored with the help of 14 air monitoring machines placed across the island of Singapore. This monitoring has aided in the review of pollution control measures and this has given a positive result in controlling air pollution in the country. AQ monitoring

methods used are based on the United States Environmental Protection Agency. The offenders were prosecuted and were required to take remedial action.

Since 1971 many laws are set up to maintain clean air focusing much on vehicular pollution and industrialization. The EPCA combines laws for air, water and noise pollution and gives a legislative framework to control pollution of the environment. Lead petrol was stopped and slowly the level of sulfur from diesel was also reduced considerably to control and reduce emission from vehicles.

Ultra low sulfur diesel was introduced to implement euro 4 emission standard and it took effect from October 2006. Air quality in Singapore is the best in the world and it was possible only through strict measures taken by the government to control emission and resolve different forms of pollution. Green plan 2012 is another great step undertaken to further improve the quality of the environment for the years to come.

Highly compatible and well maintained reservoirs catch every drop of rain water and this is utilized by almost half of Singapore uses this water. New projects to build new dams and reservoirs desalination plants, etc are also are being developed. To aid in this mission MEWater is set up which is high quality water received from water reclamation from 2003. Sustainability and cleanliness of water supply and environment is maintained well as Singapore stands tall as a very good example of how we should conserve and preserve our natural resources for a better tomorrow.

It is clearly evident that Singapore has successfully implemented anti pollutant measures and even though its economy is growing fast the infrastructure and the low pollution levels are unchanged. There is enough water to meet all the growing needs and the greenery and the cleanliness stands proof of the people commitment to make their country a higher power standing out and setting an example to all other nations. Asian countries like India and china can take this as an example and with proper coordination with this country try to implement such strict rules in their country too. Finally it is a joint responsibility of both the government and the individuals and they should both commit themselves to make a better, cleaner and pollution free nation not only for us but also to our future generations.

Reference

1. Survey of Indian resources – research paper submitted to the Annamalai Open University. India
2. [www. indiastat. com](http://www.indiastat.com)
3. [http://www. sedb. com/edb/sg/en_uk/index/why_singapore/singapore_rankings. html](http://www.sedb.com/edb/sg/en_uk/index/why_singapore/singapore_rankings.html)
4. [http://app. nea. gov. sg/cms/htdocs/category_sub. asp? cid= 29](http://app.nea.gov.sg/cms/htdocs/category_sub.asp?cid=29)