

## STRATEGIES AND PLANNING FOR SUSTAINABLE UTILIZATION OF LAND RESOURCE IN INDIA

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### ABSTRACT

*Today India faces varied problems and challenges of ecological disequilibrium, population-explosion, increasing trend of urbanization, water and energy crisis, rapid industrialization, pollution and excessive exploitation of natural resources. It consequently rising regional disparities and created pressure on land resource and environmental imbalance. Development and economic growth are at the cost of degradation of natural resources, particularly producing land area. The study aims to investigate rationally and objectively the dynamic nature of settlements, agricultural land and other land-use pattern and queries to make useful suggestions for sustainable development. To achieve aim of sustainable development, we need strategies and planning for utilizing the land resource through forestation, pasture and agricultural development, systematic settlement, urbanization and industrialization. The land use policy is also important due to the ongoing land acquisition disputes. The change in land-use pattern is the best indicator of socio-economic and cultural development, so plans need to be oriented with specific objectives and further gainful strategies for land utilization. According to the new policy, there is a plan to divide the country into six zones on the basis of main land uses and these zones are rural and agricultural areas, areas undergoing transformation, urban areas, Industrial areas, ecological and disaster prone areas. For each type of area, different organizing methods will be used to suit different local needs. The direction and pace of the land resource dynamism in the country need to be accelerated to match with the growing rate of population and rapid urbanization. It should also include a plan to make land use change irreversible in agricultural and ecologically sensitive areas. The Policy should an attempt to further these objectives and to regulate and control the increasing competition between different sectors for land resources. The policies and decision related to land use will play a determining role in resources conservation and sustainable development in our country.*

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**Keywords:** Sustainable Development, Resource, Planning, Strategies, Land Use.

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### Introduction

The growing development associated with increasing population, rapid urbanization and industrialization are increasing pressure on land resource. Land is a limited resource and an indispensable resource for meeting the social, economic and environmental demands. The concerns can even become more serious in India, which has at present over 17.6% of world's population living on only 2.4% of the world's geographical area.

The depletion of land resources is one of the greatest challenges for mankind in this millennium. Shrinking land resources, deterioration of land quality and liberalization of market economies have become intertwined to influence the sustainable management of land resources and land use plans. This important volume, Sustainable Management of Land Resources: An Indian Perspective, addresses these challenges. The work looks at how scientists translate their knowledge and experience in sustainable

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land resources and management into implementable policy decisions, with a particular focus on India. Since India is a growing economy, the land resources assume a very critical role affecting the livelihood of a vast majority of populace in the country.

### **Objective**

The purpose of improving and strengthening land use strategies and planning should aim at optimal utilization of the limited land resources for achieving sustainable development. The land use strategies and planning is required for these objectives:

- Protection of the lands under natural resources, ecosystem and the heritage sites.
- Protection of the social interests and livelihood aspects.
- Meeting the urbanization, industrialization, mining and transport sector demands
- Meeting the demands of rural and agriculture sectors.
- Also regulating land use shifts.
- To suggest sustainable development strategies and planning for utilizing the land resource through forestation, pasture and agricultural development.
- The paper may provide a base for sustainable development and better management of land resource for the administrator, economist, social reformers and policy makers.

### **Hypothesis**

The study is primarily concerned with utilization of land resource with reference to sustainable development in India that the following hypotheses are to be discussed.

- The planning and development programmes have influenced the resources and land use pattern.
- The impact of planning and development programmes for sustainable land utilization and socio-economic development is uniform in the region.
- Physical aspects and human interference plays vital role in determining the nature and merit of land utilization in early stage of land use development in India.

If land use management, environmental and social issues are not focused in overall planning; it can lead to agrarian chaos and social damage in future. It is necessary to define sustainable development and take pro-active steps in order to stabilize the system, so that socio-economic-environmental balance can be restored, in a time bound manner.

### **Methodology**

Data play vital and significant role in giving a factual base to the abstract picture of the study. These also help in either comparing or contrasting units within the framework of a particular geographic phenomenon. These are additionally the other language of representation of ideas and a silent but a sure way of expression in various precise modes and methods. The present paper is based on data and information collected from various secondary sources, internet and web sites. The details of land classification have collected from Handbook of Statistics Ministry of Agriculture, Govt. of India and population data from Census Hand Book, (Census 2011).

### **Discussion**

It is crucial for decision-makers to understand potential trade-offs between the objectives to find a balance of human needs and environmental impacts. The concept of land use planning developed when the need for planned development of towns and cities was felt in India. Earlier, the population growth and availability of resources were in consonance with one another and hence there was no need for human planning. However, with an increase in population and depleting resources, the requirement for smart planning of land was felt. Before independence that cities were mostly established based on their location with respect to essential resources. For example- cities, which were near the coast, were established as port cities. However, after independence, the prophecy of using land according to a planned strategy gained importance, to maximize the output using the available resources.

Town planning commenced in India with the establishment of improvements trusts, municipalities, assigned with the responsibility of checking health care issues. The most important work that they performed was the formation of theoretical, spatial and sector maps. One immediate benefit of these maps was the systematic collection of taxes on the basis of these artificial boundaries. This can be

called the primary form of spatial planning. Growth of development authorities- As the dimensions of cities became more complex; municipalities became insufficient to host these land-planning problems. Then the development authorities appeared. These were established specifically for the purpose of city and town planning. These authorities charted out various Town Planning Schemes and Development Plans to ensure development.

- **Land use Planning Schemes In India:** This concept of town planning being relatively new in India is still struggling to gain attention. However, with the increased realisation of the importance of quality of life, land use planning is gaining attention. Planning at the national level is done by the Planning Commission of India, now renamed *NITI Aayog*. The five-year plans passed by this commission detailed the allocation of funds to various sectors. Planning of the urban areas is carried out through various planning schemes. The master plan is one such plan, particularly made for the urban sector development. It is pertinent to note that the most important component of all these schemes is land use planning, as it denotes a spatial nature to a plan. Land use planning implies, assigning a specific purpose to every piece of land. India is rapidly developing country, with a consistently rising GDP. The major part of population still involves in agricultural works and there has been a stark rise in the number of people migrating from villages and towns to cities. Due to this development, there has been a rapid rise in urbanization. For managing the limited resource and land in urban areas and making this rapid urbanization systematic, land use planning in India becomes an utmost necessity. Therefore, land-use planning is done in India primarily to divide areas for specific and tasks done to maximize the utility of the overall land and negate the possibility of repetition of the use of land for the same activity. It also stops any other future negative impact.

There are many provisions made in the constitution of India for the purpose of land use planning. The seventh schedule provides for land use planning and it assigns the responsibility to both the state and centre to look into this matter. Entry nineteen of the State list provided in the seventh schedule, assigns the task of enacting laws and policies to the state legislatures. Also, empowers the centre to make policies and legislations for development of defence infrastructure, railways, interstate rivers, industries etc. By the 74th constitutional amendment, spatial planning was introduced in the constitution, via this amendment provided for spatial planning in District and Metropolitan Area Development Plans. So spatial planning can be rightly termed as a constitutional obligation. The central government has a responsibility for national-level land use planning, as provided in the seventh schedule. Framing of land use planning and development guidelines and Construing model acts are the major tasks that are to be fulfilled by the government. These government departments and agencies are allocated the task of land use strategies and planning at the national level:

The department of space has the task of creating thematic maps of wasteland, environmental disasters, land use in different terrains etc. It also performs the work of charting out plans for local and regional level land-use patterns. The ministry of urban development undertakes a number of plans for land use planning. Some important guidelines are- National housing and habitat policy-2007, Model urban and regional planning and development law-1996. Ministry Of Rural Development supported previous land use planning schemes and is propagating the current efforts of the national and state governments. Draft National Land Reforms Policy (2013) is a localised policy framework providing aid to preparation of village land use plans. This policy also supports the aggregations of such localised plans to help shape the other land-use policies. Shyama Prasad Mukherjee Rurban Mission (2016) aims to transform land use clusters to novel urban from rural in a magnificent manifestation.

Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change has contributed significantly to the conservation of environmental resources and eco-sensitive zones. Some policies, which relate to land use are-

National Environment Policy, 2006 was a remarkable policy, which led to the inception of more than five hundred wild sanctuaries, more than hundred national parks and 18 biospheres. The significant success of this policy led to a remarkable rise in the conservation of environmental resources. Provisions for zonal master plans were made and important guidelines for Eco-sensitive Zones were issued. National Mission for Sustaining the Himalayan Ecosystem details the formation of an observation and monitoring network to assist the observance of the climatic conditions of the Himalayan environment. National Mission for 'Green India' [policy](#) had a remarkable feature of the plantation of saplings in over ten million hectares of land. This was scattered over all types of lands ranging from forest lands to wastelands to community lands. Coastal Regulation Zones Notification (2011) is a major step towards the

management of land use along the coastline. It also promotes and provides for the required resources for the coastal zone management or land use plan. Ministry of Commerce and Industry has initiated and passed various policies related to land use policy like Delhi Mumbai Infrastructure Corridor. This project covers the infrastructural development of over six states. This ministry is also accredited for the success of **the Make In India policy**. Other ministries like the ministry of mining, transport etc. are also associated with various developmental policies for the development of land use planning.

### **Suggestions**

Development and planning being a continuous process is often guided by its inherent physio-cultural components on one hand and pressure of population, growing demands and technological innovations on the other hand. Land development and planning are the inseparable organic parts of the overall national economy. Planning as an essential way of organizing and utilizing resources to maximum advantage in terms of social, economic and cultural objectives, necessarily formulates techniques of utilizing all physical, mental and material resources of a region for the maximum benefit of its people. As part of this process "Integrated Rural Development Programme" (I.R.D.P.) also advocated multiple strategies for its economic and resources development particularly concentrating on land use planning. We have looked into the existing initiatives undertaken for land use planning.

- Human beings are at the centre of the developmental process; however, to direct the developmental process establishing and maintaining the established harmony between nature and needs of human beings is imperative. So Minimum damage to the environment should be done by the human activities.
- The developmental policies should not be centre in some specific areas. This is necessary for the equitable development of the nation as a whole. So, there should be a holistic development approach for all regions.
- Sustainable development should be the goal of the government and policy makers while framing policies. This should be to ensure that the resources of the country are equitably shared between the present and future generations.
- Smart utilization of resources should be the aim of these schemes, especially when it comes to land resources. Optimum resources should be channelised for the development for development of wasteland, uncultivable lands, recycled and degraded land.
- For a comprehensive development, there has to be adequate harmonization of authorities at national, state and local level. In addition, the evolution of a sound scheme, which directs the entire policy, is imperative.
- The specific purpose of each terrain of the land resource is necessary so that the natural purpose of that piece of land is not altered and hence most effective use of such land is enabled.
- Specific attention should be given to conservation of agricultural lands, taking into consideration the growing demands of food consumption of the ever-increasing population of India. Adequate attention should be given to the channelization of employment opportunities into all communities, especially the vulnerable groups like women, tribal groups, underprivileged etc. This would serve the purpose of empowering these communities.
- The local programmes to promote the needs of native people who are already in place should be given due weightage. This is to protect the rights and livelihood needs of the tribal and poorer sections of the society. This would serve the purpose of social development of a particular piece of land too.
- The cultural and historical heritage of lands should also be preserved at all costs, by protecting certain places, which are revered and or have scenic or historical importance. Lands, extremely rich in natural resources, namely natural ecosystems should also remain untouched.
- Due attention should be paid to minimization of land shifts. In addition, once such a policy is framed, it should be specifically monitored to ensure that there are minimum land shifts.
- The developmental policies should follow a dismantled approach, following the regional patterns. Therefore, a proper hierarchy of settlement in accordance with the prevailing infrastructural pattern should be followed.
- Transportation procedure should be synced with the regional transportation systems, hence sharing the work with the local administrations.

## Conclusion

It is evident from the reading of the above-stated facts regarding the various policy initiatives and constitutional and legislative provisions that land use planning is firmly based in India. In addition, various efforts have been made by the central and state governments to enhance and adorn these policies with the improved infrastructure potentials of the country. These should be updated taking into consideration improvement in technology. A comprehensive and integrated land use planning system is a known solution to cope with the dynamics of development and to ensure optimal utilization of land resources. However, in the absence of such an elaborate planning system such as in India, a strategic and viable approach is required to be developed and adopted. The suggested strategic approach is in line with the integrated land use planning and management approach suggested in Agenda Twenty One.

The approach for achieving integrated land use planning and management should have the key elements of development of policies for optimal utilization of land resources and strengthening of monitoring and evaluation systems. The strategic approach suggested for India takes into consideration the existing constraints in strengthening and improving such a planning for the entire country. At the same time, the approach also takes into consideration the problems being faced due to pressure on land resources and the negative impacts. The Land Utilisation Zones cover the land areas that are or will be under pressure to undergo land use changes. These zones would cover lands for urban development, industrial development, infrastructure development and mining. The land zones are to be protected and regulated because of environmental sensitivity, historic heritage and cultural importance. The planning of the land utilisation should be based on sound planning procedures and planning principles integrating socio, economic and environmental demands, as well as the sectoral demands and participatory processes to ensure sustainable development. Such a strategic approach would support sustainable land use for an emerging country like India to achieve its socio, economic and environmental goals and targets.

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