

## ROLE OF ENVIRONMENTAL LAWS IN ATTAINING SUSTAINABILITY

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### **ABSTRACT**

***“We do not inherit this earth from our ancestors; we have borrowed it from our children”.***

This phrase is pertinent to explain the concept of Sustainability Development, it is our prime responsibility to provide to our future generation better environment, by taking proper care of it and hand it over to them. Rate at which resources of environment are depleted is of great concern. Very functioning of biological system is a threat to human life. Thus there is need to have Environmental Laws to protect resources Environmental governance advocates **sustainability** as the supreme consideration in managing all human activities – political, social and economic. The concept of sustainability relies on sustainable development. There are three pillars on which sustainability relies they are economic, environmental and social sustainability. This article covers need for attaining sustainability and role played by environmental laws of attaining sustainability, which is an area of critical importance for the humanity and the protecting planet.

### **Introduction:**

Global environment problems that have resulted from the decrease in biological diversity, extinction of species and problems which destroy the functioning of global biological systems threatening the continuity of human life. Deforestation activities, global warming resulted from the use of energy sources particularly fossil fuel, pollution of the air and lands, deterioration of fresh water sources, change in climate, environmental pollution, has brought along global principles, ideals, ethics and international cooperation in the name of creating a collective consciousness, so that the quality of the environment is maintained at a level that protects the health of human individuals, species, and ecosystems. Environmental governance advocates sustainability as the supreme consideration in managing all human activities – political, social and economic. The concept of sustainability relies on sustainable development. The principle of “leaving no one behind”, which was the agenda emphasizing a holistic approach to achieving sustainable development for all.

### **Objectives of study:**

- Define key concepts of Sustainability; and its three pillars on which the concept of sustainability is built.
- Provide an overview of and identify need for attaining Sustainable development.
- Major Environmental Laws of India for protection of environment.
- Role of Environmental Laws in attaining Sustainability.

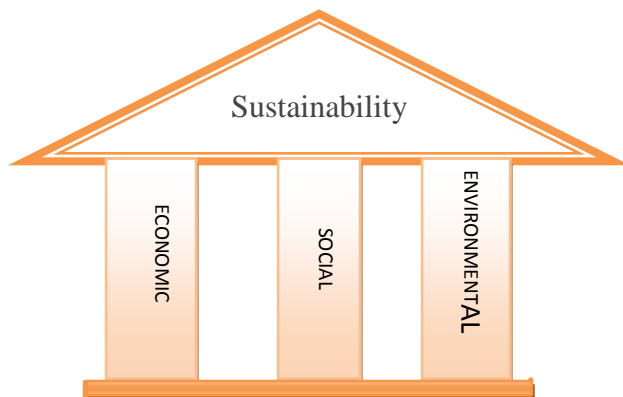
### **Concept of Sustainability:**

Sustainability means the ability to sustain, continue or maintain meeting human's need without harming future generation. It is all about creating value to stake holders by reducing harm to environment and providing quality of life to society within the limits of what nature provides us, which can be achieved by is changing business practices and policies with changes in need of the planet. Renewing resources at a rate equal to or greater than rate at which they are consumed is sustainability which is an essential ingredient for a company's long-term success. All business requires basic ecosystem services to function, dynamic and complex nature of environment has made business executives to place sustainability as their company's business strategy. Company with strong sustainability has become a credential for investors to invest in the company.

### **Definition of Sustainability:**

In 1987, "World Commission on Environment and Development" (United Nations, 1987) in their "Brundtland report, titled, Our Common Future" defined sustainability as, "that which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of the future generations to meet their own goals".

**Three pillars of sustainability: economic, environmental and social sustainability.**



### **Sustainability leads to innovation:**

- Redesigning of products to meet the environmental standards.
- Redesigning of products to meet the social needs.
- Pollution Prevention by minimizing waste.
- Equipment redesign,
- Process modification,
- Waste recycling.
- Improving operational efficiency through better management of natural resources like water and energy, as well as minimizing waste.

## Major Environmental Laws of India

Environment (Protection) Act 1986 (EP Act): This umbrella law enables the central government to take measures it deems necessary to protect and improve the environment, and to prevent, control and abate environmental pollution. A wide range of rules and notifications have been adopted under it, such as the:

- Wild Life (Protection) Act 1972;
- Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act 1974 (Water Act),
- Forest (Conservation) Act 1980;
- The Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981;
- The Environment Protection Act, 1986;
- Manufacture, Storage and Import of Hazardous Chemicals Rules 1989;
- Biological Diversity Act 2002;
- Environment Impact Assessment Notification 2006;
- National Green Tribunal Act 2010;
- Coastal Regulation Zone Notification 2011;
- E-Waste (Management) Rules 2016;
- Bio-Medical Waste Management Rules 2016;
- Construction and Demolition Waste Management Rules 2016;
- Hazardous and Other Waste (Management and Transboundary Movement) Rules 2016;
- Plastic Waste Management Rules 2016);

## Role of Environmental Laws in attaining Sustainability:

Environmental education is the means to ensure that the environment is not degraded but safeguard it for the future. Environmental regulation is an important tool of sustainability as it focuses upon fear of penalty on people who cause reparations to resources provided by nature. The persistence, purpose and inter-temporal nature of environmental problems, call for actions of prevention, which made Environmental laws essential. The very purpose of environmental law is to protect the environment and conservation and management of resources. There is need for Environmental laws which provide a guideline to care of the environment in an effective manner by managing waste, to protect and improve quality of air ,water and other natural resources, maintaining biodiversity, safeguarding human health, and preserving cultural and social values.

## Conclusion:

No longer we need environmental law is to protect the environment it is humanity which should realise what was rightly said by **David Zwick** – ***“As the frog does not drink up the pond in which he lives”***. It is we who need to realise that it is our responsibility to protect and conserve resources. **Necessity** for sustainable development aims to promote harmony among human beings and between humanity and nature. As the frog does not drink up the pond in which he lives, it is our moral responsibility not to use all the resources of nature. We must preserve it, find alternate renewable sources and take proper care of it and pass it on to our future generation.

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