

# Some Concepts

## What is an Ecosystem?

- A geographical area of a variable size where plants, animals, the landscape and climate all interact together – flora, fauna, landscape and weather patterns

e.g deserts, rainforests. Rocky mountains, grasslands etc.

# Some Concepts

## What is Biodiversity?

- Biodiversity is the variety and differences among living organisms from all sources – terrestrial, marine and other aquatic ecosystems and ecological complexes – genetic diversity within and between species and of ecosystems
- Himalayan ranges – mountains
- Chilika lake – wetlands

# What is Climate Change?

- Also called global warming
- Rise in surface temps of the earth due to human use of fossil fuels which releases Carbon Dioxide and other green house gases into the air
- Gases trap heat in the atmosphere which leads to rise in temps, rise in sea levels and severe droughts
- Irratic weather conditions

# **Linkages between environmental degradation, poverty, gender and equity**

**Natural resource availability to the poor severely eroded due to 2 parallel and interrelated trends:**

## **Primary factors**

- Growing degradation both in quantity and quality**
- Increasing statization and privatization along with decline of CPRs**

## **Intermediary factors**

# **Poverty and Environmental Resource Degradation (P-ERD)**

**Mainstream/dominant view that poverty is the major  
cause of environmental degradation**

- over-extraction of resources by the poor
- poor are ignorant of both the limitations of their environmental resources and consequences of their extractive usage practices
- poor are least concerned in the health and productivity of their natural resources

# **Fragile Ecological Zones (Examples)**

- *Dry tropical plains and mountainous areas***
  - fragility**
  - marginality**
  - low accessibility**
- Limited resources, high risk, low-productivity options**
- Poverty of the people and fragility of natural resources – operation of PERD links**

# Foundations of FRZ

- Sustenance driven – the natural resource base is used where the health and productivity is kept in mind
- Local communities have community based institutions to prevent over-exploitation of NR
- Follow social sanctions to protect the environment

# **External Changes Imposed**

- Erosion of above arrangements with introduction of externally induced changes**
- Administrative & Market integration,**
  - dominant mainstream systems, legal and administrative and fiscal measures,**
  - emphasis on supply side issues, uncontrolled demands on resources,**
  - strong tendency for centralization for NRM etc.**



# Gender and Equity Dimensions – differential impact

- **Gender based division of labour**
- **Gender differences in distribution of resources**
- **Gender inequalities in access to most productive resources**

# Poor and Women

- **time**
- **income**
- **nutrition**
- **health**
- **social-survival networks**
- **indigenous knowledge**

# Consequences

- Erosion of traditional arrangements which helped in the regulated use of NRB due to external interventions
- Depriving local communities of their role and responsibilities - disempowering
- Replacing local institutions by legal and administration evolved at a higher level
- Marginalisation of traditional knowledge

# What is possible?

- Reviving community stake in the NRB
- Local control over local natural resources
- Use of local perspective and traditional knowledge systems