

# **BABASAHEB BHIMRAO AMBEDKAR UNIVERSITY**

**(A CENTRAL UNIVERSITY)**

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**FOREST POLICIES  
AND  
ITS IMPACT**

# What is a Forest

- ❑ A forest is a highly complex, constantly changing environment made up of a variety of living things (wildlife, trees, shrubs, wildflowers, ferns, mosses, lichens, fungi and microscopic soil organisms) and non-living things (water, nutrients, rocks, sunlight and air). Trees are the biggest part of this complex community.
- ❑ The forest is a complex ecosystem consisting mainly of trees that buffer the earth and support a myriad of life forms. The trees help create a special environment which, in turn, affects the kinds of animals and plants that can exist in the forest. Trees are an important component of the environment. They clean the air, cool it on hot days, conserve heat at night, and act as excellent sound absorbers.

# Features of Indian Forests

- ❑ **Large Variety of Area-** Due to different varieties of soil and climate, there are various types of forests.
- ❑ **Low Forest Area-** In India, about 22% area is under forests. According to modern experts, in hot countries like India, 1/3 portion of the total area should be under forests. But the area under forests in our country is very low in comparison to other countries of the world.
- ❑ **Unequal Distribution-** The distribution of forests is uneven. On the one side, in Himachal Pradesh, Kerala, Assam and M.P., about 33% area is under forests. In the more populated areas like Punjab, only 5% forest area.
- ❑ **Low Per Acre Productivity-** The per acre productivity of forest is low. It is 1/10 of France, 1/21 of Japan and 1/6 of USA.
- ❑ **Low Per Capita Forest Area-** The per capita forest area is also very low due to rapid growth of population. The per capita forest area in India is 0.2 hectare, which is very low.
- ❑ **Unproductive-** India's 75% forests are productive and 25% of forests remain unproductive. It is due to lack of transportation and communication facilities.
- ❑ **Control of Forests-** In India, 95% forests are controlled by Government, 3% by Village Panchayats and 2% by private individuals.

# National Forest Policy

- There are two forest policies in the history of Independent India. They are as follows-
- Forest Policy of 1952
- Forest Policy of 1988

# Forest Policy 1952

- Since 1947, government has been quite alive to the necessity of developing forestry in the country. In 1950, Van Mahotsava was inaugurated. Likewise to evolve an all India forest policy, a Central Board of Forestry was set up.
- In 1952, the Government of India announces its National Forest policy. According to this policy, it was decided to raise steadily the area under forest to 100 million hectares. It was suggested to provide green cover over  $\frac{2}{3}$  of the land area in the hills and mountains. To achieve this goal, it was necessary to reduce the long range development of forest resources and meet the growing demand for timber and firewood.

# Features of Forest Policy 1952

- **Classification of Forests-** Forest Policy 1952 has proposed the classification of forests on functional basis into 3 categories- *Protected forests (less strictly controlled), National forests and unclassed forests comprising of village forest or land classed as culturable land.*
- **Balanced Land use Pattern-** Emphasised on evolving balanced and complementary land use pattern under which each category of land is to be used according to its land use capacity so that it may produce more and deteriorate less.
- **Establishment of Tree Lands-** It emphasised on the establishment of tree lands so that physical and climatic conditions may be improved which in turn promote the general well being of the inhabitants of the country.
- **Indiscriminate Extension of Arable Land-** It advocated that indiscriminate extension of land should be discouraged through deforestation. It is because it not only deprives the local population of wood, grass, etc. but side by side deprives the land of its natural defence.
- **Principle of Progressive Yield-** It laid down that forests should be maintained by the principle of progressively increasing the highest sustained yield in order to meet the requirements of defence, communication and industry.
- **Protection of Wild Life-** The forest policy also evoked on the need for affording protection of wildlife by its proper management for scientific study and for recreational purposes.
- **Awakening People's Interest-** The forest policy stressed that it would be the duty of the forester to awaken the interest of the people in the development, extension and establishment of tree law wherever possible and to make them tree minded.

# Evaluation of Forest Policy 1952

- The National Commission on Agriculture

# Forest Policy 1988

- Replacing old forest policy of 1952, GOI announced new forest policy in December 1988.
- According to the Forest Policy Resolution of 1988, forest cover of country should not be less than 33% of the total geographical area.
- Main points of forest policy of 1988 are protection, conservation and development of forests.

# Features of Forest Policy 1988

- **Role of Tribals in Forests-** The new forest policy aimed at recognising the natural relationship between the tribal people and forests. It seeks to ensure the communities living in and around forest area should be in a position to get their domestic requirements of fuel wood, fodder, etc.
- **Target for Green Cover-** The forest policy of 1998 dictates that green cover should be extended to more than two-third of the land area of the million hectares and the total area should be raised to 100 million hectares.
- **Discouraging Forest Based Industries-** No forest based enterprises would be permitted to establish in future unless the projects have been cleared after a thorough assessment of the availability of raw materials from the forests.
- **Withdrawing the System of Private Forest Contract-** The forest policy states to cancel totally the system of forest contractors working in the forests. This policy also stresses upon the need to distribute the minor forest products through state-run depots.
- **Restriction on Diversion of Forests Land-** The policy suggests that restrictions should be imposed on the diversion of forest land and due application of forest land for non forest uses.

# Evaluation of Forest Policy 1988



Thank You!

