



Mains Practice Question

Q. “Advancing human development is impossible if we continue to create planetary pressures for others”. In the context of Planetary pressures-adjusted Human Development Index (PHDI), Analyse the statement. (250 Words)

24 Feb, 2022 GS Paper 3 Bio-diversity & Environment

Approach

- Start with defining Planetary pressures-adjusted Human Development Index (PHDI).
- Discuss how the development is creating planetary pressure.
- Suggest a way forward.

Introduction

The Planetary pressures-adjusted Human Development Index (PHDI) adjusts the standard HDI by a country's level of carbon dioxide emissions and material footprint, each on a per capita basis.

The purpose of the PHDI is to communicate to the larger society the risk involved in continuing with existing practices in the global resource use and environmental management, and the retarding effect that environmental stress can perpetuate on development.

It succinctly brings out the nature of planetary pressure generated by the developed countries and indirectly indicates their responsibility in combating the situation.

Body

Development is creating planetary pressure in following ways -

- Rapid industrialisation and urbanisation are inevitable to bring in desired levels of economic development.
 - This is also believed to be essential to substantially increase the per capita income.
- However, these income-generating activities are sure to have negative environmental consequences such as pollution.
- Noticeably, environmental quality is being compromised for the goals of mass employment generation and poverty reduction.
- It is believed that with gradual increase in income levels along with growth in financial and technological capabilities, environmental quality could be restored.
- But the reality is that the continued growth generating activities only increasingly deteriorates the environmental quality.

Way Forward

- **Intertwining Environmental and Social Development:** It is now well established that there are interdependencies of earth system processes including social processes, and their relationships are non-linear and dialectic.

- Therefore, it is necessary to nest human development including social and economic systems into the ecosystem, and build a biosphere on a systematic approach to nature-based solutions that put people at the core.
- **Local Level Involvement:** It is now essential to consider people and the planet as being a part of an interconnected social-ecological system.
 - Social and environmental problems cannot be addressed in isolation anymore; an integrated perspective is necessary..
- **Recommendations by the HDR Report:** The 2020 HDI report outlines three mechanisms for collective change:
 - **Social Norms and Values:** As the world seeks to expand agency and empower people through human development, it must also establish new norms that give greater weight to planetary balance and sustainability.
 - **Incentives and Regulation:** Incentives and regulations can be used to promote or deter action, helping to bridge the gap between behaviours and values.
 - **Nature-based Solutions:** These can create a virtuous cycle between human development and planetary health by generating and supporting actions that protect, sustainably manage and restore ecosystems.

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