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INDIAN INSTITUTE OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION
Building Capacity for Good Governance

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Karnataka Regional Branch
ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಪ್ರಾದೇಶಿಕ ಶಾಖೆ

Virtual Newsletter
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A Note from the Chairman, IIPA-KRB
S. Ramanathan, IAS (Retd.)

It gives me great pleasure to place before our esteemed readers, the third issue of our Virtual Newsletter. It is a Special Issue on '*Environment and Development'*. It features a Policy Update by Dr. A. Ravindra on the Draft Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) Notification, 2020. The Lead Article is by Sunita Narain, which is excerpted from a very perceptive editorial in the *Down to Earth* annual, *State of India's Environment, 2020*. We also carry a report on a webinar organized by us on *Environment and Development*, in collaboration with the Centre for Sustainable Development and UGC Paramarsh of Mount Carmel College. There is a brief summary of the *Environmental Performance Index, 2020*. In the month when we celebrate Gandhi Jayanti, we present a Gandhian *Alternative* Vision of Sustainable Development. And we have a new addition to the Newsletter: A *Feedback* page, based on responses of readers.

Esteemed readers are requested to peruse the contents of the newsletter and give a feedback on improving its contents. Ideas and contributions are also welcome.

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Policy Update

Draft Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) Notification, 2020

Dr. A. Ravindra, IAS (Retd.)
Former Chief Secretary, Govt. of Karnataka, and
Chairman, Centre for Sustainable Development, Bengaluru

The objective of the Notification, as stated in its Preamble, is "*to make the process more transparent and expedient through implementation of online system, further delegation, rationalisations etc*.". Comments were sought from the public, fixing June 30 as the last date. The Delhi High Court overruled the government's decision on the time limit and revised it to August 11. The Karnataka High Court, on the basis of a PIL, stayed the operation of the notification till September 7.

The **main changes** proposed in the 2020 EIA Draft Notification are the following:

1. The 2020 Notification will supersede the EIA Notification of 2006 currently in force.

2. Projects are classified into three categories: A, B1 and B2 based on their potential social and environmental impacts. Projects coming under A and B1 would require prior approval and public consultation while projects under B2 are exempted from public consultation. The type of projects under B2 include highways, expressways, ring roads, expansion or widening of existing highways, buildings and constructions, as per prescribed threshold limits. For instance, for highways up to 100 km, public consultation is not required and for construction projects, the exemption has been raised to 150,000 sq. metres from 20,000 sq. mts.

3. It provides for *post-facto* approval of projects implemented without prior environmental clearance.

4. The time for Public Consultation is reduced from the existing 30 days to 20 days.

According to the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MOEFCC), GOI, about 17 lakh comments have been received from the public which are under examination. The **main objections and comments** are summarised below.

(a) The 2020 Draft Notification is anti-democratic as it dilutes the scope of public participation. The local communities, especially the people affected by the proposed projects, are deprived of an opportunity to voice their concerns and views.

(b) The exemption proposed to be granted to certain categories would absolve the project authorities of the adverse environmental consequences of implementation of the project.

(c) *Post-facto* approval of projects executed without prior environmental clearance would amount to legalising violations of the law.

Apart from the above specific comments with reference to the draft 2020 Notification, there are some observations about the current EIA process in general. First, the EIA report is prepared by a consultant who is paid by the project proponent, thus leading to a conflict of interest. Secondly, the scrutiny system of EIA reports is weak and almost all projects are cleared. Thirdly, the environmental conditions imposed on the companies are rarely monitored. The monitoring is mostly based on self-certified yearly reports. It may also be pointed out that the government, both at the centre and in the states, lack the staff required to scrutinise reports and monitor compliance, both in numbers and professional expertise. Finally, the entire process of EIA and EC (Environmental Clearance) is flawed, resulting in rampant non-compliance of safeguards.

In support of the Draft EIA, the following arguments have been advanced:

- It consolidates all the earlier amendments and removes ambiguities present in the existing laws;
- It rationalises and simplifies the clearances and makes them more transparent;
- It does not legalise illegalities; on the other hand, it emphasises the 'polluter pay' principle;
- In case of *post-facto* approvals, closure is not a solution where an industry is already functioning, upsetting all its operations. It should however be ensured that the industry conforms to the required conditions;
- The new system will help overcome procedural delays and promote *ease of doing business.*

What form the final Notification will take will depends on how government would respond to the comments by the public and the experts.

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Lead Article

It's a Tinderbox World
Growth has stumped Environment. The decade of 2020 is the last chance we have to walk the talk and make it right.

Sunita Narain
Editor, *Down to Earth*

*Courtesy: **State of India's Environment 2020***
A *Down to Earth* Annual
www.downtoearth.org.in

(Reproduced below are extracts from a longer editorial. Emphasis is added.)

It's the end of a decade and the start of a new dawn, we hope. In the decade we leave behind – 2010-2019 – the world, it would seem, has unravelled; come apart; our leaders are diminished; our economies are in trouble; and there is conflict and strife everywhere we look. In this decade, we have realized that climate change is not in the distant future. It is happening and its impact will only grow. Every year in this decade has broken a new record – the highest heat and the

most extreme weather. But it is not just about weather. It is about how people in the world view their present and think about their future.

It is also a divided world. Countries no longer work together anymore. Every country thinks only of its self-interest and nothing more. This is not to say that the situation was any different earlier. But the pretence has gone – and this, in an age of extraordinary inter-connectedness and inter-dependence, has huge consequences.

There are consequences – intended and unintended - of the economic order in the post-globalization world. It is a fact that in this period of obsessive and competitive growth, there have been many losers – most of all, the poor and the environment. *Let's be clear that in the last three decades – 1990-2019 – growth has stumped environment, leading to this existential threat of climate change.*

There is other decadal learning as well – *in our world we are seeing unprecedented rates of internal migration and rural distress*. What we fail to understand is that people are coming because there are jobs to be found in cities, as against the village – where farmers are crushed under double-triple burdens of poor infrastructure, debt and freak weather events.

The jobs that are available to the migrant are at the bottom of the heap. If we go into these factories, you see the deplorable and hazardous conditions of work; people eat and sleep in closed hovel-type places; fumes and all. But why should we be shocked? *The fact is that modern industrial growth is designed to shift the burden of the cost of labour, occupational health and safety and environment, to places where it can be discounted.*

In this way, the industry of our world discounts health – of its workers and of the surrounding region – because of its need to compete. This is the rule of the game. If its cost goes up, it will lose business, and it will now move to even poorer regions and work even more in the "dark", so that enforcement is not possible. It is a race to the very bottom.

We need to ensure that this industrial growth comes without discounting the cost of environment. We need growth so that it is inclusive – rural and urban; for the rich and the poor.

This should also have been the lesson for the rich in the rich world. Their governments have worked overtime in successive climate negotiations to erase the very idea of equity and justice. They believed that they could shove the blame on the poor world as it works to develop – using the same energy sources that the rest of the world did and so emitting the same greenhouse gas emissions that the rest of the world did. *But the fact is that we have one planet and one atmospheric space – it is also a common airshed*. If the rich emitted in the past, the poor will emit in the future. We also share a common future and it does not look so good anymore in terms of climate impacts.

Now, climate change negotiations have a new twist in this deadly tango – the word is *net-zero* or *carbon-neutral*, which could mean another attempt at creative carbon accounting. A game to find cheap options to cut emissions at home and through purchases from desperately poor developing countries. We know and they know it will not work in our severely compromised and climate-risked world. It will lead to more poverty as climate impacts hit the poor, and they will have no options but to migrate, and this will lead to more insecurity and more vile and nasty attempts to control immigrants.

So, let's please get real in this next decade. If not for our sakes, then for the sake of the young who will inherit this world – polarized, intensely unequal, and now greatly risked because of climate change. No more games. No more procrastination. The decade of 2020 is the last chance we have to walk the talk. To make it right. Let's not lose it. Not again.

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Report of IIPA-KRB Activities

Collaborative Webinar on '*Environment and Development*'

The **Centre for Sustainable Development**, Bengaluru, in collaboration with the **Karnataka Regional Branch** of the **Indian Institute of Public Administration** and the UGC *Paramarsh* of **Mount Carmel College**, Bengaluru, organized a webinar on '*Environment and Development*' on 23rd September 2020. **Dr. A. Ravindra**, IAS (Retd.), former Chief Secretary, Government of Karnataka and Chairman, Centre for Sustainable Development, Bengaluru, chaired and moderated the event. The Panellists were the following:

1. **Dr. M.K. Ramesh**, Professor of Law, National Law School of India University, Bengaluru;
2. **Dr. Priyanca Mathur**, Associate Professor, Centre for Research in Social Sciences, Jain (Deemed-to-be) University, Bengaluru;
3. **Dr. R. Srinivas**, Executive Director, Centre for Sustainable Development, Bengaluru; and
4. **Dr. D. Jeevan Kumar**, Hon. Professor, Karnataka State Rural Development and Panchayat Raj University, Gadag.

In his introductory remarks, **Dr. Ravindra** identified the four main challenges before India as follows: (1) Declining economic growth; (2) Employment crisis; (3) Glaring inequalities; and (4) Worsening environmental sustainability. These challenges are currently being accentuated by the Public Health crisis created by the pandemic, COVID-19. The downward spiral in economic growth is clearly reflected in statistics, he said. During 1999-2000, it appeared that India was coasting along quite well with a growth rate of 6.4%. However, this came down to 5% by 2019-20. And then came the pandemic which dealt such a devastating blow to the economy that figures for the first quarter of 2020 showed India's growth rate tottering at -23%! Although negative growth rate is a universal phenomenon, thanks to the pandemic (with the sole exception of China which is showing a growth rate of +3.2%), India's economic distress is compounded by existing fault-lines: Close to 20% of our population suffer from multi-dimensional poverty; the unemployment rate at the beginning of 2020 was 27%; while the richest 1% of the population own close to 60% of the wealth and the richest 10% own 81% of the wealth, the bottom 10% own a negligible 0.2%. In terms of environmental sustainability, India is the 5th most vulnerable country in the world to Climate Change. But in the *Environmental Performance Index*, our rank is as low as 168 out of 180 countries. 20 of the world's 30 most polluted cities are in India. Deforestation, floods, fires, pollution and the generation of waste (India has the dubious distinction of being the highest producer of waste in the world!) – are all adding fuel to fire. At the root of the problem is unsustainable production and excessive consumption.

According to Dr. Ravindra, the current critical issue before the country is this: *Do we prioritize economic recovery or environmental sustainability*? A larger and deeper issue is whether we need a new development model which goes beyond GDP? The 2019 Nobel Prize winning economists, Abhijit Banerjee and Esther Duflo have raised this question in their book, '*Good Economics for Hard Times: Better Answers to our Biggest Problems'*. Dr. Ravindra posed two questions relating to Policy and Governance: *Are we making the right policy choices? Are we exhibiting the capacity to govern?* To find the answers, he said, we need to take a close look at the recent policy initiatives of the Government of India like the Draft Environment Impact Assessment Notification, 2020; the UN Sustainable Development Goals and how India is faring in implementing them; the overall scenario of environmental law and governance; and the model of development that is being pursued. The four panellists would look at each of the above areas, he said.

Prof. M.K. Ramesh of the National Law School of India University undertook an evaluation of the contentious **Draft Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) Notification, 2020**. He began by tracing the evolution of the law pertaining to EIA. Till 1994, there were only administrative guidelines. The period 1994-2006 saw several notifications being issued, but they were also subjected to amendment/dilution. Subsequently, from 2006 to 2009, there were more and more amendments to the EIA Notification, aimed at relaxing the norms and procedures. The 2020 Notification is the latest in a series of such measures. Although the Notification justifies the proposed changes with terms like *greater transparency*, *expediency, rationalization* and *standardization of processes*, these objects are not discernible in the Draft Notification, opined Dr. Ramesh.

While there are several worrisome features in the Draft Notification, the following major ones were picked up by Dr. Ramesh for scrutiny:

(1) *Post-Facto* Approval can be given to certain projects, as long as they are "permissible in that area". While the Precautionary Principle is absent, provision has been made for normalizing environmental violations by the imposition of fines. It is no more than application of the "polluter pays principle". It fails to factor in situations where the impacts would be irreparable and irreversible.

(2) Post-Decisional Monitoring on Non-Compliance: With no stipulation for ensuring monitoring of compliance of conditions for Environmental Clearance and poor implementation of the laws by enforcement agencies, a serious lacuna existed in the working of the EIA law. This was addressed on paper and claimed as a major aspect of making the law more effective in the 2006 notification. But the details of ensuring the same were conspicuous by their absence. The expectation was that the new draft would make up for that lapse. The Draft on hand, however, disappoints in not creating any space for this.

(3) Cumulative Environmental Impacts of developmental activities have been completely ignored in all the previous efforts. This finds no mention in the Draft Notification, as well.

(4) Regulatory Oversight: In at least five areas, there is a great reduction in the rigour and extent of such oversight:

    (i)   The filing of Compliance Reports has been relaxed to one year, from the earlier requirement of twice in a year.

(ii)   By-passing of the first stage of the EIA process: Projects labelled as 'strategic' need not go through the process or even placed in the public domain;

(iii)   Reclassification of projects to avoid similar scrutiny;

(iv)   Drastic reduction in the space for communitarian engagement;

(v)   Downgrading of the status of Public Hearings.

According to Dr. Ramesh, the overall intention behind the Draft Notification seems to be '*Development at any Cost'*, spurred undoubtedly by India's dismal position vis-à-vis other countries in the *Ease of Doing Business Index*. In Dr. Ramesh's considered view, the need of the hour is to re-anchor EIA to the lodestars of the Precautionary Principle and *Environmentally* Sustainable Development.

2. The second Panellist, **Dr. Priyanca Mathur** of Jain (Deemed-to-be) University spoke about *Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in India* from an Environment and Development Perspective**.** She restricted her presentation to SDG Nos. 11, 12, 13, 14 and 15. SDG-11 addresses <u>Sustainable Cities and Communities</u>. According to the latest NITI Aayog report, the States and UTs performing best in this area are Himachal Pradesh, Goa and Chandigarh. SDG-12 deals with <u>Sustainable Consumption and Production</u> and the toppers in performance here are Nagaland and Chandigarh. SDG-13 addresses the issue of <u>Climate Action</u>, and Karnataka and Lakshadweep lead the way here. The performance of Karnataka has also been exemplary, in keeping up with the goals of SDG-14 which look at <u>Life Below Water</u>. When it comes to SDG-15, <u>Life on Land</u>, the best performers are Sikkim, Manipur, Dadar and Nagar Haveli, and Lakshadweep. Under SDG-15, the important targets are as follows:

- By 2020, ensure the conservation, restoration and sustainable use of terrestrial and inland freshwater ecosystems and their services, in particular, forests, wetlands, mountains and drylands, in line with obligations under international agreements.
- By 2020, promote the implementation of sustainable management of all types of forests, halt deforestation, restore degraded forests and substantially increase afforestation and reforestation.
- By 2030, combat desertification, restore degraded land and soil, including land affected by desertification, drought and floods, and strive to achieve a land degradation-neutral country.
- By 2030, ensure the conservation of mountain ecosystems, including their biodiversity, in order to enhance their capacity to provide benefits that are essential for Sustainable Development.

According to Dr. Priyanca Mathur, these goals are important as India with only 2.4 per cent of the earth's land area, accounts for 7-8 per cent of the world's recorded species and is home to around 8 per cent of the world's biodiversity, which includes many species found nowhere else in the world. The challenges with SDG-11 lie in the fact that India is home to14 out of the 20 most polluted cities in the world, and to a growing number of urban unemployed. Since Sustainable Consumption and Production aims at "doing more and better with less," net welfare gains from economic activities can increase by reducing resource use, degradation and pollution along the whole life cycle, while increasing the quality of life. Thus, it is critical to decouple economic growth and environmental degradation, to retain focus on operating a sustainable supply chain, involving everyone from producer to the final consumer. This includes educating consumers on sustainable consumption and lifestyles, providing them with

adequate information through standards and labels, and engaging in sustainable public procurement, among others.

Ineffective Solid Waste Management needs attention, especially in urban centres. The particular challenge with implementing SDG-12 is that about a third of the population lives in urban areas and by 2050, it is expected that about 50 per cent of India's population will be urban, and waste generation will grow by 5 per cent per year. With regard to SDG-13, it is important to improve disaster resilience, as India is highly vulnerable to climate-induced natural disasters, which affect vulnerable communities the most.

According to NITI Aayog, India is taking all the steps to face the challenge of making available the energy needed to fuel its impressive economic growth, especially when the country needs to wean itself off dependency on coal, considering that India's electricity demand is expected to triple by 2030, with coal sources accounting for about 57 per cent of electricity generation. Historically, India's focus on oceans and marine resource management has been forward-looking. There are more than 125 institutions in the country on marine and ocean-related issues. Therefore, the challenge is to improve coordination and cooperation among these institutions. With the creation of a separate ministry, however, efforts in this direction will get a firm fillip.

One of the critical needs to assess progress in implementing national actions to achieve SDG-14, is to collate data and information related to agreed targets and indicators. Given the diversity of targets and suggestive indicators, it can be assumed that there will be need for a significant quantum of data and information. Such diversity of data and information need to be collected and collated from a wide range of actors, including civil society organisations, to be effectively used for measuring progress. Given the wide range of needs and challenges India faces, it is essential not only to identify additional and new ways of enhanced finances but also ensuring its appropriate and timely deployment, Dr. Priyanca Mathur asserted.

3. The third Panellist, **Dr. R. Srinivas**, Executive Director at the Centre for Sustainable Development, Bengaluru, spoke on '*Environmental Governance in India'*, dealing with both Environmental Policy as well as the legal framework to enforce environmental laws. He drew the attention of the audience to a major omission in the constitutional scheme of things: that the word 'environment' does not figure in any of the three Lists in the 7th Schedule in the Indian Constitution. Many states want it to be in the State List so that they can enact laws relevant to their state. In his view, the two major deficits here are the dichotomy between Policy and Law, and weak enforcement of environmental laws. Agencies like the Environment Department and the Central and State Pollution Control Boards are terribly understaffed; to make matters worse, not less than 50% of their budgets is spent only on administration; a very small number of cases of violation of environmental laws are being registered; and there appears to be very little coordination between municipalities and Pollution Control Boards in states.

Dr. Srinivas presented a list of reforms needed in Environmental Governance in India, which included the following:

(1) The Indian Forest Service should be replaced by another service called Indian Environmental Protection Service;

(2) Pollution Control Boards should be rechristened and restructured as Environment Protection Agencies;

(3) There should be <u>Environment Protection Facilitation Cells</u> in every Ministry, as most Government Departments do not know how to comply with environment rules and laws;

(4) <u>Market-Based Incentives</u> should be provided to polluting industries, to get them to stop polluting the environment.

(5) <u>Very High Costs and Penalties</u> must be imposed for non-compliance with environmental laws;

(6) There must be a <u>Revision of the Role of Stakeholders and NGOs</u> on environmental matters like Public Hearings. Only credible voices and affected parties must be allowed to participate, not all and sundry; further, their participation must be role-based.

Dr. Srinivas summed up his presentation by stating that environmental governance is all about *right* environmental policy and the *right* legal framework to enforce environmental laws. While penalties may or may not work, converting a penalty regime into an incentive regime may be a more positive way to ensure better results, he concluded.

4. The last panellist, **Dr. D. Jeevan Kumar**, Hon. Professor at the Karnataka State Rural Development and Panchayat Raj University, Gadag, presented his views on '***Rethinking the Dominant Model of Development***'. In his opinion, it is this model of development that has brought us to the brink of planetary ecological collapse, being based on ethnocentrism, techno-centrism, anthropocentrism, materialism and reckless consumption. The concept of Sustainable Development has been framed within this dominant ideology and model of development and mainstream economic theory. Sustainable Development is therefore essentially concerned with the sustainability of Capitalist growth and profitability, and only subsequently with the sustainability of the eco-system. His fundamental point was that maximization of capitalist profit and environmental protection cannot be achieved simultaneously.

The way out is to opt for an *alternative model of development*, with a clear emphasis on ecological wisdom, social, economic and environmental justice, real democracy and genuine sustainability. The Gandhian vision of Sustainable Development, with its focus on Trusteeship, *Ahimsa*, *Gram Swaraj*, Participatory, Deliberative Democracy, *Ram Rajya*, *Sarvodaya*, *Antyodaya*, *Swadeshi* and *Aparigraha* – has all the ingredients to pull us back from the brink of planetary ecological collapse, he stated.

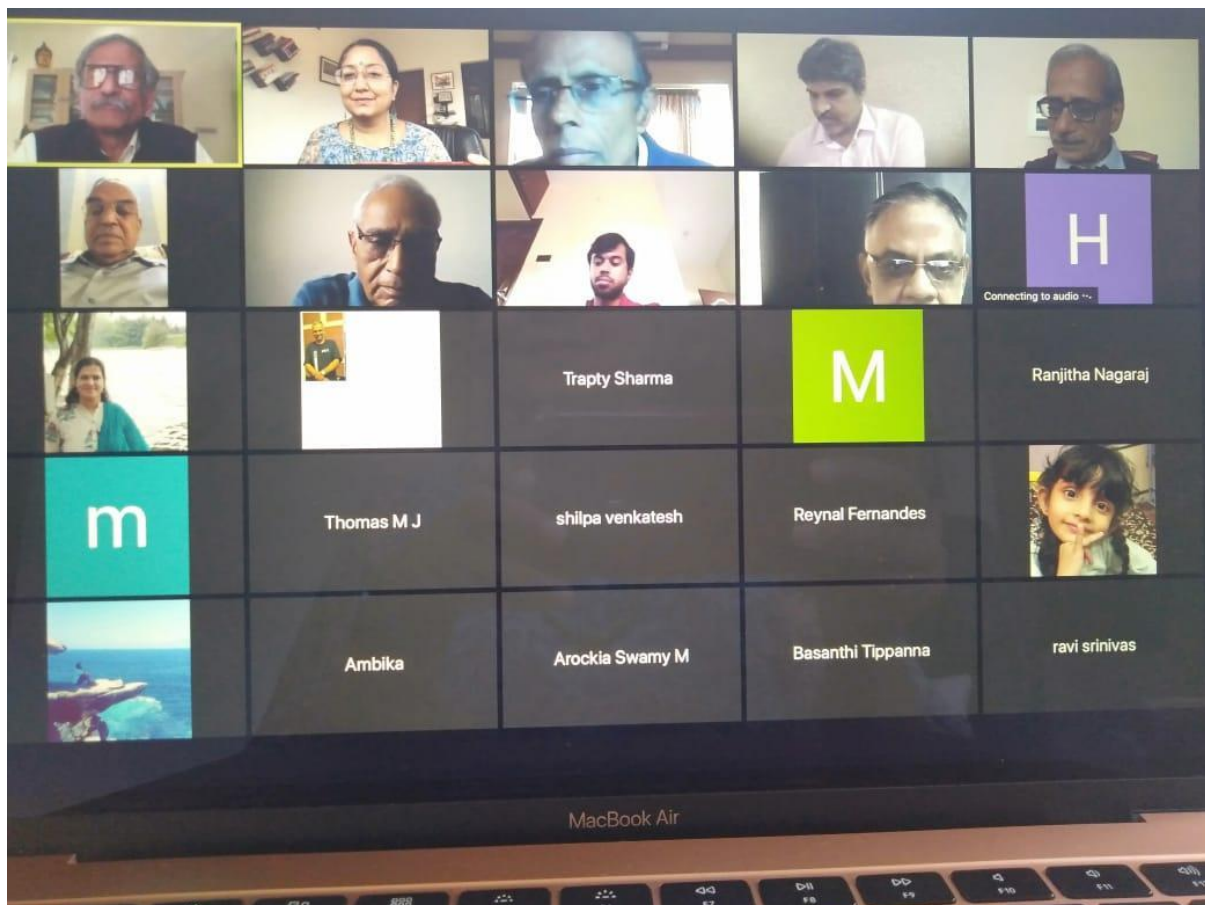Dr. Kumar summarized his arguments as follows:

(1) The concept of Sustainable Development encompasses a number of internal flaws and contradictions, for the Sustainable Development Goals to be successfully realized by the given deadline.

(2) These flaws and contradictions flow from the dominant model of development, which believes in unsustainable production, consumption, competition and profit.

(3) The Gandhian vision of Sustainable Development represents a crucial way forward in advancing a revised and reformed project of Sustainable Development.

(4) The Gandhian *alternative* vision contains the virtues of ecological wisdom, social, economic and environmental justice, real democracy and genuine sustainability.

An active discussion followed the presentation of papers. In his concluding observations, **Dr. Ravindra** stated that Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals are ambitious but are clearly related to the model of development being currently pursued. The

way forward is to move to a Green Economy model, with a clear focus on low carbon growth, by shifting to the utilization of renewable energy which can produce more, with less pollution and less waste generation. While inequalities will always be there, inequities should go. Inclusive growth should become a part of Sustainable Development. We need to make the right policy choices to move toward the path of Green Alternative Development, with elements of Gandhian vision.

<u>Below</u>:

A picture of the Panellists and some participants at the webinar

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<u>Summary of Report</u>

Environmental Health and Ecosystem Vitality around the World

D. Jeevan Kumar
*Courtesy: **Southern Economist**,* Vol.59, No.5, 1st July 2020

The 2020 Environmental Performance Index (EPI) provides a data-driven summary of the *State of Sustainability* around the world. Using 32 performance indicators across 11 issue categories, the EPI ranks 180 countries on environmental health and ecosystem vitality. These indicators provide a gauge at a national scale of how close countries are to established environmental policy targets. The EPI offers a scorecard that highlights leaders and laggards in environmental performance and provides practical guidance for countries that aspire to move toward a sustainable future.

EPI indicators provide a way to spot problems, set targets, track trends, understand outcomes, and identify *Best Policy* practices. Good data and fact-based analysis can also help government officials refine their policy agendas, facilitate communications with key stakeholders, and maximize the return on environmental investments. The EPI offers a powerful policy tool in support of efforts to meet the targets of the UN Sustainable Development Goals and to move society toward a sustainable future.

Major Conclusions

A number of striking conclusions emerge from the 2020 EPI rankings and indicators:

1. First, good policy results are associated with wealth (GDP *per capita*), meaning that economic prosperity makes it possible for nations to invest in policies and programs that lead to desirable outcomes. This trend is especially true for issue categories under the umbrella of environmental health, as building the necessary infrastructure to provide clean drinking water and sanitation, reduce ambient air pollution, control hazardous waste, and respond to public health crises yields large returns for human well-being.

2. Second, the pursuit of economic prosperity – manifested in industrialization and urbanization – often means more pollution and other strains on ecosystem vitality, especially in the developing world, where air and water emissions remain significant.

   But at the same time, the data suggest that countries need not sacrifice sustainability for economic security or *vice versa*. In every issue category, we find countries that rise above their economic peers. Policymakers and other stakeholders in these leading countries demonstrate that focused attention can mobilize communities to protect natural resources and human well-being, despite the strains associated with economic growth. In this regard, indicators of Good Governance – including commitment to the

rule of law, a vibrant press, and even-handed enforcement of regulations – have strong relationships with top-tier EPI scores.

3. Third, while top EPI performers pay attention to all areas of sustainability, their lagging peers tend to have uneven performance. Denmark, which ranks #1, has strong results across most issues, with leading-edge commitments and outcomes with regard to climate change mitigation. In general, high scorers exhibit long-standing policies and programs to protect public health, preserve natural resources, and decrease greenhouse gas emissions. The data further suggest that countries making concerted efforts to decarbonize their electricity sectors have made the greatest gains in combating climate change, with associated benefits for ecosystems and human health. The report notes, however, that every country – including those at the top of the EPI rankings – still has issues to improve upon. No country can claim to be on a fully sustainable trajectory.

4. Fourth, laggards must redouble national sustainability efforts along all fronts. *A number of important countries in the Global South, including **India** and Nigeria, come out near the bottom of the rankings. Their low EPI scores indicate the need for greater attention to the spectrum of sustainability requirements, with a high-priority focus on critical issues such as air and water quality, biodiversity, and climate change* (Emphasis added). Some of the other laggards, including Nepal and Afghanistan, face broader challenges such as civil unrest, and their low scores can almost all be attributed to weak governance.

Innovations in Data and Methodology

Innovations in the 2020 EPI data and methodology reflect the latest advances in environmental science and indicator analysis. Notably, the 2020 rankings include for the first time a Waste Management metric and a pilot indicator on CO2 emissions from land cover change. Other new indicators deepen the analysis of air quality, biodiversity and habitat, fisheries, ecosystem services, and climate change. Full documentation of the methodology is available on their website, and the EPI team invites feedback and suggestions for strengthening future versions of the Index.

While the EPI provides a framework for greater analytic rigor in policymaking, it also reveals a number of severe data gaps that limit the analytic scope of the rankings. As the EPI project has highlighted for two decades, better data collection, reporting, and verification across a range of environmental issues are urgently needed. The existing gaps are especially pronounced in the areas of agriculture, water resources, and threats to biodiversity. New investments in stronger global data systems are essential to better manage sustainability challenges and to ensure that the global community does not breach fundamental planetary boundaries.

The inability to capture transboundary environmental impacts persists as a limitation of the current EPI framework. While the current methodology reveals important insights into how countries perform within their own borders, it does not account for "exported" impacts associated with imported products. With ground-breaking models and new datasets emerging, the EPI team has been working to produce new metrics that account for the spillovers of harm associated with traded goods in an interconnected world.

Global Pandemic

The 2020 EPI emerges in the midst of the COVID-19 crisis that has challenged public health systems and disrupted economic activity across the world. The global pandemic has made clear the profound interdependence of all nations and the importance of investing in resilience. Unintended consequences of the economic shutdown in many nations include a sharp drop in pollution levels and the return of wildlife. The EPI team hopes that this unexpected glimpse of what a sustainable planet might look like from an ecological perspective – albeit at a terrible price in terms of public health and economic damage – will inspire the policy transformation required for a sustainable future that is both economically vigorous and environmentally sound.
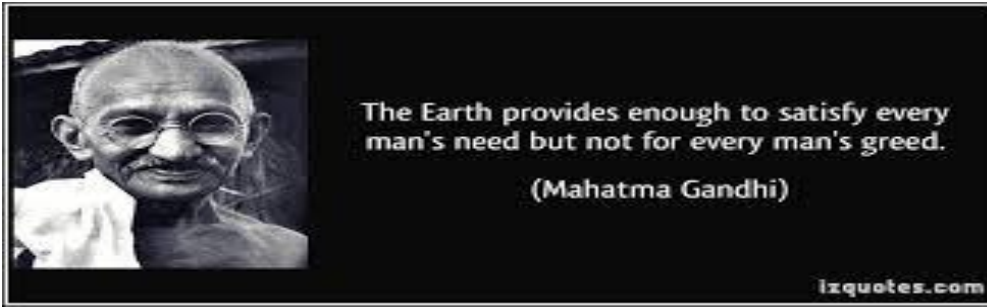
Top 10 Countries in EPI, 2020	
Rank	**Country**
1.	Denmark
2.	Luxembourg
3.	Switzerland
4.	United Kingdom
5.	France
6.	Austria
7.	Finland
8.	Sweden
9.	Norway
10.	Germany

Countries Right at the Bottom in EPI, 2020	
Rank	**Country**
168 (1)	Ghana
(2)	**India**
170 (1)	Burundi
(2)	Haiti
172 (1)	Chad
(2)	Solomon Is.
174.	Madagascar
175.	Guinea
176.	Cote d'Ivoire
177.	Sierra Leone
178.	Afghanistan
179.	Myanmar
180.	Liberia

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A Gandhian *Alternative* Vision of Sustainable Development

The Earth provides enough to satisfy every man's need but not for every man's greed.

(Mahatma Gandhi)

izquotes.com

A 10-Point Charter

1. Humankind would act in a manner that it is a <u>part</u> of Nature, not <u>apart</u> from Nature.
2. Resources available on the earth are not used with an element of greed. (Trusteeship)
3. Human beings practice non-violence ('*Ahimsa*') not only towards fellow human beings, but also towards other living and non-living creatures and elements.
4. Women are respected, made partners in, and given their rightful place in all spheres of human endeavour.
5. A bottom-up shared view is preferred to the top-down authoritarian overview (*Gram Swaraj, Participatory Democracy, Ram Rajya*)
6. Conservationist and sustainable life-enhancing approach prevails over the unsustainable, consumerist, self-destructive approach.
7. The fruits of development must reach *everyone* in society (*Sarvodaya*); in particular, the needs of the poorest in society must be taken care of (*Antyodaya*).
8. The human race thinks about how much is *enough* for a simple, need-based, austere, yet comfortable lifestyle. (*Aparigraha*)
9. All development, as far as possible, leads to local self-reliance, and equity with social justice (*Swadeshi, Sarvodaya*)
10. Ethics and self-discipline in resource use is an overriding criterion of development.

Feedback

Congratulations, Sir.
Kindly share the link.
With best wishes,

S.N. Tripathi, IAS (Retd)
Director, Indian Institute of Public Administration, New Delhi

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Dear Shri Ramanathan Garu,
Please accept our sincere compliments on the publication of your Virtual Newsletter. It was sheer delight and pleasure to read the very contemporary and relevant articles and the masterly analysis and suggestions. On behalf of the Regional Branch of IIPA, I wish the Karnataka Regional Branch continued success.

M. Gopalakrishna
Chairman, IIPA-A.P. Regional Branch

Dear Sir,
Congratulations on the launch of your Branch's Newsletter and thanks for sharing the E-copies with us.

Er. Jugal Kishore Singh
Chairman, IIPA- BHR Regional Branch, & (Chief Engineer-Retd., WRD, GOB)

Dear Shri Ramanathan,
My compliments and greetings.
Thank you for sending the Virtual Newsletter of your Branch for the months of August and September 2020. It will be our pleasure to circulate the Newsletter among our members.

Jatin Hazarika
Chairman, IIPA-Assam Regional Branch

Dear Chairman Sir,
Thank you for the inaugural issue of the captioned Newsletter of IIPA-KRB. The quality and contents have far exceeded those of quite some allied varieties. For example, the incisive contents of the articles have critically dealt with ground realities on the one hand, and road map needed to upgrade the gamut of Public Administration on the other hand. The dire need of the hour is for such deliberations in an institution specialised in the field of Public Administration.

You will find from the copy of proceedings of the AGM of Oct. 2014 of IIPA, New Delhi, that in my speech I had stated the following:

"*While the academic agenda and focus on theoretical knowledge at the IIPA, New Delhi are topping the global scale, much more emphasis needs to be given in its agenda to widening and deepening its scope so as to transform Public Administration into primarily Applied Public Administration.*"

I am delighted to read the articles in the Virtual Newsletter, as they can stimulate and pilot the IIPA's ensuing agenda to transform studies in Public Administration to focus more on applied aspects with greater speed.

Trivikram B. Pai, Kumta

Dear Sir,

It is heartening to note that the Central Government is bringing out a number of administrative reforms to govern a heterogenous country like ours. Civil servants play an important role in building this great nation.

I agree with the tenets of *Mission Karmayogi* which is much needed to improve the level of services provided by all civil servants. Karnataka is known for its exemplary civil service officers. Recent examples are Sri Bipul Bhattacharya and Sri S.V. Ranganath, former Chief Secretaries. They are icons in administration. They still command our respect and reverence for their outstanding contribution for the healthy growth of the Civil Service in this State. It is heartening to note that their vast experience and work culture are examples to emulate, which continue to be extensively used by IIPA-KRB.

The article by Sri Amitabha Bhattacharya IAS (Retd.) 'Steel Frame needs to Retain its Effectiveness' has set the tone for *Mission Karmayogi*. I agree with the author's various suggestions. Effectiveness in decision making and delivery of services with a positive attitude, are the need of the hour. Many of the serving officers need a through briefing about the fulfilment of the aspirations of the common man. I remember the quote, "*that Government is the best which governs the least*". Civil Servants should always aim at solving problems with a positive note. Problem solving approach is the key to successful governance. Public Accountability should be ingrained in every aspect of administration in the present-day context. *Mission Karmayogi,* when implemented in its fullest sense, will meet the objectives for which it is coined.

K. Amaranarayana, IAS (Retd.)
Member
Karnataka State Planning Board
Bengaluru

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IIPA-KRB Virtual Newsletter
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