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Our World Today: Unsustainable Consumption And Production

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ARTICLE ID: 41

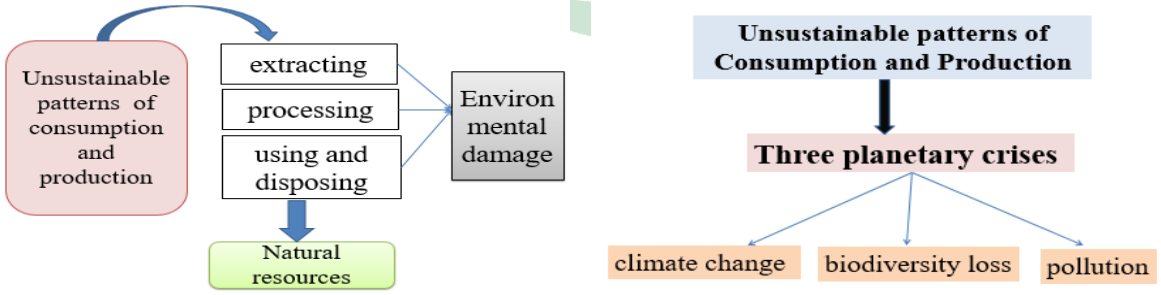
Abstract

A wealth of natural resources is available to us on our planet. Our current level of consumption, however, is considerably above what the world can sustain since we have not used them wisely. The demand for natural resources has increased due to growing consumption, prompting questions about sustainability. An estimated 7% of the raw resources harvested worldwide are consumed annually in India. India is now the second-largest user of materials in the world. Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP), which takes into account all phases of a product's life cycle and seeks to improve everyone's quality of life, strives to reduce the damaging environmental effects of consumption and production systems. Responsible production and consumption involve being aware of what, how much, and how we produce in order to use resources wisely and protect them for future generations.

Keywords: SDG-12, Consumption, Production, Climate change, Biodiversity loss, Pollution.

Introduction

The existing unsustainable patterns of production and consumption that are prevalent throughout the world today depend on the extraction, processing, use, and disposal of an ever-increasing quantity of natural resources from the earth while also harming the ecosystem.



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Despite decades of warnings, the amount of materials used in production and consumption continues to rise globally, and the rate at which materials are extracted globally is outpacing both population growth and economic growth, meaning we are using materials less effectively while using more of them. Global resource extraction will rise by 110% by 2060 if production and consumption go as usual.

Climate change

Climate change is one of the most well-known environmental consequences of unsustainable production and consumption, and it is mostly brought on by burning fossil fuels like coal, oil, and gas to produce the energy needed to drive economic activity. Various sources of energy are employed in manufacturing, including but not limited to:

1. Heavy machinery for mining and industrial farming
2. Product processing and manufacturing facilities
3. The products are transported by trucks, ships, and aeroplanes
4. Treatment and disposal of both production and consumption waste
5. The extraction and production of certain materials, such as steel used in construction and infrastructure, which can produce greenhouse gases as a result of chemical processes..

Biodiversity loss

The need for more and more land for infrastructure, buildings, agriculture, forestry, raw material extraction, and other uses is causing the clearing of the ground and the removal of all native trees and flora.

Pollution

The quantity of pollution produced as a result of unsustainable production and consumption is also seriously hurting the planet's food, water, and air ecosystems and threatening both human and environmental health. Pollution is caused during the extraction of raw materials, the processing and production of commodities, as well as the distribution and consumption of goods, at every level of the value chain of a good or service.

These environmental effects are intricately linked to one another and have an impact on one another. For instance, both pollution and climate change exacerbate biodiversity loss, which is already a problem. All people are at risk from these three crises, which also endanger the materials and resources, as well as the food we eat, the oxygen we breathe, the

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water we drink, and our overall well-being and prosperity. Because of the negative effects on the environment brought on by unsustainable production and use, there may be a further deterioration in the quality and quantity of natural resources accessible. For instance, improper fertilizer use in agriculture can have a detrimental impact on the soil and quality of water essential for farming and fishing in the future.Additionally, this risk is disproportionally dispersed throughout the world, fostering global inequality and affecting the fulfilment of all the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) set forth in the 2030 Agenda.

Sustainable Consumption and Production

The Sustainable Development Goals are an international call to action for all nations, rich and poor, to end poverty, safeguard the environment, and advance prosperity by 2030. Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP), which takes into account all phases of a product's life cycle and seeks to improve everyone's quality of life, strives to reduce the damaging environmental effects of consumption and production systems. In order to ensure that the resources of the world are used wisely and kept for future generations, sustainable consumption and production ensures that we be attentive of what and how much we produce and consume.

The best plan currently available for creating a better world for people and the planet by the year 2030 is the set of 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Sustainable consumption:

It is the use of services and products that meet basic needs and improve people's quality of life without endangering the needs of future generations. In order to minimize the use of natural resources and toxic materials and to reduce polluting emissions of waste throughout the life cycle of the service or product.

Sustainable production:

It is the process of making products and providing services through non-polluting, resource-conserving, economically viable, consumer- and worker-safe, socially and creatively satisfying, and non-polluting processes and systems.

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Statistical data on responsible production and consumption around the world

- From 1970 to 2017, India's demand for natural resources rose from 1.18 billion tonnes to 7.4 billion tonnes.
- In comparison to the global average of 454 tonnes/acre, India extracts resources from its land at one of the highest rates (1,579 tonnes/acre).
- Due to inadequate transporation and collecting techniques, 1.3 billion tonnes of food per year end up spoiling in the bins of customers and retailers (Estimated to be one third of all food produced).
- The world's natural resources have been utilised in an unsustainable manner (In 2010, global material footprint was estimated to be 73.2 billion tonnes, which increased to 85.9 billion tonnes in 2017).
- Electronic trash increased by 38% between 2010 and 2019, yet less than 20% of it is recycled, and that amount is projected to increase to 9.0 kg per person in 2030. (Increase of 0.16 kg per capita annually).
- Before food reaches grocery stores, supply systems lose 13.8% of the food that was harvested, transported, stored, and processed.
- Between 2000 and 2019, human dependency on natural resources increased globally by 65%. According to the United Nations, an estimated 17 per cent of total global food production is wasted annually.
- India's contribution to food waste, at 68.8 million tonnes yearly, is 7% of the global total, according to the United Nations Environment Programme's Food Waste Index Report 2021.
- India was rated 94 out of 107 nations in the Global Hunger Index (GHI) in 2020.
- Around 8–10% of the world's greenhouse gas emissions are linked to food loss and waste, which in turn fuels climate change and harsh weather. Thus, reducing food loss and waste (FLW) can help both the poor's access to food and efforts to combat climate change.
- Each year, India produces 1.8 million metric tonnes of electronic garbage and 15,342 tonnes of plastic waste.

Sustainable Consumption and Production takes a comprehensive strategy and focuses on systemic transformation. It centres on three primary goals.

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Decoupling environmental damage from economic progress

The goal of sustainable development as a future endeavour is to strike a balance between the economic, societal, and environmental aspects of life in order to improve it. At least five of the SDGs specifically mention health because it is a significant factor in boosting quality of life. More goods and services are provided while having "less" of an impact on resource use, environmental damage, waste, and pollution.

Applying life cycle thinking

Resource extraction, the creation of intermediate inputs, distribution, marketing, waste disposal, and the reuse of goods and services are all included in this discussion of improving resource sustainability management and achieving resource efficiency. Applying the life cycle approach, they look at how each design and production choice affects the environment and how to make it more sustainable.

Sizing opportunities for developing countries and leapfrogging

By avoiding inefficient, polluting resources and technology, emerging countries can "leapfrog" to more resource-efficient, environmentally sound, and competitive technologies. SCP presents potential for developing nations, including the development of new markets, the creation of green jobs, and improved, welfare-generating resource management.

Challenges – Unsustainable Consumption and Production

First, it is now widely acknowledged that globalization plays a part in achieving sustainable development. In a report published by the United Nations in 2015, it was demonstrated that although globalization presents a wide range of potential for environmental sustainability, it also poses a number of difficulties and has unfavorable effects.

People's dietary patterns and food choices have changed as a result of globalisation. The usage of transposition and related carbon dioxide emissions to the atmosphere are increased by high import demand. The cultural ties to regional foods are also impacted by dietary changes, which have an impact on consumer behaviour about food waste.

Second, the globalization of the food industry has a significant impact on the food supply chain, as food supply chain management problems are on the rise and have a significant impact on food loss, which increases the likelihood of supply chain disruption and the risk of food loss and waste.

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Thirdly, globalisation has greatly impacted the domestic economy and mode of production while increasing the level of competition in international trade. The domestic market became more and more dependent on the global market and trade as globalisation grew. To put it another way, globalisation makes nations compete with one another.

National and International agencies supporting SustainableConsumption and Production

- United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP)
- Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)
- Department of Economic and Social Affairs-Statistics Division (DESA)
- United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD)
- United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)
- UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UNESCO-UIS)
- International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA).
- United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO)

Covid-19 Impact on SDG 12-Responsible Consumption and ProductioninMedical Field

Responsible production and consumption are gradually becoming more popular throughout India. The acceleration of the SDG by 2030 has been significantly impacted by the COVID-19 epidemic, though. Plastic items for medical needs have greatly increased as a result of the epidemic. People turned to plastic plates, cups, bottled water, and other items as part of their hygiene precautions against COVID-19, which increased plastic manufacturing and usage.

Along with it, a concerning increase in the fabrication of fraudulent medical supplies was noted. When the recycling process was put on hold because of the epidemic, the situation grew worse. After COVID-19, more e-waste was produced as a result of people using technology more frequently than usual to get by during the lockdown. In 2021, India produced 3.2 million tonnes of electronic garbage, ranking third globally.

Summary

Sustainable consumption and production is crucial because humans place a great deal of strain on the earth and its resources beyond what is necessary, such as by choosing to purchase larger homes, nicer cars, the newest technology and appliances, entertainment, clothing, and other products. The mother earth provides the essential necessities of air, food,

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water, and shelter to all living things. People and society now need to find methods to work better and harder with less resource. It is crucial to remember that this specific SDG-12 Responsible Consumption and Production addresses the consumer and corporate sectors as well as essential services, supply chains, better jobs, and a higher standard of living for a person.