



IMPACT OF CLIMATE CHANGE ON TRIBAL COMMUNITIES IN INDIA-

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“Climate change affects us all, but it does not affect us all equally. The poorest and most vulnerable – those who have done the least to contribute to global warming – are bearing the brunt of the impact today.” (UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon)

Climate change is one of the greatest threats to environment and ecology today. Yet its blatant challenges to a country's human rights, security, and economic development are less discussed. Simply put, climate change refers to unpredictable weather patterns, rising sea levels, and other catastrophic events. It is associated with human activities and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions that contribute to global warming. Developing countries with fast industrial growth and increasing carbon emissions are more threatened by effects of climate change.

India, one of the most populous countries in the world, is very vulnerable to the effects of climate change that pose significant challenges to the country's ecology, economy and society. Although climate change affects all communities,

indigenous peoples are among the first and hardest hit as they are closest to the nature even when they have no to very less contribution in global warming. Indigenous peoples of India make up an estimated 104 million (or 8.6%) of the country's population (according to the 2011 Census report). There are 705 officially recognized ethnic groups, but there are many more that are not officially recognized, although they are eligible to be proposed as a tribe. Therefore, the total number of tribal groups in the country is likely higher than the official number. The highest concentration of tribal peoples is in his seven states in northeastern India, with the so-called "Central Tribal Belt" stretching from Rajasthan in the west of the country to West Bengal in the east. It is vital to highlight that the dangers that climate change postures for indigenous people groups contrast from the dangers that it postures for other bunches in society, counting the poor. Hundreds of millions of indigenous men and women around the world manage their forests and cultures, making a sustainable contribution to sequestering and capturing greenhouse gases from the global atmosphere.

However, in many parts of the world, tribal and indigenous people tend to struggle to preserve their natural and ecological resources from deforestation and destructive mining of minerals, energy and resources. , oil and gas, etc. through mining. Indigenous communities are advocating in many local, regional and international discussion forums for the maintenance of sustainable systems of production and consumption, and this effort is perhaps more necessary than ever.

The phenomena of climate change disrupts agricultural cycles, degrade land quality, and deplete water sources, causing reduced crop yields, food scarcity, and increased vulnerability to poverty and malnutrition. As a consequence of climate change impacts, tribal communities are often forced to leave their ancestral lands due to rising sea levels, coastal erosion, and changing ecological conditions. Displacement leads to a loss of cultural identity, disconnection from traditional practices, and challenges in adapting to new environments. Moreover, indigenous people face land grabbing and exploitation as they seek refuge in unfamiliar territories.

Climate change also amplifies health risks for tribal communities, who already face limited access to healthcare services. Changing climate patterns contribute to the spread of vector-borne diseases, such as malaria and dengue, affecting indigenous populations disproportionately. Extreme temperatures and heatwaves pose significant health hazards, particularly for the elderly and children, who are more vulnerable to heat-related illnesses. Inadequate healthcare infrastructure and resources exacerbate these challenges, further compromising the well-being of tribal people.

These factors have direct impact on mental health, social capital, food security, water supply, sanitation, infectious diseases, injury, and health care access.

One report found that indigenous peoples share six characteristics that make them particularly vulnerable to the direct effects of climate change; the destructive effects on the environment leading to climate change, and mitigation and adaptation measures.

First, indigenous peoples are among the poorest of the poor, the most vulnerable group to climate change. Second, they depend on renewable natural resources most threatened by climate

variability and extremes of their economic activities and livelihoods. Third, they live in the geographic areas and ecosystems most vulnerable to the effects of climate change,

and share a complex cultural relationship with these ecosystems. Fourth, high level exposure and vulnerability to climate change forces as indigenous peoples migrate a lot that leads to exacerbate economic and social vulnerabilities.

Fifth, gender inequality, Climate change threatens to increase the vulnerabilities of Indigenous women to discrimination, exclusion and exploitation, while also creating new risks from climate change impacts. Sixth, and finally, many indigenous communities continue to face excluded from decision-making processes, often without institutional recognition and support.

This limits their access to remedies, increases their vulnerability to climate change, weakens their ability to mitigate and adapt to climate change, and thus pose a threat to progress made in securing their rights.

However, many indigenous tribes are using their own traditional practices and expertise to resist the effects of climate change. Over generations, these people have acquired a fundamental understanding of the relationship between human-environment interactions and the impact of the environment on human health and well-being.

This traditional ecological knowledge provides tribal communities with a holistic view of the impacts of climate change and a unique approach to interpreting climate science. And that knowledge is an essential resource for predicting the impacts of climate change and developing adaptive responses in tribal communities, such as identifying food substitutes and adapting hunting and fishing cycles and practices.

Therefore, the impacts of climate change on Indian tribal communities are severe and diverse, threatening tribal livelihoods, cultural heritage and general well-being. It is important to recognize their unique vulnerabilities and actively engage in mitigation and adaptation measures. Policy makers, researchers and civil society work together to strengthen tribal communities, protect tribal rights, preserve traditional knowledge and build resilience in the face of an uncertain future. is needed. Only through concerted efforts can we foster a more inclusive and sustainable future for all.

Additional Reading

The environment around us is full of amazing features and facts you might not know. One of the best ways to appreciate the earth around us is to learn more about how we interact with nature. Here are some cool environmental facts you might not know:

1. Around 27,000 trees are cut down each day

The world has over 3.04 trillion trees in the world. However, 27,000 of them are cut down daily to make toilet paper. This translates to about 9.8 million trees annually. One single recycled edition of the New York Times newspaper could save 75,000 tree

2. Humans use only 1% of all available water

About 71% of the earth is water. The oceans hold approximately 96.5% of this water and the ice caps hold about 2%. The remaining water exists in rivers, ponds, glaciers, ice caps, lakes, as water vapor and our taps, among other water bodies. Only 1% of the earth's water is safe for human consumption.

3. 78% of marine mammals are at risk of choking on plastic

Seventy-eight percent of marine mammals are at risk of accidental deaths, such as getting caught in fishing nets. Plastic bags and other plastic garbage that ends up in the ocean kill over 1,000,000 sea animals every year.

4. Americans throw away 25 trillion Styrofoam cups every year

Styrofoam is not biodegradable. Switching to single use options will help cut down on Styrofoam pollution.

5. Fungi play a highly vital role in the environment

Fungi play a protective role in the environment. From digesting minerals out of rock formations to consuming fossil fuel spills, and even de-radiating the environment

6. Ants weigh more than humans

The combined weight of ants on the planet is higher than all human beings. The world has over 7 billion people, and 100 trillion ants.