UNIT 4: PERSPECTIVES ON DEVELOPMENT (II)

UNIT STRUCTURE

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4.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to-

- conceptualize what is development.
- understand the meaning of economic growth.
- know the meaning, origin and requirements of sustainable development.
- know the world conventions on sustainable development, its dimensions, issues arising and challenges faced by the process.
- understand the meaning, definition and origin of the concept of Eco-Feminism.

- know the different theories and criticisms to Eco-Feminism.

4.2 INTRODUCTION

Development is a buzz word of the world since the period following the Second World War. It is a social process affecting as well as wanted by both the rich and the poor nations. This unit gives an overview of the theoretical concept of development and the associated dimensions of it. Here an attempt is made to provide a conceptual analysis of the concept of development, its related concept of economic growth. Further the unit tries to focus on the paradigm shifts in the concept of development over the years. It also focuses on the concepts of sustainable development and eco feminism which have become the dominant paradigms in the development discourse in the contemporary times.

4.3 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT - MEANING AND DEFINITION

Sustainable development is a major approach that has dominated the development discourse in contemporary periods. This approach makes an attempt to combine growing concerns about a range of environmental issues with socio-economic issues. According to this paradigm, development cannot be simply growth and economy centric. But it has to bring a blend between growth, human development and environment. So it has to take into consideration environmental concerns to make development more yielding, lasting and effective.

Sustainable development has thus, the potential to address fundamental challenges for humanity, now and into the future. It tries to bring a synergy between humanity and environment. The approach insists environment is not external to humanity, but an integral part of it. So, development concerns should take into consideration environment issues. Thus, as an approach of development it is environment centric in character.

Sustainable Development implies economic growth together along with the protection of the environment, each reinforcing the other. Sustainable Development, thus, is maintaining a balance between the human need to improve lifestyles and feeling of well-being on one hand, and preserving natural resources and ecosystems, on which we and future generations depend.

The concept of sustainable development is the result of the growing awareness of the global links between mounting environmental problems, socio-economic issues like poverty and inequality, and concerns about a healthy future for humanity. It strongly links environmental and socio-economic issues. This process of bringing together environmental and socio-economic questions was most famously expressed in the Brundtland Report's definition of sustainable development as ‘‘meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs’’. This defines needs from a human standpoint. According to the The World Conservation Union, 1991, sustainable development may also be defined as "improving the quality of life while living within the carrying capacity of ecosystems".

Thus, sustainable development does not focus solely on environmental issues. More broadly, it encompasses the three general policy areas namely economy, environment and society. The Swiss 'Monitoring of Sustainable Development Project' in 2001, proposed the following definition: 'Sustainable development means ensuring dignified living conditions with regard to human rights by creating and maintaining the widest possible range of options for freely defining life plans. The principle of fairness among and between present and future generations should be taken into account in the use of environmental, economic and social resources. According to Robert Prescott Allen, who has been engaged in several projects in this field and has 18 years of experience in evaluating and advising development strategies on four continents, sustainability is just another way of saying

"the good life" as a combination of a high level of human well-being, and a high level of ecosystem well-being that supports it.

4.4 ORIGIN OF THE CONCEPT OF SUSTINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The first important use of the term was in 1980 in the World Conservation Strategy. The idea of sustainable development was very much embedded long ago in Malthus theory of population growth in late 1700s. But the term started gaining coinage in early 1970s following a range of key publications drawing attention to man's over exploitation of environment. Few literary publications gave a boost to the world's thinking on sustainable development. The key among them are: Rachel Carson's *The Silent Spring* (1962), Paul Erich's *How to be Survivor: A Plan to Save Spaceship Earth* (1971), Club of Rome's publication *The Limits to growth* (1972), Barbara Ward and Rene Dubos's *Only One Earth*(1972). Faced with the over-exploitation of natural resources that accompanied economic and demographic growth, the think tank known as the Club of Rome, created in 1968, advocated zero growth. In 1971, this private international association sounded an urgent alarm by publishing *The Limits to Growth.* Broadly speaking, it presents current economic development as being incompatible with the long-term protection of the planet.

4.5 WORLD CONVENTIONS ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The theoretical framework for sustainable development evolved between 1972 and 1992 through a series of international conferences and initiatives. The UN Conference on the Human Environment, held in Stockholm in 1972, was the first major international gathering to discuss sustainability at the global scale. The conference created considerable momentum, and a series of recommendations led to the establishment of the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) as well as the creation of numerous national environmental protection agencies at the national level.

The United Nations Conference on the Human Environment in Stockholm in 1972 gave birth to the first true notion of sustainable development, which was called 'eco development' in those days. In this conference personalities like Maurice Strong, Professor René Dubos, Barbara Ward and Ignacy Sachs cautioned about the integration of ecological concerns in economic planning. This resulted in the creation of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

The recommendations from Stockholm were further elaborated in the 1980 World Conservation Strategy, (a collaboration between the International Union for the Conservation of Nature, the World Wildlife Fund (WWF), and UNEP) which aimed to advance sustainable development by identifying priority conservation issues and key policy options. In 1980, the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) published its world conservation strategy. This document is one of the original sources of the expression 'sustainable development'.

In 1983, the UN convened the WCED, chaired by Norwegian Prime Minister Gro Harlem Brundtland. Comprised of representatives from both developed and developing countries, the Commission was created to address growing concern over the "accelerating deterioration of the human environment and natural resources and the consequences of that deterioration for economic and social development." The term 'sustainable development' remained virtually unnoticed until its revival in the Gro Harlem Brundtland report 'Our Common Future', published in 1987. The report popularized the most commonly used definition of sustainable development: "Development that meets the needs of current generations without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs". Since then, the concept of sustainable development has been accepted all over the world.

The Brundtland report provided the momentum for the landmark 1992 Rio Summit that laid the foundations for the global institutionalization of sustainable development. Marking the twentieth anniversary of the Stockholm Conference, the Earth Summit adopted the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development and Agenda 21, a global plan of action for sustainable development.

Three seminal instruments of environmental governance were established at the Rio Summit: the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), and the legally non-binding Statement of Forest Principles. Following a recommendation in Agenda 21, the UN General Assembly officially created the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) later that year.

Since that time a number of important international conferences on sustainable development have been held-including the 1997 Earth Summit+5 in New York and the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) in Johannesburg. The negotiations at the WSSD in 2002 demonstrated a major shift in the perception of sustainable development-away from environmental issues towards social and economic development. This shift was driven by the needs of the developing countries and strongly influenced by the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

4.6 OBJECTIVES OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Sustainable Development refers to the challenges of reducing global inequity and poverty, and promoting well-being, while reducing threats to the earth's systems from industrial production and consumption. Effective environmental care and management in relation to climate stability, other species and natural resources are the chief objectives of sustainable development. Three main objectives of sustainable development are:

- It should be socially desirable: It means development should fulfil people's cultural, material and spiritual needs in equitable ways.

- It should be economically viable: It implies that the costs of development should not exceed the output.

- It should be ecologically sustainable: It means maintaining long term viability for supporting the eco system.

4.7 REQUIREMENTS OF SUSTAINBLE DEVELOPMENT

Sustainable development implies the fulfilment of several conditions. These conditions are: preserving the overall balance, respect for the environment, and preventing the exhaustion of natural resources. Reduced production of waste and the rationalization of production and energy consumption must also be implemented. In order to be sustainable, development must combine three main elements: fairness, protection of the environment, and economic efficiency. A sustainable development project must be based on a better-developed mode of consultation between the community and the members it comprises. The success of such a policy also depends on consumers accepting certain constraints and citizens observing certain requirements with regard to transparency and participation. The concept of sustainable development is based on a set of requirements as discussed below.

- It must allow the basic needs of present and future generations to be fulfilled with regard to demographic constraints, such as: access to water, education, health, employment, and the fight against hunger or malnutrition.

- Another requirement of this type of development is to improve quality of life, which involves easier access to medical care, social services, culture, and therefore also social well-being.In addition, respect for rights and freedoms and the promotion of new forms of renewable energy such as wind, solar, and geothermal power, are important requirements of sustainable development.

- Sustainable development is required to allow the planet's resources and condition to be protected for future generations and natural assets to be shared.

- The concept of sustainable development also involves narrowing the gaps between rich and poor countries, insofar as these gaps, if maintained or accentuated, could be the cause of violent conflict, which by its very nature leads to regression rather than development.

4.8 DIMENSIONS OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The second half of the 1980s witnessed the development of three dimensions of sustainable development with the publication of the Brundtland Report (1987). The report enshrined them as the strategies to be adopted by local, national and global strategies for development. The Rio de Janeiro Earth Summit, 1992 established them as the three pillars of sustainable development. This is one of the most well-known models created using the three dimensions -Economy, Environment and Society.

However, the UNESCO argued that these are not the three key issues that affect the world today. It claimed that it is culture which to a great extent also determine and detect what people do. Local cultures which are a rich source of knowledge and creativity are in a process of extinction. So, it has to be included as a dimension of sustainable development. Accordingly, in November 2010, culture was included as the fourth dimension of sustainable development in World Summit of Local and Regional Leaders in the Third World Congress of UCLG, held in Mexico City. Today there are four dimensions to sustainable development. They are: society, environment, culture and economy - which are intertwined.

Nobel Laureate Amartya Sen gives the following dimensions for social sustainability:

- **Equity -** The community is to provide equitable opportunities and outcomes for all its members, particularly the poorest and most vulnerable members of the community.

- **Diversity -** The community is to promotes and encourage diversity.

- **Interconnectedness/Social cohesions -** The community is to provide processes, systems and structures that promote connectedness within and outside the community at the formal, informal and institutional level.

- **Quality of life -** The community is to ensure that basic needs are met and is to foster a good quality of life for all members at the individual, group and community level (e.g. health, housing, education, employment, safety)

- **Democracy and governance -** The community is to provide democratic processes and open, accountable governance structures.

- **Maturity -** The individuals are to accept the responsibility of consistent growth and improvement through broader social attributes (e.g. communication styles, behavioural patterns, indirect education and philosophical explorations)

Further, economic sustainability includes the following:

- **Growth-** It refers to an increase is conventional measures like Gross National Product (GNP) and Gross Domestic Product (GDP), etc.

- **Efficiency-** It is reflected in more efficient production and consumption of (mainly marketed) goods and services.

- **Stability-** It refers to the stability of prices and employment.

Again environmental sustainability gives coverage to the following:

It refers to the capacity to preserve over time the three basic functions of the environment: the resource supply function, the waste receiver function

and that of direct usefulness of the environment. In other words, environmental sustainability means the capacity to increase and bring up the value of the environment and its peculiarities, while assuring the protection and the renewal of natural resources. Environmental sustainability involves making decisions and taking actions that are in the interests of protecting the natural world, with particular emphasis on preserving the capability of the environment to support human life. Environmental sustainability is the ability to maintain the qualities that are valued in the physical environment. It demands the maintenance of human life, the capabilities that the natural environment has to maintain the living conditions for people and other species (e.g. clean water and air, a suitable climate), the aspects of the environment that produce renewable resources such as water, timber, fish, solar energy, the functioning of society, despite non-renewable resource depletion, the quality of life for all people, the liveability and beauty of the environment.

Cultural sustainability refers to the process of developing, renewing and maintaining human cultures that create positive, enduring relationships with other peoples and the natural world. Amartya Sen explains, "Cultural matters are integral parts of the lives we lead. If development can be seen as enhancement of our living standards, then efforts geared to development can hardly ignore the world of culture".

4.9 KEY ISSUES IN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The foregoing review of sustainable development concept, dimensions, reveal the key issues that arise repeatedly in debates about sustainability. These are:

- **Intergenerational Equity:** The most important concept in sustainable development is that each generation should have an equitable opportunity to meet its own needs. This is called inter-generational equity.
- **Types of Capital and Assets:** Sustainable development programs often encompass a broad range of different types of capital and assets. Capital

and assets are any store of value that can provide income, benefits, goods, services, or other things of value. They are typically categorized into three types:

a. Manufactured and Financial Capital: It includes buildings, highways stock and bond investments, the Permanent Fund, and any other form of financial or physical asset that we as humans have created or manufactured.

b. Human and Social Capital: People and communities also have stores of value that can be passed from one generation to the next. People embody human capital in the form of knowledge, education, skills, training and other valuable abilities. Communities and societies are stores of social capital in the form of traditions, customs, identity, organizations, laws, and institutions that are passed on to future generations as well.

c. Natural capital: It includes all aspects of the natural environment that provide income, services, resources, or benefits. Natural capital includes raw resources such as oil, timber, and fish. It includes life support services such as climate regulation, nutrient cycling, waste treatment, soil formation and other ecological processes that keep us alive. Natural capital also encompasses hunting, subsistence, and outdoor recreation resources as well as aesthetic and cultural benefits derived from nature.

- **Concept of well-being:** Sustainable development concept expands the traditional understanding of well-being to include the social and environmental well-being of people. Sustainable development programs typically define progress and well-being in broad terms that include measures of the health of the environment, communities, and the people living there. They argue that people need access to a healthy natural environment to meet their need for life support services and to ensure their physical health and well-being. They emphasize the need to sustain natural assets to preserve life support services and the need to conserve

natural resources that future generations will depend on for life. They also emphasize the social well-being of communities, cultures, and individuals. To help ensure social well-being, current and future generations should have access to the wealth offered by communities, institutions, and traditions. Besides accumulating financial wealth, creating jobs, and building physical infrastructure, we also need to ensure that the social institutions and human capital that sustain our communities are also passed on to future generations.

4.10 CHALLENGES TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Sustainable development encounters many challenges today. The prominent among them are:

- The world's population is growing rapidly and most of this growth is taking place in cities. Cities are particularly vulnerable to environmental challenges due to their high population density.
- Population growth, poverty and degradation of natural resources often fuel one another and pose a challenge to sustainable development.
- Increased demand and competition for scarce resources such as energy, water and food are putting upward pressure on resources and threatening sustainable development.
- Climate change and its potential impact also challenge sustainable development.
- Successive development and economic planning programmes have neither been thoroughly planned nor wholeheartedly implemented. Consequently, large segments of society remain economically deprived and socially marginalised. This has appeared as the greatest challenge to the notion of sustainable development.
- Globalization, removal of trade barriers, rapid and blind industrialization are negations to the concept of sustainable development.

- Growing consumerism is making people blind and they fail to foresee the needs of the future generation. Uncontrolled consumption of resources leads to resource depletion and challenges sustainable development.Technology driven culture undermines the significance of culture and disregards environment safety. This has posed a great challenge to sustainable development.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q1. In which year the term "Sustainable Development" came into existence?

Q2. In which year& month the 4th Dimension of Sustainable Development was incorporated?

Q3. What does GNP stand for?

Q4. What does UNFCCC stand for?

4.11 ECOFEMINISM - MEANING AND DEFINITION

Ecofeminism is a theoretical, political, and educational movement that draws specific parallels between the domination of women and other marginalized groups, and the degradation of nature. While much of ecofeminist thought is focused on examining the interconnectivity between social and environmental injustices, ecofeminism is as vast and varied as its feminist and ecological roots. Given the global environmental and social crises currently sweeping the planet, ecofeminism offers important, albeit diverse, theoretical, practical, and pedagogical perspectives for developing effective responses to such interrelated crises. As such, scholars across a variety of disciplines are revisiting ecofeminist thought. In the field of education, ecofeminism is influencing the ways that we approach questions of justice by offering an intersectional framework that insists on recognizing the interconnected roots of racism, sexism, poverty, and other social

problems with ecological degradation. An ethics of care is woven throughout to form the basis of a pedagogy of responsibility whereby students learn to both critique these cultural foundations of violence and identify practices and relationships that help to create healthy sustainable communities.

As there are several different types of feminism and different beliefs held by feminists, there are different versions of ecofeminism. Charlene Spretnak has argued that there are three main 'paths' to ecofeminism, and that they draw in a diverse group of people, which strengthens any movement, such as: through the study of political theory as well as history, through the belief and study of nature-based religions, through environmentalism

According to Vandana Shiva, women have a special connection to the environment through their daily interactions and this connection has been ignored. She says that women in subsistence economies who produce "wealth in partnership with nature, have been experts in their own right of holistic and ecological knowledge of nature's processes". She makes the point that "these alternative modes of knowing, which are oriented to the social benefits and sustenance needs are not recognized by the capitalist reductionist paradigm, because it fails to perceive the interconnectedness of nature, or the connection of women's lives, work and knowledge with the creation of wealth''. Shiva blames this failure on the West's patriarchy, and the patriarchal idea of what development is. According to Shiva, patriarchy has labelled women, nature etc. as "unproductive"

According to Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary,(2010) Ecofeminism is defined as a ‘‘philosophical and political theory and movement which combines ecological concerns with feminist ones, regarding both as resulting from male domination of society". According to Webster's New World Encyclopaedia (2013), "Ecofeminism is a movement or theory that applies feminist principles and ideas to ecological issues."

4.12 ORIGIN OF THE CONCEPT OF ECOFEMINISM

The term "ecofeminism" is an intersection of two critical perspectives - ecology and feminism. It liberates political and social construction for those who abhor the designation of nature and women. The word 'ecology' derives from the biological science of natural environmental systems. It is a combined movement of socio-economic and biological study to examine how human use of nature is causing pollution of soil, air and water, and destructions of the natural systems which threatens the base of life. Feminism - a complex movement with multiple layers centralizes on full inclusion of women in both political and economic field against patriarchy, exploitation, oppression and violence against women.

The term ecofeminism was first coined by the French feminist Francois d'Eaubonne (1974). However during the 1970s there was not a coherent body of ecofeminist theory. Instead there were differing accounts that wove together a perceived interconnection between the domination of women and nature. For example, Rosemary Radford Ruether's *New Woman, New Earth- Sexist Ideologies and Human Liberation (1975),* Susan Griffin's *Women and Nature - The Roaring Inside Her (1978)* and Carolyn Merchant's, *The Death of Nature - Women, Ecology and the Scientific Revolution (1980).* However, they all provide important historical evidence for the Western association of women with nature. *Mary Daly's Gyn/Ecology (1979)* is sometimes framed this way also, and although D'Eaubonne influences her choice of title, this is not strictly speaking an ecofeminist text. In an activist context, the women's movement during the 1970s was clearly intertwined with a peace and environmental movement. Ecofeminism as an academic discourse did not develop until the mid to late 1980s The diversity of ecofeminism is illustrated by its geographical spread, having a significant academic and activist presence in the US, Canada, Northwest Europe, India and Australia.

Types of Eco-Feminism

There are two main types of Eco-Feminism. They are as follows:

a. Cultural Eco-Feminism

b. Constructive Eco-Feminism

The concept of cultural Eco-Feminism entairs the following:

- Women have an essential and distinctive connection to nature that men do not have.
- Women should recognize and celebrate these unique qualities, and we need a culture based on them.
- The earth is inherently feminine:

The concept of constructive Eco-Feminism can be comprehended as:

- The link between women and nature as a social construction.
- Culture has inculcated the "feminine" qualities in women and the "masculine" qualities in men.
- In many cases the socially constructed feminine qualities are superior to masculinism.

4.13 THEORISTS OF ECO-FEMINISM

The following account highlists some of the significant eco-teminist theories and their contributions to this field.

Judi Bari - Bari was a member of the Earth First movement and says she was targeted due to her womanhood.

Françoise d'Eaubonne - Called upon women to lead an ecological revolution in order to save the planet. This entailed revolutionizing gender relations and human relations with the natural world.

Greta Gaard - Greta Gaard is an American ecofeminist scholar and activist. Her major contributions to the field are the ideas of queer theory, vegetarianism, and animal liberation. Her major theories include ecocriticism which works to include literary criticism and composition to inform ecofeminism and other feminist theories to address wider range of social issues within ecofeminism. She is an ecological activist and leader in the U.S. Green Party, and the Green Movement.

Sallie McFague - A prominent ecofeminist theologian, McFague uses the metaphor of God's body to represent the universe at large. This metaphor values inclusive, mutualistic and interdependent relations amongst all things.

Carolyn Merchant - Merchant is historian of science who taught at Berkeley for many years. Her book The Death of Nature: Women, Ecology and the Scientific Revolution is a classic ecofeminist text.

Mary Mellor - Mellor is a UK based sociologist who moved to ecofeminist ideas from an interest in cooperatives. Her books - Breaking the Boundaries and Feminism and Ecology are grounded in a materialist analysis.

Maria Mies - Mies is a German social critic who has been involved in feminist work throughout Europe and India. She works particularly on the intersections of patriarchy, poverty, and the environment on a local and global scale.

Val Plumwood - Val Plumwood, formerly Val Routley, was an Australian ecofeminist intellectual and activist, who was prominent in the development of radical ecosophy from the early 1970s through the remainder of the 20th century. In her works "Feminism and the Mastery of Nature" she describes the relationship of mankind and the environment relating to an eco-feminist ideology.

Rosemary Radford Ruether - Ruether has written 36 books and over 600 articles exploring the intersections of feminism, theology, and creation care.

Ariel Salleh - Salleh is an Australian ecofeminist with a global perspective. Salleh is a founding editor of the journal *Capitalism Nature Socialism* and the author of two books and some 200 articles examining links with deep and social ecology, green politics and eco-socialism.

Vandana Shiva - Shiva is a physicist, author, activist, feminist and philosopher from India. She was a participant in the Chipko movement of the 1970s, which used non-violent activism to protest and prevent deforestation in the Garhwal Himalayas of Uttarakhand, India then in Uttar Pradesh.

Charlene Spretnak - Spretnak is an American writer largely known for her writing on ecology, politics and spirituality. Through these writings Spretnak has become a prominent ecofeminist. She has written many books which discuss ecological issues in terms of effects with social criticisms, including feminism. Spretnak's works had a major influence in the development of the Green Party. She has also won awards based on her visions on ecology and social issues as well as feminist thinking.

Starhawk - An American writer and activist, Starhawk is known for her work in spiritualism and ecofeminism. She advocates for social justice in issues surrounding nature and spirit. These social justice issues fall under the scope of feminism and ecofeminism. She believes in fighting oppression through intersectionality and the importance of spirituality, eco consciousness and sexual and gender liberation.

Douglas Vakoch - Vakoch is an American Eco critic whose. Some of Vakoch's works include *Ecofeminism and Rhetoric: Critical Perspectives on Sex, Technology, and Discourse* (2011), *Feminist Ecocriticism: Environment, Women, and Literature* (2012), and (with Sam Mickey) *Ecofeminism in Dialogue* (2018), *Literature and Ecofeminism: Intersectional and International Voices* (2018), and *Women and Nature, Beyond Dualism in Gender, Body, and Environment* (2018).

4.14 MOVEMENT OF ECO-FEMINISM

Ecofeminism which developed from the global feminist movement both have been affected by each other. Rachel Carson, an American marine-biologist, in one of her most famous books, *'Silent Spring'* (1962), aroused a heart-touching voice of conscience in protest against the pollution and degradation of nature. Carson's book sowed the seeds of the modern ecology movement that culminated in the nationwide Earth Day of 1970. A French feminist Francoise d'Eabonne has been credited with coining the word 'Ecofeminism' in 1974 in her book *"Feminism or Death"*(1980). Her book has in fact become a wake-up call for all women to lead an ecological revolution to save the planet Earth. Ecofeminism is a culmination of various social movements, for instance, the Feminist, Peace and the Ecology movements in the 1970s and 80s. The meltdown at Three-Mile Island in Pennsylvania, where large amount of radiation were released from the nuclear power plant, forced large number of women in the US to join together in the first ecofeminist conference - "Women and Life on Earth, a conference on ecofeminism in the 80s" in March 1980 at Amherst, Massachusetts. Ynestra King, a feminist theorist who was one of the organizers of the conference wrote: "Ecofeminism is about connectedness and wholeness of theory and practice. It asserts the spatial strength and integrity of every living thing. For us, the snail-darter is to be considered side by side with a community's need for water, the porpoise side by side with appetite for tuna and the creatures it may fall on with Skylab. We are a woman- identified movement, and we believe we have a special work to do in these imperil times. We see the devastation of the art and her beings by the corporate warriors, and the threat of nuclear annihilation by the military warriors, as feminist concerns. It is the same masculinist mentality, which would deny us our right to our own bodies and own sexuality, and which depends on multiple systems of dominance and state power to have its way." (King 1983: 10) Women thus became aware of the connectedness between patriarchal violence against women and nature. The Chipko movement in 1973 began in defense of the Himalayan forest and of the subsistence-

based economy pursued by women in harmony with nature. A noted Kenyan eco-feminist, recipient of Nobel Peace Prize in 2004, Wangari Maathai in 1977 set up the Green Belt Movement, a non- governmental organization in Kenya which focused to promote a positive image of women and their independence. It encouraged women to plant trees in order to combat deforestation and environmental degradation. However between 1980 and 1981, two important events made the movement popular on an international level: In Washington, about 2000 women protested against nuclear power in 1980 and in 1981 there was another protest held at the Greenham Common Missile base in England. One would never forget the incident on the night of 2nd and 3rd December, 1984, marked by the leakage of 40 tons of toxic gas from Union Carbide pesticides planned in Bhopal India, where women have been mostly affected. This was one of the world's worst industrial disasters. The Chernobyl disaster in 1986 provoked a spontaneous expression of women's outrage and resistance against these nuclear technologies and experiments. Thus, Carolyn Merchant in *'Earthcare: Women and the Environment* (1995)' writes that: "There is no simple relationship between the ways in which nature has been gendered both positively and negatively as female over the past two and a half millennia, and the roles of women in society. Nature has been revered as animate mother, feared and degraded an unpredictable witch, and plowed as virgin land. Yet forces such as the socialization of women and care takers nurturers, the degradation of women's livelihood and bodies, and the double burden borne by women as workers and homemakers in capitalist, socialist, and colonized countries have often propelled them to act to preserve both non-human nature and themselves (Merchant 1995:1). Nobel Laureate Svetlana Alexievich's *"Voices from Chernobyl: The Oral History of a Nuclear Disaster"* (1997), is considered to be the first book to furnish personal accounts of the tragedy from the affected people which reveals fear anger and uncertainty.

4.15 CRITIQUES OF ECO-FEMINISM

Various feminists have augmented their critique of domination on the basis of sex to include domination of nature as well. Francoise d' Eaubonne who envisioned the world 'eco-feminism' to describe this more holistic understanding of liberation, argued in 1974 that when the fate of the human species and of the living planet is at stake, "no male led revolution will counteract the horrors of overpopulation and destruction of natural resources" (Daly 1978: 9). For ecofeminism the central category of analysis is "nature", particularly the interrelated dominations of nature and of women. Though it is not a religious movement per se, it is interesting that Ecofeminists often quote the thought of a theologian, Rosemary Ruether, as foundation for their own: "Women must see that there can be no liberation for them and no solution to the ecological crisis within a society whose fundamental model of relationships continues to be one of domination. They must unite the demands of the women's movement with those of the ecological movement to envision a radical reshaping of the basic socio-economic relations and the underlying values of this society" (Ruether 1975: 204). Feminist scholars like Janet Biehl, Meera Nanda, Bina Agarwal, Cecile Jackson pointed out, this ecofeminist perspective is "ethnocentric, essentialist, blind to class, ethnicity and other differentiating cleavages, ahistorical and neglects the material sphere". Ecofeminist literature reveals the historical exploitation and domination of women and nature as victims in the name of development. It is however understood that any harm to nature harms women equally, as women are closer to nature. Moreover, none of the ecofeminist literature attempts to establish this connection through concrete evidence. It establishes the domination of women and nature mainly in ideology, thereby neglecting the "interrelated material sources of dominance based on economic advantage and political power" (Agarwal 1992:122) as well as the gender division of labour and distribution of opportunity. "The use of metaphors of women as 'nurturing'- like the earth, and of the earth as female abound are regressive rather than liberating women" (Biehl 1991:17). Moreover these arguments seem to overlook those

concepts of nature; culture and gender are ‘‘historically and socially constructed and vary across and within cultures and time periods’’ (Agarwal 1992: 123). This essentialism thus reveals women as an identical class both within countries and across nations. It "fails to differentiate among women by class, race, ethnicity and so on" (Agarwal 1992: 122). Few Ecofeminists disagree regarding the nature of the connections between women and nature and whether such connections are potentially liberating or reinforcing of the inferior or subordinate position of women. Here, Ecofeminists are conscious that the "standpoint consciousness" which categorizes feminist theory- liberal, radical or socialist- will also affect one's position concerning the domination of nature/woman. (Warren1987:9) Liberal feminism called "equal rights" feminism, "idealizes a society in which autonomous individuals are provided maximal freedom to pursue their own interests" (Warren 1987: 8). The liberation of women necessitated the annihilation of those legal and social constraints that prevent women from applying their right of self-determination. Though such questioning of "natural" roles or destinies has worked for women and other dehumanized peoples, Ynestra King argues that liberal feminism, with its individualist, rationalist, utilitarian bias, is the least able appropriately to address ecology, because it is by and large a white middle-class movement, concerned with the expansion of male power and privilege to women like themselves, not the fate of women as a whole (King 1983: 119).

In short, with regard to the connection between nature and women, liberal feminism's position involves rationalization and the ultimate is the domination of nature. However Marxist feminism point out how the economic system and the sex/gender system are reinforced in historically specific ways. Differences between men and women are social-constructions, not biologically given. Capitalism is result of patriarchy; women's liberation requires the end of both.The main problem for Ecofeminists is that while "socialist feminists have articulated a strong economic and class analysis they have not sufficiently addressed the domination of nature. Socialist feminists have addressed domination between persons, but they have not

seriously attended to the domination of either non-human nature or inner nature" (King 1983:128).Despite these limitations, the Ecofeminists working within the socialist fabric have much a lot of potential in considering the association or bond between gender and environment, consequently promoting an organic, holistic and inclusive perception of reality.



4.16 LET US SUM UP

- Sustainable Development allows the basic needs of present and future generations to be fulfilled with regard to demographic constraints, such as: access to water, education, health, employment, and the fight against hunger or malnutrition.

- Another feature of sustainable development is to improve quality of life, which involves easier access to medical care, social services, culture, and therefore also social well-being.In addition, respect for rights and freedoms and the promotion of new forms of renewable energy such as wind, solar, and geothermal power, are important requirements of sustainable development.

- The four major dimensions to sustainable development are: Culture, Society, Environment, Economy.

- Sustainable development is facing several challenges in present times, which include - poverty, population growth etc.

- The concept of Eco-Feminism highlights the intersectionality of ecology and feminism.

- Two major types of Eco-feminism are Cultural and Constructure Eco-feminism.



4.17 FURTHER READING

1) Karen J Warren, *Eco Feminist Philosophy,* Rowman &Littlefield Publisher, United State of America, 2000

2) Karen J Warren, *Eco Feminism Women Culture Nature,* Indiana University Press Pub. 1997

3) Mary Mellor, *Feminism & Ecology,* NYU Pub. 1997

4) Dutta Amitav Krishna (2014) *Pathways to Economic Development,* OxfordUniversity Press.

4.18 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q No. 1: The term "Sustainable Development" came into existence in the year 1980.

Ans to Q No. 2: In November 2010, the 4th Dimension of Sustainable Development was incorporated.

Ans to Q No. 3: GNP stands for Gross National Product

Ans to Q No. 4: UNFCCC Stands for United Nation Framework Convention on Climate Change

4.19MODEL QUESTIONS

A) Short Questions (Answer each question in about 150 words)

Q 1: Who initiated the Chipko Movement?

Q 2: Who set up the Green Belt Movement? When?

Q 3: When did the Earth Summit take place?

B) Long Questions (Answer each question in about 300-500 words)

Q 1: Make a critical analysis of Eco-Feminism.

Q 2: Discuss the challenges to Sustainable Development.

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