

“Life is short. Focus on what really matters most. You have to change your priorities over time.” Roy T. Bennett

NATIONAL

CENTRE TO START MEASURING 'GREEN GDP' OF STATES

India's environmental diversity and riches are universally recognized but have never been quantified.

Starting this year, the government will begin a five-year exercise to compute district-level data of the country's environmental wealth.

The numbers will eventually be used to calculate every State's 'green' Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

The metric will help with a range of policy decisions, such as compensation to be paid during land acquisition, calculation of funds required for climate mitigation, and so on.

This is the first time such a national environment survey is being undertaken.

A pilot project is set to begin this September in 54 districts.

These will capture the diversity in the State's geography, farmland, wildlife, and emissions pattern, and will be used to compute a value.

For instance, there's a no-go zone, we need to calculate what its economic impact.

Much of the data required for the inventory would be sourced from datasets that already exist with other government ministries.

Launching “Green Skilling Programme”:

The government has also launched a 'green skilling' programme under which youth, particularly school dropouts, would be trained in a range of 'green jobs'— as operators of scientific instruments used to measure environmental quality, as field staff in nature parks, and as tourist guides.

Some of the labour required for the survey would also be sourced from the green-skilled workforce.

Green GDP:

Green GDP is a term used for expressing GDP after adjusting for environment degradations.

Green GDP is an attempt to measure the growth of an economy by subtracting the costs of environmental damages and ecological degradations from the GDP

The concept was first initiated through a System of National Accounts.

The System of National Accounts (SNA) is an accounting framework for measuring the economic activities of production, consumption and accumulation of wealth in an economy during a period of time.

When information on economy's use of the natural environment is integrated into the system of national accounts, it becomes green national accounts or environmental accounting.

The process of environmental accounting involves three steps viz. Physical accounting; Monetary valuation; and integration with national Income/wealth Accounts:

Physical accounting determines the state of the resources, types, and extent (qualitative and quantitative) in spatial and temporal terms.

Monetary valuation is done to determine its tangible and intangible components.

Thereafter, the net change in natural resources in monetary terms is integrated into the Gross Domestic Product in order to reach the value of Green GDP.

RESOURCE EFFICIENCY CELL

MoEFCC and TERI have entered a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to set up a resource efficiency cell in the Ministry.

The main objectives of the Cell are to provide a platform to mainstream resource efficiency in public policy.

It aims to achieve this through coordinated thinking among the various relevant Ministries and agencies for promoting resource efficiency in the use of materials in the country.

It also aims to ensure a 'systems' thinking based on materials, products and processes, apart from enabling the preparation of an overarching resource efficiency policy for India and coordinated sectoral policies and regulatory mechanisms.

Strategy on Resource Efficiency:

NITI Aayog in collaboration with the European Union delegation to India has released the Strategy on Resource Efficiency. The strategy aims to promote resource efficiency in India.

This strategy is the first policy document to emphasize resource productivity in the country. The Strategy emphasizes on Sustainable Public Procurement (SSP) as an action agenda which will be the market transformation tool to transform to a resource efficient economy.

It is developed with the recommendations from the Indian Resource Efficiency Programme (IREP), launched by the Indian Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change (MoEFCC) and Indian Resource Panel (InRP) in April 2017.

India's large population, rapid urbanization and expanding industrial production have led to exploitation of available limited natural resources with concerns regarding resource depletion and future availability becoming more pronounced. Ensuring resource security requires an integrated, concerted and collaborative approach in order to fulfill the needs of a vast and growing population. Also, the environmental burdens emanating due to resource extraction, utilization and disposal, including land degradation, biodiversity loss, as well as air and water pollution remain of great concern. Enhancing resource efficiency (RE) and promoting the use of secondary raw materials (SRM) is a pertinent strategy to address these challenges and reduce dependence on primary resource.

INDECENT REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN (PROHIBITION) ACT (IRWA)

Based on the observations made by Parliamentary Standing Committee and recommendation made by the National Commission for Women on the basis of

consultation with civil society groups and likeminded individuals, WCD has proposed amendments in IRWA keeping in mind the recent technological advancement in the field of communications such as social media platforms, over the top services etc.

Amendment in definition of term advertisement to include digital form or electronic form or hoardings, or through SMS, MMS etc.

Amendment in definition of distribution to include publication, license or uploading using computer resource, or communication device or in.

Insertion of a new definition to define the term publish.

Amendment in section 4 to include that No person shall publish or distribute or cause to be published or cause to be distributed by any means any material which contains indecent representation of women in any form:

Penalty similar to that provided under the Information Technology Act, 2000.

Creation of a Centralised Authority under the aegis of National Commission of Women (NCW). This Authority will be headed by Member Secretary, NCW, having representatives from Advertising Standards Council of India, Press Council of India, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting and one member having experience of working on women issues.

This Centralized Authority will be authorized to receive complaints or grievances regarding any programme or advertisement broadcasted or publication and investigate/examine all matters relating to the indecent representation of women.

Reforms have been proposed keeping in mind the recent technological advancements. The need was felt to widen the scope of the law so as to cover such forms of media on one hand and to strengthen the existing safeguards to prevent indecent representation of women through any media form on the other.
