

# ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY



Don Bosco **SukhAlok Nisarg**  
*Care Towards Beautiful Nature*



**BSK**

*Touching Lives for Better Future*

## **BOSCO SEVA KENDRA**

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## 1. ABOUT US

BSK is the official organization for Social Concerns and Development. It is a voluntary, non-profit, non-political organization established in the year 1993. It has always been a trend setter in the field of Development in Andhra Pradesh, Telangana and Orissa. BSK also exists for the development of Salesians Institutions within the Province and the implementing partners by engaging with benefactors. The organization exists to advance the development of institutions that provides vital social services to those who lack access to good education, after school programs, community programs, safe houses for girls and women, healthcare and skill training programs. The values of charity, upholding the dignity of the human person.

As per the changing socio-cultural, economic and political scenario of the States of Andhra, Telangana, Orissa and the world at large, BSK and its partners have changed as per the signs of the times without deviating from its Vision and Mission to focus on the empowerment of the poor and the most marginalized, and restore to them their human dignity.

BSK with its 32 member organizations renders various kinds of services for the underprivileged people in the districts of Andhra and Telangana and to many others indirectly on the basis of no caste, creed, gender and religious with a clear option for the most marginalization, to help them claim their rights through various programs.

## 2. CONTEXT

Environment mainly consists of atmosphere, hydrosphere, lithosphere and biosphere. But it can be roughly divided into two types such as Micro environment and Macro environment. It can also be divided into two other types such as (c) Physical and (d) biotic environment.

Environment is a place where different things are such as a swampy or hot environment. It can be living (biotic) or non-living (abiotic) things. It includes physical, chemical and other natural forces. They constantly interact with it and adapt themselves to conditions in their environment. Land, water and biomass are the only sources of life and livelihood for a large proportion of people around the world. The world is blessed with rich and diverse natural resources but they are unequally distributed.

## 3. LIST OF SOME OF THE MOST SERIOUS ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES IN INDIA

- 3.1 **Air pollution:** Air pollution levels in the country have been rising to scary levels for the past few decades. As per a World Health Organisation survey released in June 2018, New Delhi and Kolkata are two of the most polluted cities in the country.
- 3.2 **Water Pollution:** As per the statistics released by Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), the number of polluted rivers in the country has risen from 121 to 275 in the last five years, with Maharashtra faring the worst among states in keeping its rivers clean.
- 3.3 **Noise Pollution:** Sound pollution has been consistently rising in Indian cities. Currently, Hyderabad, Chennai, Lucknow and Delhi are the noisiest cities because of reasons like population growth, overcrowding and traffic.
- 3.4 **Soil Pollution:** One of the kinds of pollution the country is reeling under soil pollution, thanks to reasons like careless disposal of chemical and menstrual waste and excessive use of pesticides.
- 3.5 **Land Denudation:** The rapid deforestation is leading to soil erosion and land being denuded when floods ravage areas located near rivers.

- 3.6 **Plastic use:** Despite the country's commitment to do away with single-use plastic this year, India needs to go miles ahead to curb usage of other forms of plastic like microplastic.
- 3.7 **Coastal zone management:** Rapid economic development in areas near coastlines have not only led to loss of habitat for marine life but also loss of livelihood for locals who are involved in fishing.
- 3.8 **Environmental governance:** The Centre needs to revamp its environmental governance tactics which are lying in indeterminate state due to slow pace of infrastructure development and fragmented policies.
- 3.9 **Climate Change:** The country is vulnerable to climate change due to combination of factors like high dependence of exhaustible energy resources, high population and rampant poverty.
- 3.10 **Man-animal conflicts:** Conflicts between predators like tigers, leopards and lions with locals living nearby have been rising over the last few years, often leading to man-animal conflicts.
- 3.11 **Dams:** Research shows that dams have disrupted the connectivity of rivers blocked sediment deposition and impeded breeding of fishes and other aquatic animals.
- 3.12 **Encroachment in coastal areas:** Tribal groups whose primary occupation is fishing are fast losing their livelihoods due to commercial activities in coastal areas. The influx of commercial fishing and fish trawlers for export has led to a rapid rise in conflicts involving strikes and violent clashes.
- 3.13 **Uncontrolled mining:** Government-backed support and easy policies led to a rapid rise in mining activities in post-Independence era in the country. Consequently, regions rich in minerals have witnessed environmental degradation and deforestation.
- 3.14 **Ecological restoration:** Over the years, the efforts on the part of the government to undo the damage done to the environment have been slow and tepid. On the other hand, voluntary organizations, on many occasions with the local populace, have organized drives for ecological restoration.
- 3.15 **Population:** With India's population inching closer to world's most populous nation, China, the country also needs to think about accommodating its citizens, both at present and in future. As a result, rapid urbanization has led to various environmental problems like deforestation and loss of habitat of animals.
- 3.16 **Hazards of chemical abuse:** Once used to increase yield of crops, the excessive use of pesticides has over the years caused substantial damage to the environment by hampering soil quality. Research suggests that over the last three decades, the average per hectare consumption of pesticides has increased by a wide margin.
- 3.17 **Greenhouse effect:** India is yet to adopt a stringent strategy to tackle rising emissions of greenhouse gases (GHG). Though it has a set of laws to bring down GHG emissions, but there is lack of effective implementation. A PBL Netherlands Environment Assessment Agency report, released in 2017, showed that in 2016 India's GHG emissions went up by 4.7%.
- 3.18 **Poaching:** Despite being illegal, poaching still thrives in India. Endangered animals continue being killed in India for their body parts which are in great demand in other countries for their use in medicine and resale value. The rapid extinction of animals also threatens to dislodge the ecological balance and adversely affect biodiversity.
- 3.19 **Lack of accountability:** India's regulatory framework for environment laws follows the 'polluter pays principle', which literally translates to strict punishment for the polluter and compensation for the one affected by the act. However, the framework is followed only on paper. As per the Environmental Performance Index—an index which ranks 180 countries based on 24 indicators—India ranked 177<sup>th</sup>.

- 3.20 Wildlife preservation:** India's efforts to preserve wildlife lag behind, with many animals on their way to extinction. Rapid urbanization, poaching, lack of government support are just some of the reasons to be blamed for the problem.
- 3.21 Lack of public participation:** A much ignored reason behind the failure of drives to spread awareness about environmental conservation in India is the lack of public participation.

There are many environmental issues in India. Air, water, garbage domestically prohibited goods and pollution of the natural environment are all challenges for India. Nature is also causing some drastic effects on India. The situation was worse between 1947 through 1995. According to data collection and environment assessment studies of experts, between 1995 through 2010, India has made some of the fastest progress in addressing its environmental issues and improving its environmental quality in the world. Still, India has a long way to go to reach environmental quality similar to those enjoyed in developed economies.

Environment plays a significant role in hale and hearty living and the survival of life on the earth. Earth is a home for different living species and we all are dependent on the environment for food, air, water, and other needs. Therefore, it is the soul responsibility for every individual to save and protect our environment.

#### 4. PURPOSE

- 4.1 BSK developed its Environment Policy in 2020 with its main focuses on protecting, preserving and conservation of natural resources like land, water and biomass, thus bringing about much-needed balance in the environment. This policy, along with the introduction of long-term action-oriented programmes, has helped in tackling environmental degradation through active participation of the focus communities.
- 4.2 There is a need to look at the vision of care for the environment embodied in Church teaching, which is intimately connected to human dignity and sustainable development.
- 4.3 BSK has the mandate to develop clear moral, rational and responsible perspectives, based on the Catholic Social Teachings. Catholic social teaching (CST) reminds of the shared duty to respect the common good rather than simply utilizing the earth's natural resources for self-serving ends. Shared responsibility, based on international and national consensus, is its primary principle.

BSK is committed to ethics-based and sustainable development. Towards this, a commonly understood Policy on Environmental Justice will establish on how environmental issues will be addressed in solidarity with focus communities and partners in the operational states of Andhra Pradesh, Telangana and Southern Odisha.

*The BSK Environmental policy document will serve as a guide of best practice in promoting environmental justice.*

#### 5. SCOPE

This Environmental policy applies to all aspects of environmental protection, which are relevant to the BSK its programmatic areas, geographical location of operations, focus communities, partners and associates. It will be a common guiding principle for understanding and practising the environmental spirit across organizational and at different programme levels. Overall responsibility for the implementation of this policy rests with the BSK Director, supported by senior management, staff, volunteers, partners and the governing body. It is the

responsibility of all managers to ensure environmental issues are considered as an integral part of the decision-making process when planning and implementing the work.

## **6. CATHOLIC CHURCH VISION OF ENVIRONMENTAL ETHICS**

The Catholic Church has elevated concerns about the growing threats to the environment and has encouraged everyone to actively participate in extending greater care for God's creation. In 1970, Blessed Paul VI urged "a radical change" in our approach towards the environment. In 1990, St. John Paul II called the ecological crisis a moral issue. Pope Emeritus Benedict reminded us that "the environment is God's gift to everyone, and in our use of it we have a responsibility towards the poor, towards future generations and towards humanity as a whole." In 2015, Pope Francis issued his encyclical *Laudato Si'* On Care for Our Common Home, specifically addressing climate change and emphasizing the "urgent need to develop policies so that, in the next few years, the emission of carbon dioxide and other highly polluting gases can be drastically reduced."

- 4.1 All efforts will be taken to reduce the impact of climate change and respect human life and dignity, especially that of the poorest and most vulnerable among us.
- 4.2 In accord with their human dignity, local communities - especially low-income residents whose voice is often not heard - should have a voice in shaping the efforts to reduce carbon emissions.
- 4.3 Workers should be supported in dealing with the negative effects on the workforce resulting from a shift away from fossil fuels by receiving assistance to mitigate impacts on their livelihoods and families.

## **7. BSK POLICY STATEMENT**

BSK policy is to carry out all activities in a manner that minimizes environmental impacts, conserves natural resources and are trying to make sincere efforts to save it from further degradation.

## **8. OBJECTIVES**

- a. Enhanced consciousness about environmental justice within BSK, among partners and in the focus communities.
- b. BSK needs to follow the principles of Environmental Justice in its programmes, organizational functioning and networking initiatives.
- c. Increasing and maintaining the environmental awareness of all employees with a view to integrating environmental considerations into operational among the partners and in the focus communities
- d. Promote participation of the community, especially the focus community, at various stages of the environmental justice decision-making process and development initiatives.
- e. Facilitate BSK partners in the formulation and/or improvements in their policies and programmes in promoting environmental justice.

## **9. STRATEGIES FOLLOWED**

### **9.1 Practice of Environmental management activities**

Promote environmental management activities to minimize waste and improve work efficiency in the project supported operational areas, schools, street children home and promoted by BSK. Promote resource use efficiency within organizational functioning, i.e. energy use, water use and management, waste minimization, recycling, use of renewable energy, environmentally

sensitive and ethical procurement systems, internal periodic environmental assessment with objectives and targets set up through our understanding of the impact of hazardous activities on the environment.

### **9.2 Continuous improvement and pollution prevention**

Promotion of continuous improvements in our environmental management system, hazardous chemical substance control and environmental management activities and we also continue green procurement as well as preventing environmental pollution.

### **9.3 Compliance with environmental- related laws and regulations**

Promote all environment-related laws and regulations and meet stakeholder's requirements regarding environmental issues through mutual agreements. Promote and support local environmental assessment of government programmes/schemes. Interface with government / private sector for environmental sensitization and for supporting projects on Environmental Justice.

### **9.4 Utilization of sustainable resources**

We promote educational programs to encourage employees to proactively commit themselves to preserving a sustainable environment and contribute to a recycling-oriented society by helping them recognize that their personal choices can bring about resource depletion and environmental pollution.

### **9.5 Mitigation of Climate Change and adaption to climate change**

We promote energy conservation, waste reduction and environmental preservation activities like crop plantation, installation of solar energy in schools, institutions and villages to help mitigate and adopt to climate change

## **10. CONCLUSION**

Over all the BSK environmental Policy will ensure a safe and healthy environment for future generations, we are stewards of god's creation and we must use our resources for the good of all, keeping in mind also our duty to future generations. Illegal mining, deforestation, some mega projects, pollution of water, air and land are destructive of ecology. The danger is that the future generations will be either left with nothing to live on or forced to live in an unhealthy, harmful environment. Thus, a correct and enlightened environmental policy and awareness creation will stir us to preserve and conserve the natural resources for the future generations, our own offspring.