Environment & Ecology · GS - II

“Policy contradictions among various competing sectors and stakeholders have resulted in inadequate ‘protection and prevention of degradation to environment.” Comment with relevant illustrations.

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
2018	GS - II	Environment & Ecology

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
10	~150 words

Answer Hint

Conflicting policy objectives; industrial development; environmental protection; interdepartmental coordination; ecological sustainability; environmental impact assessment; public participation; sustainable development

Model Answer

Introduction

Environmental degradation often results when economic, infrastructure and livelihood policies operate without adequate coordination with environmental objectives. Such contradictions weaken conservation and pollution-control efforts.

Examples of Policy Contradictions

1. **Mining and forest conservation:** Mineral extraction and infrastructure projects may conflict with forest protection, biodiversity conservation and the rights of forest-dependent communities.

2. **Agriculture and water security:** Subsidised electricity and water-intensive crops can encourage excessive groundwater extraction.
3. **Industrial growth and pollution control:** Relaxed enforcement or poorly planned industrial zones can increase air and water pollution.
4. **Urban development and wetlands:** Construction and road expansion can encroach on wetlands, floodplains and natural drainage channels.
5. **Energy and climate policy:** Dependence on fossil fuels may conflict with emissions-reduction objectives.
6. **Fisheries and coastal development:** Coastal infrastructure can damage mangroves, breeding grounds and livelihoods.

Measures to Address Contradictions

1. Integrate environmental considerations into sectoral planning and budgeting.
2. Strengthen scientific environmental impact assessments and cumulative impact studies.
3. Improve coordination among ministries, regulators and local governments.
4. Ensure transparent public consultations and compliance monitoring.
5. Apply the polluter-pays and precautionary principles, alongside incentives for cleaner technologies.

Conclusion

Economic development and environmental protection need not be mutually exclusive. Coherent policies, effective enforcement and ecological accounting can align sectoral growth with long-term sustainability.

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