

## **Impacts of Modern Life Style on Environmental Quality**

### **1. Life style**

The life style can be defined as habits, attitudes, tastes, moral standards, economic level, etc., that together constitute the mode of living of an individual or group.

The modern lifestyle has several advantages which includes easing people's life, saving hundreds of people's lives by the new development of medicine and vaccines. But modern lifestyle also led to too much pressure on Earth's resources.

**Simple example:** Petroleum products. Global warming also called as climate change is an outcome of modern lifestyle. The more modern you want to become the more waste you will produce.

### **2. Environmental quality**

Environmental quality is a set of properties and characteristics of the environment, either generalized or local, as they impinge on human beings and other organisms. It is a measure of the condition of an environment relative to the requirements of one or more species and or to any human need or purpose. The major forms of the environmental quality can be classified as follows:

- Air
- Water
- Forest
- Land

Environment quality has deteriorated due to uncontrolled mechanization, overuse of natural resources, deforestation and excessive use of pesticides and fertilizers in farms. Though, greener evolution has unshared in food self-sufficiency but has resulted in excessive use of harmful pesticides, insecticides and other chemicals for crop production. The extensive use of chemicals has caused contamination of environment. It is widely acknowledged that modern lifestyles and developmental models exceed earth's ability to support human beings and other organisms in terms

of providing clean and adequate natural resources. An important concept related to modern lifestyles and the resulting environmental degradation is that of the 'ecological footprint'.

### **2.1. Ecological footprint**

Ecological footprint is a measure of people's demand on natural ecosystems. It is a measure of the area of biologically productive-land and water an individual, population or activity needs to produce the resources it consumes and absorb the waste it generates using current technology and resource management practices.

## **3. Impacts of modern life on environmental quality**

### **3.1. Global warming**

Global warming is also an aftermath of modern lifestyle. The modern you want to become the more waste you will produce. Another important aspect of modern life style is changes in food habits, sedentary jobs, comfortable but stressful life and bad eating habits hazards like blood pressure, diabetes and obesity.

### **3.2. Climate change**

Climate change is a direct threat to living being's ability to survive, grow, and thrive. As extreme weather events such as cyclones and heat waves increase in frequency and ferocity, they threaten children's lives and destroy infrastructure critical to their well-being. Floods affect water and sanitation facilities, leading to diseases such as cholera.

### **3.3. Environmental degradation**

Environmental degradation is the deterioration of the environment through depletion of resources such as air, water and soil; destruction of ecosystems and extinction of wildlife. Increase in the sophistication of technology enabling natural resources to be degraded quickly and efficiently.

#### **3.3.1. Adverse effects of environmental degradation on health and productivity**

- Water pollution and scarcity contribute to poor household hygiene added health risks, aquifer depletion and limits on economics activity, contributing to millions of deaths yearly

- Excessive urban particulate matter responsible for 300 to 700 thousand premature deaths annually and for half of childhood chronic coughing.
- Smoky indoor air affects 400 to 700 million people, mostly rural areas.
- Air pollution from factories and vehicles affects forests and water through acid rain.
- Solid and hazardous wastes and polluted groundwater increases diseases.
- Soil degradation reduces nutrition for poor farmers on depleted soils and increases susceptibility to drought.
- Deforestation and flooding leads to death and diseases, increased erosion, & reduced carbon sequestration.
- Reduced biodiversity

### **3.4. Water and air pollution**

Water and air pollution are unfortunately the common causes of environmental degradation. Pollution introduces contaminants into the environment that can even kill the plants and animal species. The two often go hand in hand.

### **3.5. Acid rain**

Acid rain occurs when dioxides of nitrogen and sulfur from coal plant emissions combine with moisture present in the air. A chemical reaction creates this acid precipitations. Acid rain can acidify and pollutes lakes and streams. It causes similar effects to the soil. If enough acid rain falls in a given environment, it can acidify the water or soil to a point where no life can be sustained. Plants die off. The animals depend upon them disappear. The condition of the environment deteriorates.

### **3.6. Deforestation**

Deforestation is the clearance of forests by logging and or burning. Deforestation occurs for many reasons: trees or derived charcoal are used as, or a sold, for fuel or as a commodity, while cleared land is used as a pasture for livestock, plantations of commodities, and settlements. The removal of trees without enough reforestation has resulted in the damage to habitat, biodiversity loss and

aridity. It has adverse impacts on bio sequestration of atmospheric carbon dioxide. Deforested regions typically incur significant adverse soil erosion frequently degrade into wasteland.

### **3.7. Desertification**

Desertification is the degradation of land in arid and dry sub-humid areas due to various factors; including climatic variations and human activities. Desertification results chiefly from man-made activities. It is principally caused by overgrazing, over drafting of groundwater and diversion of water from rivers from human consumption and industrial use; all these processes are fundamentally driven by overpopulation. A major impact of desertification is reduced biodiversity and diminished productive capacity, for example, by transition from land dominated by shrub lands to non-native grassland.

### **3.8. Agriculture Runoff**

Farming creates agriculture runoff issues. Agricultural runoff is deadly sources of pollutants which can degrade environments, so much so that the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) identifies agriculture as the primary sources of water pollution.

Surface water washes over the soil and into lakes and streams. When it does so, it carries the fertilizers and pesticides used on the farm lands into water resources. Fertilizers containing large amounts of phosphorus can cause explosions of algae in lakes. As the algae die, bacteria start to breakdown the organic material. It soon develops a situation where bacteria are using up the available of dissolved oxygen in the water. Plants, fish, and other organisms begin to die off. The water becomes acidic. Like acid rain, lakes become dead zone with conditions so toxic that neither plants nor animals can live in these environments.

### **3.9. Urban development**

Urban development is one of the primary causes of environmental degradation. As populations increased, so did the need for land for homes and farms. Wetlands were drained.

**Table: Impacts of human lifestyle on environment with their respective Eras of Evolution**

Human evolution with time	Change in human's lifestyle with time	Impact on environment
Humans were mostly hunter gatherers	Hunting & food gathering	Biodiversity loss Deforestation
Agriculture revolution	*Settlement & agriculture development *Domestication of animals *Habitat development (urbanization)	Decrease the environment quality Loss of fertility Desertification
Industrial revolution	*Development of industrial process. *Mining & fossil fuel production.  * Increase the use of pesticides & chemical fertilizers.	Air pollution  Disturbed land: mining accident, health hazards, mine waste dumping, oil spills.  Pollution from pesticide sprays

#### 4. How to stop depletion

There are ways which you can help to decrease degradation in our environment. Some of these include:

- Purchase recycled products
- Conserve water and energy
- Do not litter to loss waste inappropriate place
- Join an awareness group
- Be an advocate to save our planet