

Forest Policy and Environment Policy of Bangladesh

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Forest Policy

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History of Forest Policy

- The first formal forest policy for the undivided India was promulgated in **1894**, which was the basic guidelines for the formulation of Acts and Rules, for the management of forests in the country and latest one in **1994**
- Prior to this **policy** "Charter of Indian Forests" was made in 1855 by the Government of British India for conserving forests in India including this tract, Bangladesh
- Prior to this **charter**, there were only scanty regulations regarding the felling of trees for revenue

Forest Policy 1894

The main feature of the 1894 policy

- State forests are to be administered for public benefit at large, through regulation of rights and privileges of the people near the forest
- Forests were categorized as
 - ❖ Hill forests/Protection forests
 - ❖ Economically important/Production forests
 - ❖ Minor forests
 - ❖ Pasture land
- Forests situated on hill slopes should be conserved to protect the cultivated plains situated downstream
- Valuable forests should be managed to yield state revenue

Forest Policy 1894

The main feature of the 1894 policy (Cont.)

- Land suitable for cultivation within the forests should be made available for cultivation, provided that such conservation does no harm and is permanent
- Local population should be allowed to exercise grazing rights in low yielding forests

Under this policy, agricultural cultivation was given a higher priority than forest conservation. However, the Forest Act of 1927 was promulgated under the 1894 forest policy.

Forest Policy 1955

The main feature of this 1955 policy

- Forestry should receive priority and increased allocations should be made available to increase forest cover
- Forests should be classified on the basis of their utility
- Intangible benefits of forest origin should be recognized
- All forests should be scientifically managed under an approved working plan (management plan)
- Timber and fuelwood supply may be enhanced through plantations along roads and canals
- Sound management of private forests should be ensured through govt. legislation and support
- Control of adverse land use and conserving soil

Forest Policy 1979

The main feature of this 1979 policy -

- Forests should be carefully preserved and scientifically managed
- Government forests should not be used for non-forestry purposes
- Timber resource should be increased by establishing large scale plantations
- Modern technologies should be employed for extraction and utilization of forest produce
- Forest based industries should be setup
- Research, education and training should be re-organized to meet the scientific, technological and administrative needs of the country
- A cadre of officers should be developed for managing the Forestry sector

Forest Policy 1979

The main feature this 1979 policy (Cont.)

- Forestry sector should be organized and relevant laws should be updated
- Steps should be taken to conserve forest and wildlife and utilize the recreational potentiality of the forestry sector
- Mass motivation should be initiated and technical assistance extended to those interested in forestry

Forest Policy 1994

Issues considered in formulating Forestry Policy, 1994

- Peoples welfare principles inscribed in the constitution of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
- Long term and specific roles of the forest sector in the overall socio-economic development of the country including the environment
- National policies for the development of agriculture, cottage industries and other sectors
- Decisions and recommendations taken in different international conferences and conventions

Forest Policy 1994

Forest Policy, 1994 has 3 parts -

- Pre-condition for the development of the forestry sector
- Objective of the National Forest Policy
- Statement of the National Forest Policy

Forest Policy 1994

Pre-condition for the development of the forestry sector

- The forestry sector provides several commodities and services which are essential for fulfillment of the basic needs of the people.
- Basic needs fulfillment will be ensured by providing timber for the construction of houses and boats, firewood for cooking, fodder for animal, medicinal herbs for healthcare and services for conservation of the environment and biodiversity
- Benefits of forestry sector development will be equitably distributed among the people, especially whose livelihood depends on trees and forests

Forest Policy 1994

Pre-condition for the development of the forestry sector

- Scope for the people's participation in afforestation programs required for the development of forestry sector will be created
- Long term political commitment of the government will be continued in the development of the forestry sector since afforestation is a long term program
- Attempts will be made to ensure the effective use and conservation of bio-ecology and biodiversity

Forest Policy 1994

Objective of the National Forest Policy

- To meet the basic needs of the present and future generations and also to ensure greater contribution of the forestry sector in the economic development, about 20% of the total area of the country will be afforested by taking up various afforestation programs.
- By creating employment opportunities, strengthening the rural and national economy, the scope for poverty alleviation and trees and forest based rural development sectors will be extended and consolidated
- Biodiversity of the existing degraded forests will be enriched by conserving the remaining natural habitat of birds and animals

Forest Policy 1994

Objective of the National Forest Policy

- Agricultural sector will be strengthened by extending assistance to the sectors related with forest development
- National responsibilities and commitments will be fulfilled by implementing various international efforts and government ratified agreements relating to global warming, decertification and control of trade and commerce of wild birds and animals,
- Through the participation of the local people, illegal occupation of the forest lands, illegal tree felling and hunting of the wild animals will be prevented
- Effective use and utilization of the forest goods at various stages of processing will be encouraged
- Implementation of the afforestation programs - on both public and private lands will be provided with encouragement and assistance

Forest Policy 1994

Statements (29) of the National Forest Policy Major statements are depicted -

- Attempts will be made to bring about 20% of the country's land under the afforestation programs of the government and private sector by year 2015
- Because of limited amount of forest land, effective measures will be taken for afforestation in rural areas, in the newly accreted char in the coastal areas and in the denuded Unclassed State Forest
- Private initiatives will be encouraged to implement programs of tree plantation and afforestation on fallow and hinter land, the banks of the ponds and homestead lands

Forest Policy 1994

Statements (29) of the National Forest Policy Major statements are depicted -

- Tree plantation on the courtyards of rural organization such as Union Parishad, school, eidgah, mosque-moktob, temple, club, orphanage home, madrassa
- Massive afforestation on either side of land surrounding road, rail, dam and khas tank through the partnership of the local people
- Protected area i.e. National Parks, Wildlife Sanctuaries and Game Reserves' area will be increased by 10 per cent of the reserved forest land by the year 2015
- Inaccessible areas such as slopes of the hills, fragile watersheds, swamps, etc. will be identified and kept as protected forests

Forest Policy 1994

Statements (29) of the National Forest Policy Major statements are depicted -

- Inaccessible areas such as slopes of the hills, fragile watersheds, swamps, etc. will be identified and kept as protected forests
- Women will be encouraged to participate in homestead and farm forestry, and participatory afforestation programs.
- Forest resource based labor intensive small and cottage scale industries will be encouraged in the rural areas.

Forest Policy 1994

Statements (29) of the National Forest Policy Major statements are depicted -

- Ecotourism, related to forest and wildlife, is recognized as forestry related activity, which will be promoted taking into consideration the carrying capacity of nature
- Forest department will be strengthened in order to achieve the goal and objectives of National Forestry Policy. A new department called "Department of Social Forestry" will be established.

Environment Policy

Forest Policy and Environment Policy of Bangladesh



Background of Environment Policy

- Initiatives for protection of environment in Bangladesh dates back to 1972 when United Nations Conference on Human Environment took place in Stockholm, Sweden.
- The conference brought leaders of the industrialized and developing nations to chart an Action Plan on Human Environment.
- Realization of various adverse impacts on environment as evident from water pollution, air pollution, soil degradation, depletion of forest resources, unplanned urbanization, discharge of untreated industrial effluents, etc. and deterioration of environment.

Background of Environment Policy (Cont.)

- Acknowledgement of the integrate linkage of poverty, population pressure, illiteracy, inadequate health care facility, lack of public awareness – have a serious impact on the environment.
- Acknowledgement of the need to address these situations in an integrated manner lead to the establishment of the Ministry of Environment and Forests in 1989 and felt the need for an well defined national environment policy.

Environment Policy 1992

- Bangladesh National Environment Policy approved in May 1992, sets out the basic framework for environmental action, together with a set of broad sectoral action guidelines.
- **Key elements of the Environment Policy are :**
 - ❖ Maintenance of the ecological balance and overall progress and development of the country through protection and improvement of the environment.
 - ❖ Protection of the country against natural disasters.

Environment Policy 1992 (Cont.)

- Identification and regulation of all types of activities which pollute and degrade the environment.
- Ensuring proper Environment Impact Assessment prior to undertaking of industrial and other development projects.
- Ensuring sustainable use of all natural resources.

Coverage of Environment Policy 1992

Environmental activities encompass all geographical regions and development sectors of the country. As such, policies towards realization of the overall objectives of this Environment Policy are delineated in 15 sectors. These are –

1. Agriculture
2. Industry
3. Health
4. Energy
5. Water Development, Flood Control and Irrigation
6. Land

Coverage of Environment Policy 1992 (Cont.)

7. Forest, Wild Life and Biodiversity
8. Fisheries and Livestock
9. Food
10. Coastal and Marine Environment
11. Communication and Transportation
12. Housing and urbanization
13. Population
14. Education and public Awareness
15. Science, Technology and Research

The policy recognizes that –

- Since global and regional environmental pollution and degradation affect the nature, environment and resource base of Bangladesh, it is essential to have coordinated vigilance and undertake necessary action programme to address such issues.
- It is necessary to undertake activities at local and national level. It is also feasible and essential to ensure improvement of national environment and thus global environment at large, as well as environmentally sound and sustainable use of resource through regional and global cooperation in relevant fields.

Legal Framework of Environment Policy

- The policy directs to amend all laws and regulations related to protection of environment, conservation of natural resources, and control of environmental pollution and degradation with a view to meet present day's needs without compromising the ability to meet future needs.
- Frame new laws in all sectors necessary to control activities concerning environmental pollution and degradation.

Legal Framework of Environment Policy (Cont.)

- Ensure proper implementation of all relevant laws/regulations and create wide spread public awareness in this regard.
- Ratify all concerned international laws/conventions/protocols which Bangladesh considers ratifiable and amend/modify existing national laws/regulations in line with the ratified international laws/conventions/protocols.

Environment Policy and Sustainable Development Linkages

- The ultimate objective of 'Environment Policy' is to ensure environmentally sound development in all sectors.
- Thus Environment policy is to provide the basic premise to define the goals of economic and social development in terms of sustainability in the respective sector and in overall national planning.

Environmental Legislation

- Environmental Conservation Act 1995 (With subsequent amendments)
- Environmental Conservation Rules 1997
- Environment Court Act 2000 (Amended in 2002)
- Ecological Critical Areas (ECA): (Seven)
 - ❖ Hakaluki Haor;
 - ❖ Teknaf Peninsula Beach;
 - ❖ St Martin Island;
 - ❖ Sonadia Island;
 - ❖ Tanguar Haor;
 - ❖ Marjat Baor;
 - ❖ Gulshan-Baridhara Lake

Thank You