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a) What is the importance of the report "Our Common Future" in the history of environmental movements? What common threats were identified in the report and what measures were suggested for the sustainability of the earth system?

1. INTRODUCTION: OUR COMMON FUTURE 1987:

In the current century, environment is the biggest threat to human. However, the threat is not some new discovery, but had been identified in 20th century. Our Common Future was the first report written on environment. The report discusses the damage industrial revolution has done to environment, the threats to environment and the measures to deal with it. The report is of vital importance in the history of environmental movements and sets the foundation for further efforts to conserve and protect environment.

2 - THE REPORT OUR COMMON FUTURE AND ITS IMPORTANCE:

i - BACKGROUND OF THE REPORT: WORLD COMMISSION 1983:

The report our

common future is the outcome of a commission set by Gro Harlem Brundtland. The commission was called "World Commission on Environment and Development" or "Brundtland Commission". The commission was set up in 1983.

a - main task of the commission of Brundtland:

The main task given to Brundtland was linking the environment and economic development because it was the economic development and industrial revolution that had caused severe damage to environment.

Economic development in 19th century = Environmental Degradation

b - Publication of the report "Our Common Future" 1987:

The commission was dissolved in 1987 with the publication of the report named "Our Common Future". The report is of vital importance and gives solution to the problems also.

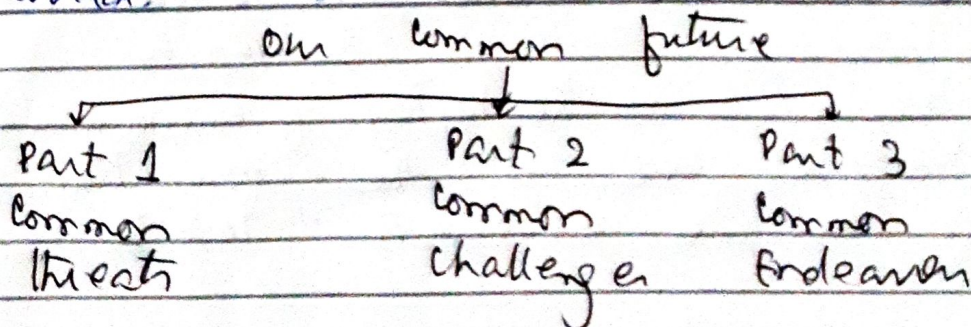
ii - IMPORTANCE OF THE REPORT OUR COMMON FUTURE:

a - FIRST REPORT ON THE PROBLEMS OF ENVIRONMENT:

Our common future is the first report published on the problems of environment. It discusses the problems and solution very comprehensively.

b - EMPHASIS ON COMMONNESS AND COLLECTIVE GOODS PROBLEM:

The report was published in 1987. It was the era of cold war and world was divided into two blocs. Arms manufacturing was at peak and environment was not taken into consideration. This book publication threw light on the fact that "environment is a collective goods problem. The name of the book suggests this. Moreover, the three parts of the book also suggest that environment is the problem of the whole world.



c- LINKS ENVIRONMENT, ECONOMY AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT: MODEL OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT.

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Another important element of the report is its emphasis on economic and social development with the conservation and protection of environment. It is the model of sustainable development. The report says:

• Economic development is unsustainable if it increases the vulnerability to environmental crisis.
Brundtland Report.

d- GIVES THE CONCEPT OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT:

As established earlier, the report emphasizes on sustainable development. It is the first report that gave the concept of sustainable development.

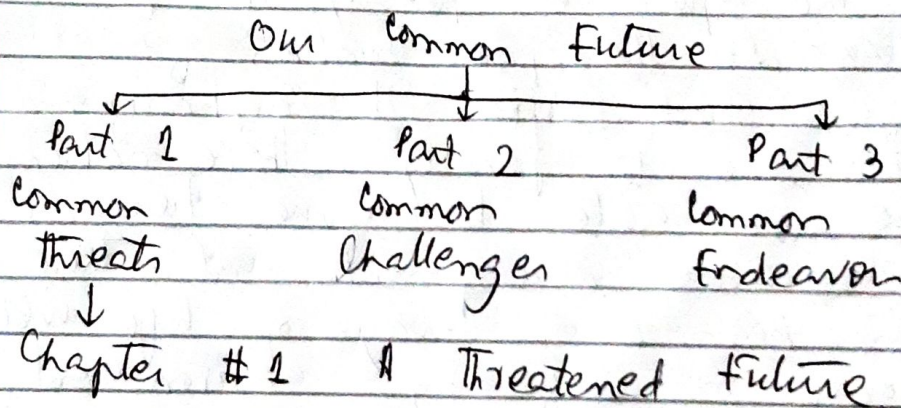
e- SET FOUNDATION FOR SUCCESSIVE ENVIRONMENTAL MOVEMENTS:

It was a landmark in the history of environmental movements and set the foundation for successive movements. It led to

many new efforts such as Earth Summit 1992, millennium development goals 2000 and Sustainable development Goals 2015.

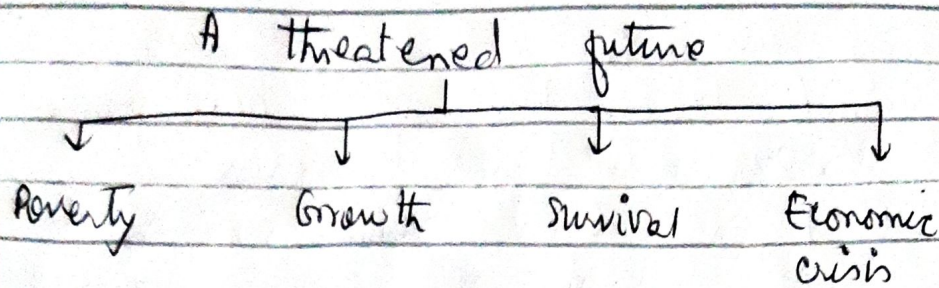
3 - THREATS IDENTIFIED IN THE REPORT "OUR COMMON FUTURE":

As established earlier, the report is divided into three parts in which part 1 discusses the common threats.



1 - CHAPTER # 1 OF THE REPORT A THREATENED FUTURE:

As the name suggest chapter 1 of the report discusses all the threats that the earth faces due to environmental degradation. Following are the threats discuss in this chapter.



Flowchart: Threats indicated in the report on our common future

a - POVERTY:

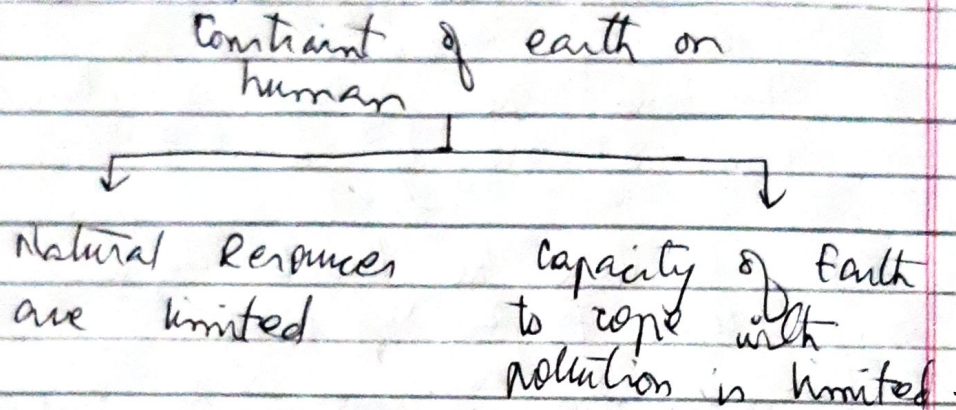
The first threat indicated by the report is poverty. It points towards the poor nations of Africa and Asia. It emphasizes that due to poverty these nations are not able to move towards sustainable development and their unsustainable ways of life will keep on degrading environment.

b - UNSUSTAINABLE GROWTH OF MANKIND AND EXPLOITATION OF NATURAL RESOURCES:

The growth pattern of the industrialized countries is not sustainable and exploitation of natural resources pose grave threat to humanity.

A - DUE TO EXPLOITATION OF RESOURCES THE SURVIVAL IS THREATENED:

A The book says that with the current practices of human the survival of humanity is threatened. The earth imposes two constraints on human.



Flowchart: Two constraints imposed by earth on human.

The report says that due to negligence of mankind, the earth is very close to the threshold of all its systems. We are close to running out of natural resources such as oil, gas, and petroleum etc and the capacity of earth to cope with the pollution of all kind is also consumed. These things pose grave threat to the survival of humanity.

d- ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION LEADS TO ECONOMIC CRISIS:

The environmental degradation, due to negligence of human world eventually lead to economic crisis. Natural resources are being exploited and environmental degradation erodes the potential of economic development of threaten the future of humanity in terms of economy also

Here all were the threats discussed in Brundtland Report of 1987.

4 - MEASURES SUGGESTED BY THE REPORT OUR COMMON FUTURE FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

To deal with the problems and neutralize the threat, the report suggest measures also. Second chapter of the book Towards Sustainable development discusses the solution

Part 1 : Common threats

A threatened future
(Chapter #1)

Towards sustainable development
(Chapter #2)

The measures to prevent the environmental crisis and go to sustainable development are as follows.

i - REVIVING GROWTH IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES:

The report emphasized very much on the growth of developing countries for there are the rising economies. Developing countries are rising their economies at the cost of environment and their development is not sustainable. Therefore, their growth must be revived.

ii - CHANGING THE QUALITY OF GROWTH: GROWTH SHOULD BE SUSTAINABLE:

The report suggests that there should be a change in the quality of growth. It suggests that the sustainable development necessitates less material and energy intensive growth.

iii - ESSENTIAL HUMAN NEEDS MUST BE PRIORITISED AND MUST BE MET:

This part of the report hints towards equity. It says that for

Sustainable development essential human needs must be met it includes food, water, sanitation, education, energy etc. Sustainable Development Goals 2015 are a step towards this aim of the report.

iv - ENSURING A SUSTAINABLE GROWTH RATE OF POPULATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: DEMAND AND SUPPLY:

To ensure sustainable development, the demand and supply system of the earth must be taken into account. A sustainable growth rate of population must be maintained.

v - CONSERVING AND ENHANCING THE RESOURCE BASE i.e., EARTH:

To ensure sustainable development the resource base i.e., earth must be conserved. Agricultural land, water resources, forest, fuel and biodiversity must be conserved and enhanced.

vi - REORIENTATION OF TECHNOLOGY AND MANAGING RISKS:

Technology is the key to progress of mankind. To protect environment and go towards

sustainable development, the technology must be reoriented and environment should be taken into account.

VII - MERGING ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMICS IN DECISION MAKING:

Sustainable development is not possible until environment is mainstreamed with economics in decision making. Therefore, to protect environment, the two domains must be merged in decision making at international, national and local level.

5- CONCLUSION:

In a nutshell, Our common future is the foundation of all the environmental program that one witnesses today. It gave the concept of sustainable development that is the agenda of global leaders of this century. It identified the threats and gave solutions to the problems. It is the first ever report that discusses the problems of environment and development and sets a way for the future of global leaders.