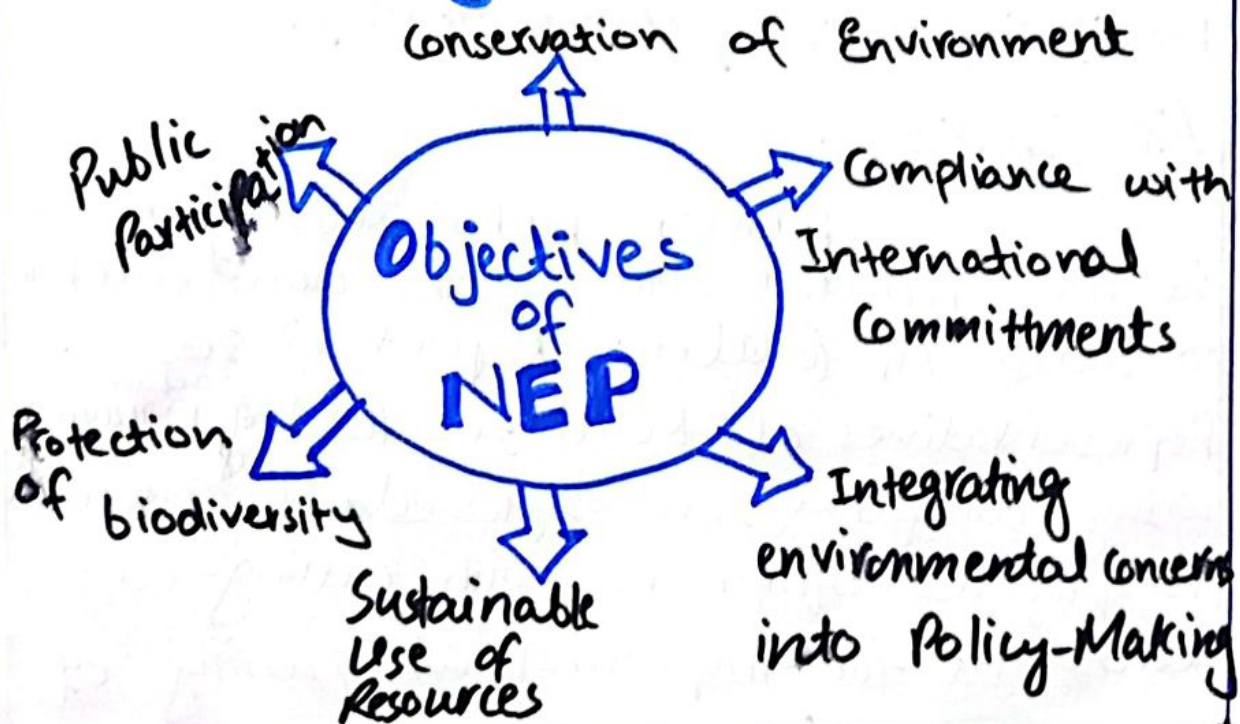


Discuss National Environmental Policy in detail.

National Environmental Policy (NEP) of Pakistan

NEP was adopted in 2005 in response to environmental concerns and challenges facing Pakistan. Pakistan is suffering from air pollution, water pollution, land pollution, deforestation and biodiversity loss, all exacerbated due to climate change. NEP reflects Pakistan's commitment to sustainable development and is aimed at integrating Pakistan's environmental considerations into its development processes.

Objectives of National Environmental Policy



Key Areas of Focus

National Environmental Policy (NEP) addresses broader areas of environment like biodiversity, marine ecosystems, wildlife, agriculture etc.

→ Water Management:

NEP focusses on water management and government of Pakistan is taking initiatives to counter water pollution and problem of scarcity of clean drinking water. In Pakistan, 80% of population lacks clean drinking water but ministry of climate change, Pakistan has collaborated with **KOICA** and **UNOPS** to resolve this problem. A 'Water Quality Monitoring project' has been launched for benefitting over 62 million people of Punjab, KP and Islamabad (**UNOPS, Water Quality Monitoring Project, March 2024**).

→ Air Quality:

Pakistan ranked second among the most polluted cities of the world, according to World Air Quality Report of 2023. Representatives of KUN, a leading ^{machinery} manufacturing company, has expressed its intention to provide equipment with cutting-edge technology for improving air quality of

of Punjab. Moreover, in order to address the key area of focus of NEP loan facility is also being provided to private sectors at 7% markup for importing environment friendly technology to improve air quality (DAWN, Improving Air Quality in Pakistan, March 2024).

→ Waste Management:

Pakistan is a dumping ground for post-textile wastes. In 2021, European Union exported \$46 million of used clothing to Pakistan. Under NEP government is taking initiatives to utilize country's potential to recycle this waste. Recently, Textile waste management specialist ^{Reverse} Resources (RR) has collaborated with National Textile University to transform the country's textile-to-textile recycling landscape for solid waste management (Alexandra Harrel, Recycling Project in Pakistan, April 2024).

→ Biodiversity Conservation:

This area of NEP focusses on the conservation of wildlife. In an initiative for biodiversity conservation, the Sindh Forest

and wildlife department has declared ^{valued} **Gughar** the most medically medicinal plant - as protected. The action was taken in the light of Sindh High Court's decision to impose ban on mining and excavation activities of Narparkar's Karoonjar Hills (BBC, Conservation of biodiversity, Jan 2024).

→ Climate Change and Energy Efficiency:

Under NEP, a project is launched by UNEP and Pakistan's National Energy Efficiency and Conservation Authority for making transition from power-hungry lighting products to energy efficient lighting products for ^{saving} energy ^{worth} of three power plants. This step has been taken to reduce planet-warming green-house gas emissions (Tribune, National Energy Plan, 2023).

→ Sustainable Agriculture:

Another key area of NEP is sustainable agriculture. The government is taking steps for promoting sustainable agriculture practices. In the past, Pakistan has teamed up with International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to use nuclear energy for responsible agriculture practices. Moreover, recently HBL Zaria

services seek to promote sustainable agriculture growth for ensuring long-term viability of farming community and natural resources.

→ Marine Ecosystems:

The government of Pakistan is focusing on conserving marine ecosystems as part of initiative of NEP. Recently, Pepsico Pakistan has tied up with WWF-Pakistan to launch coastal 'Clean-up Project' at Karachi Fish Harbor.

This project is aimed to gather and manage waste at coastal line of Karachi through a concerted effort for ensuring sustainable coastal development (Dawn, Clean-Up Project in Karachi, July 2023).

Challenges for ^{Successful} Implementation of National Environmental Policy

→ Weakness of Environmental Institutions of Pakistan:

Pakistan has all environmental institutions for implementation of policies but it is weakness of all environmental institutions of Pakistan due to which it is **5th most vulnerable** country to climate change.

Another evidence that shows weakness of all such institutions of the country is that Pakistan has **second highest rate of deforestation in Asia** (Global Forest Watch, Deforestation in Pakistan, 2023). Thus, weakness of environmental institutions is a challenge for successful implementation of NEP.

→ Poor Governance Structure:

Another challenge for successful implementation of NEP is poor governance structure of Pakistan. The weakness of governance structure of Pakistan is evident from this startling fact that after 2022 floods, Pakistan's poverty increased upto **39.4% in 2023 from 34.2% in 2022** due to lack of proper Disaster Risk Management (DRM) facilities in the country (World Bank, Poverty in Pakistan, 2023).

Moreover, the government failed to take efficient steps for strengthening agriculture sector after 2022 floods. Due to this, prized mango crop faced reduction by 20% in 2023 (Tribune, Decrease in Mango Production, June 2023).

→ Financial Constraints:

Pakistan also suffers from numerous financial constraints that occludes successful implementation of NEP. But the government is trying to collaborate with other economic powers to promote sustainable development in Pakistan in by (providing) acquiring economic assistance from such developed economies. For instance notable progress has been made on Karot Hydropower Project, which includes biodiversity management plan, due to financial assistance of China under CPEC green policies.

Concluding Thoughts

NEP is a significant step of Pakistan towards (sig) sustainable development. Although Pakistan has main issues that obstruct successful implementation of National Environmental Policy (NEP) but still government and other environmental institutions are taking steps to conserve environment of Pakistan in order to ensure successful implementation of NEP.