

# ① Environmental Science:

Q: What is the Importance of the Report "Our Common Future" in the history of Environmental Movement? What common threats were identified in the report and what measures were suggested for the sustainability of the earth system?

## Introduction:

"Our Common Future", also known as Brundtland Report, was published in 1987 by the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) chaired by "Gro Harlem Brundtland". This essential report document in the history of the environmental movement as it introduced and popularized the concept of sustainable development, defined as "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs". The report describes the interconnectedness of economic growth, environmental stewardship and social equity, urging global action to address environmental challenges through sustainable practices.



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"Consume Responsibly For our Planet.  
Our Common Future depends on it."

## Importance of "Our Common Future" in the Environmental Movement :

### 1. Introduction of Sustainable Development :

The report famously defined sustainable development as "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" -

Brundtland Report (1987). This concept became the foundation for environmental policies and strategies worldwide, influencing both national and international agendas.

### 2. Integration of Environment and Development :

The report emphasizes that environmental degradation and economic development are interlinked and must be addressed together. It argued that poverty and environmental issues are closely connected.



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The Sustainable development requires an integrated approach that considers economic growth, environmental protection and social equity.

"Sustainable development is the peace policy of the future."  
(Dr. Klaus Topfer)

### 3. Global Perspectives:

"Our Common Future" brought global attention to environmental issues, emphasizing that environmental degradation is a global problem requiring international cooperation. It called for a **collective effort** to address common threats and highlighted the disparities between developed and developing nations in terms of environmental impacts and capacity to address these issues.

"Environmental pollution is an incurable disease - It can only be prevented."  
(Barry Commoner)



4. Influence on International Policies :

The report significantly influenced international environmental policies and agreements. It laid the groundwork for the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992 and subsequent global environmental initiatives, including the formulation of Agenda 21 and establishment of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

5. Public Awareness and Education :

The report played a key role in raising public awareness about the environmental crisis and need for Sustainable development. It educated

- a. Policy makers
- b. Businesses
- c. General public

The importance of integration environmental consideration into all aspects of decision making.



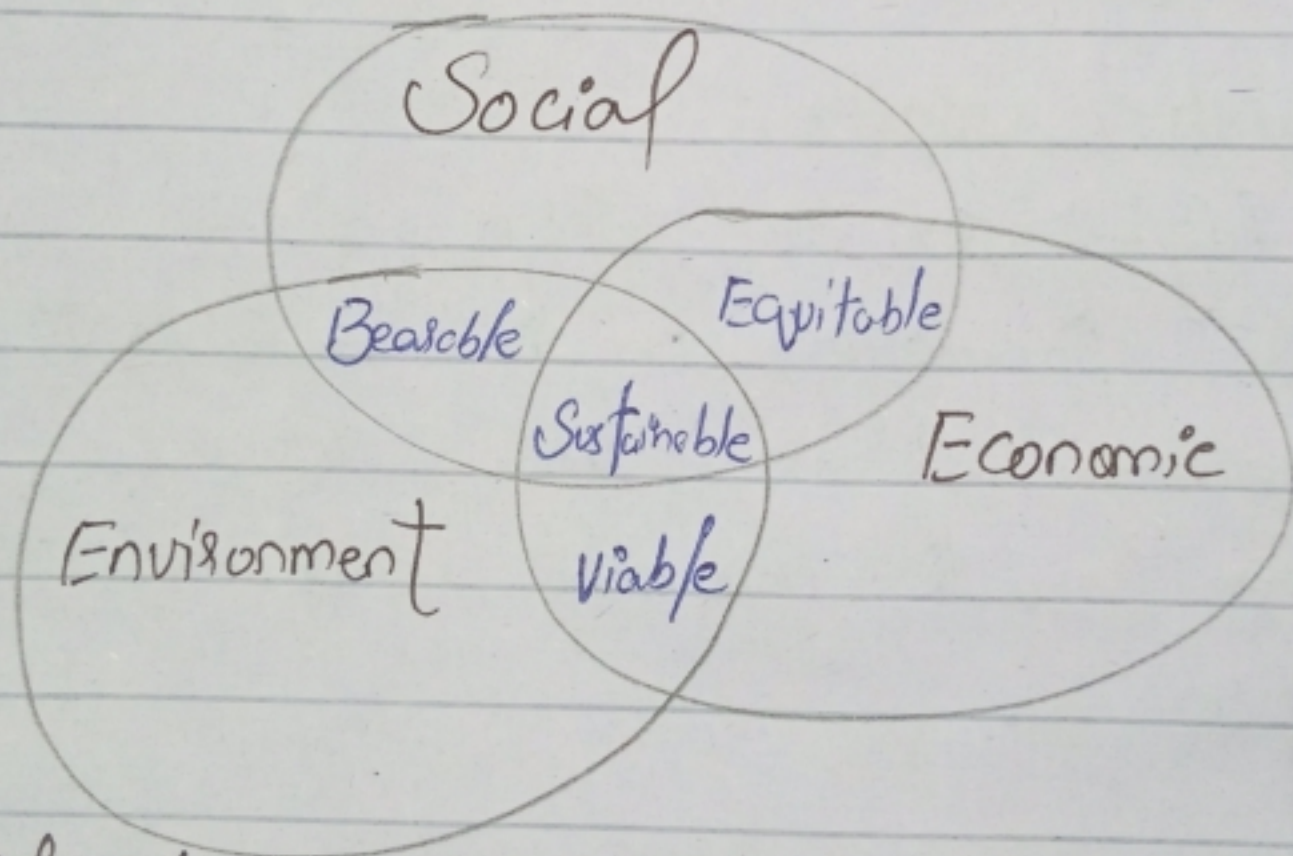
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## Common Threats Identified in the Report:

### i. Environmental degradation:

The report highlighted the rapid degradation of the environment, including

- Deforestation
- Loss of biodiversity
- Pollution of air, water and soil.



### ii. Climate Change:

It identified climate change as a critical issue, pointing to the rising levels of greenhouse gases and the potential for severe impacts on global weather patterns, ecosystems and human societies.



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### iii. Resource Depletion:

The report underscore the unsustainable use of natural resources such as;

- Fossil fuels
- minerals
- Freshwater

which threatened the long-term availability of these resources.

### iv. Population Growth:

It highlighted the pressure of growing global population on the environment, exacerbating issues like resource depletion, waste generation and habitat destruction.

### v. Poverty and Inequality:

The report emphasized the link between environmental degradation and socio-economic factors, noting that poverty and inequality hinder sustainable development and exacerbate environmental problems.



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## Measures Suggested for Sustainability:

### a. Promoting Sustainable Economic Growth:

The report called for economic growth strategies that are environmentally sustainable and socially inclusive, emphasizing the needs for policies that promote

- Green technologies
- Renewable Energy
- Resource efficiency

### b. Enhancing International Cooperation:

It recommended stronger international collaboration to address global environmental issues, including the sharing and financial resources to help developing countries achieve sustainable development.

"Our Common Future" was instrumental in paving the way for the Earth Summit, where our 178 countries gathered to discuss sustainable development."



C. Improving Resource Management:

The report suggested better management of natural resources through conservation, sustainable use practices and the protection of ecosystems to ensure their long-term viability.

Initiatives such as REDD+ (Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation) have been developed to create financial value for the carbon stored in forests.

d. Addressing Climate Change:

It urged immediate action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and develop strategies for adaptation to the impacts of climate change.

The Brundtland Report catalyzed global action on climate change, leading to the establishment of the IPCC in 1988 by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the World Meteorological Organization (WMO).



e. Strengthening Institutions:

The report highlighted the need to strengthen global and national institutions to effectively implement and enforce environmental policies and regulations.

"The EPA's (Environmental Protection Agency) was a significant step in strengthening education institutional capacity to address environmental issues comprehensively at the national level."

Conclusion:

The Brundtland Report's significance lies in its holistic approach to addressing global environmental challenges by linking them with economic and social dimensions. By introducing the concept of sustainable development, it laid the foundation for future international environmental agreements and policies. The report says that environmental movements by framing sustainable development as an essential goal for humanity.



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It identified critical threats to the planet and offered a comprehensive set of recommendations to achieve a sustainable and equitable future.

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