
**SHALLOW ENVIRONMENTALISM IN RAPID CLIMATE CHANGE:
AN ANALYSIS OF PAKISTAN'S NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL DISCOURSE**

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines the rapid climate change in Pakistan and national environmental discourse. This also observes the dominant understandings on the topic which problematizes the standard assumptions and interrogates the geographical literature on this particular subject. The main area of "climate change adaptation" is selected for the analysis which is a major part of "National Climate Change Policy of Pakistan 2012" in which five sub divisional partitions, "Water Resources, Agriculture and Live Stock, Human Health, Forestry and Biodiversity" exist. There are several factors interlinked in the crucial climate change situation in the country and different kinds of discourses are used at different levels to describe the whole situation in Pakistan. Critical discourse analysis of national climate change policy brings the clear picture in front of the whole world and it shows the Pakistan's vulnerability in specific areas to climate change. Several policy measures have been presented, which are analyzed on different levels of discourse with shallow environmentalism and deep ecology. This paper will be helpful for the discourse analysts as well as the national climate change policy makers in Pakistan.

Keywords: Human health, Climate change, Water, Agriculture, Policy, Discourse, Pakistan.

INTRODUCTION

Pakistan's national climate change policy 2012 deals with different issues and measures, all the statistics and numbers are obtained through the hard efforts of the experts and it is presented as a national environmental discourse on macro level mainly and there are several issues and effects highlighted through the national discourse at meso and micro level. In this context, it is discussed that how average and poor people are directly affected by the climate change in the country and there are the hidden or less highlighted areas in the national climate change policy. Climate changes impacts on different other areas of life which exist around us. In this direction health, agriculture, water, forest and socio-economic sectors are in the main stream around the world. Mostly people who are directly affected by these major climate changes are from the lower and poor strata.

"It is hard to predict future weather and climatic conditions to an extended scale of several years and decades with sufficient accuracy. The reason is the lack of knowledge and information about the major

contributors which determine the state of climate. They are both natural and anthropogenic; the latter has dominated the former one. Green House Gases emission after the industrial revolution of 1940 has triggered the changes to the composition of lower atmosphere by addition of gases (Robin and James, 1993).

Pakistan's involvement in the production of greenhouse gas is very low in comparison with the other countries. A water resource in the country depends upon the climate conditions, fresh water needs and glacier-melt. Arne Naess (Norwegian Philosopher) had familiarized the term "Deep Ecology". Both shallow environmentalism and deep ecology are contemporary movements.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

- To present the rapid climate changing conditions in Pakistan.
- To highlight the real causes of climate change in Pakistan.
- To present the important points of Pakistan's National Environmental Policy.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- How Pakistan's National Environmental Policy can play its role in reducing the rapid speed of climate change in the country?
- How to create an understanding and its difference between shallow environmentalism and deep ecology in comparison with western world?

DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

There is an important difference between shallow environmentalism and deep ecology. Shallow environmentalism is quite famous in the western world, it observes nature at the disposal of humans and it neglects many aspects that deep ecology touches on; it neglects human and nonhuman, and just give importance to living beings. It can be explained through the terms of preservation and conservation. Shallow environmentalism is comparable to conservation; it deals with the controlled usage of natural resources and systematic protection. This type of conservation is about human conserving nature and the needs of their future. This conservation is based on the natural resources like forests, oil and water. Deep ecology is similar to preservation; it tries to keep all these resources safe, intact and unchanged. It is emphasised on human preserving nature from human use and to keep nature in its original form in which it is tried to save the nature from the human damage and interference. 'Nature holds its own right' is the key idea behind deep ecology.

Deep ecology has faced huge criticism since its enunciation in 1984 from anti-ecologist and fellow ecologists. Fellow ecologists criticized its misdirection in its approach. Main critique came forward from the side of ecofeminist movement. Social ecologists feel that deep ecology loses its grip on the larger picture and the crisis remains in the dominating nature of society. Deep ecology is supposed as too religious, too mystical, hypocritical, unrealistic, narrow minded and anti-human. Richard A. Watson has presented a valuable critique and brought numerous arguments against this movement in his renowned article “A Critique of Anti-Anthropocentric Biocentrism”. He finds deep ecology quite hypocritical in its demands for man must be treated similar to nature. Shallow environmentalism presents the clear picture and the ground realities that how much vulnerability exist in a specific place or region and which factors are responsible in creating deep impact on nature as well as climate.

Policies are made to be applied not just as a description, so all the immediate measure can save the nation from the worst climate change conditions and as it is discussed that mostly poor people are the direct and real victims of this condition. National climate change policy 2012 has indicated the vast problems and causes which are directly affecting the whole country and its impact is quite visible on the people especially on the poor community because they cannot survive in these conditions. They lack facilities and this climate change effect creates a huge blow for them in which they cannot survive.

WATER RESOURCES

Shallow environmentalism can be seen evidently and it is presented with the use of most powerful mediums of national, social and political discourses at macro level. This level of discourse has overlapped rather reduced the intensity of its horrible climate change effects in a sense. Monsoon rains are a great source in storage of water but non-availability of dams is a major hindrance in this way, irregularity has also happened in the monsoon timings. Water storage infra structure is quite weak in the country there is a huge need of more big and small dams. This sort of issue have become in the political sensitive line where different provinces create tensions over this water storage issue. Several times, it is tried by the democratic governments to take this step but every time this could not be fulfilled. Army dictators had also this power but their hidden agendas and pressures came in between them and the national cause. The policy presents the collected data on the macro level discourse but on micro level it does not provide the satisfactory answers. It hides the majority of affected people and their miseries attached with the shortage of water especial in Sindh province and Southern Punjab. It is also suggested in the policy that management should be made better. It is also witnessed that if government machinery

gives its full attention towards the prevention of drought in the country then the whole nation faces the disastrous floods and when all the measure are taken to avoid the floods then people die in large numbers due to drought. “This is true if we scale down this fact to the community level; in case of any climatic anomaly the poor people face the consequences due to lack of resources and access to information” (Ansari, 2002).

Mountain chain of Himalaya-Karakorum-Hindukush is the largest chain in this region. It is not less than any asset for this region which fulfills the huge need of water; it is hard to distinguish from where this mountain belt starts and where it ends. “Existence of these ranges is a blessing for South Asia. They protect the inhabitants from the cold surges in winter associated with northerly winds. They confine the monsoon precipitation to this region which is the great resource of water. In addition to that they possess a treasure of solid water which melts with high temperature in summer and makes this precious resource available in rivers (Salman, 2010).

At micro and meso level of environmental discourse, it is used for the description of the domestic issue related to climate change in which the terms like, waste water, proper treatment, water licensing, artificial water wetlands are adopted, but mostly environmental matters are discussed at macro level.

Agriculture and Livestock: In National Climate Change Policy 2012, value of the agriculture sector and livestock has been described in detail in which all the long term and short term climate change effects are presented with the help of statistics through environmental discourse. It also links the climate change policy in global scenario. It has remained quite evident that both agriculture and livestock sector is dependent on water sector. If water sector gives negative output then there is no doubt that a visible effect on these two sectors will not be avoidable. On macro level of environment discourse, it is tried to blame the biological, chemical, physical and financial aspects in the production system of agriculture. For its solution it is suggested new crops must be tried which are less vulnerable, drought tolerant and resist the heat stress.

The agriculture sector, as the single largest sector of Pakistan’s economy, is its life line. It accounts for 45% of the labor force, 21% GDP and 70% of total export earnings (NCCP, 2012). Agriculture in Pakistan is greatly faceted by short term climate variability and could be significantly impacted by long term climate change.

In livestock sector, it is suggested to try new breeds of livestock which provide more milk and drought tolerant. In environmental discourse it is presented on a larger canvas, all the suggestions are worthy in its nature but outside pressures, political influence, poverty issues and ground realities of climate change do not allow all these measure to be taken by common majority of people. Things enter in a disastrous state when attention of the authorities divert.

According to Kreps (1998), a disaster is an event concentrated in time and space, in which a society or one of its subdivisions undergoes physical harm and social disruption, such that all or some essential functions of the society or subdivision are impaired.

In the very state of natural calamity, climate creates its horrible effect on the lives of the people, they lose their animals and agriculture land, they try to save their assets but in that effort they lose their lives as well. In this part of the national climate change policy, environmental discourse includes the global environmental and scientific discourse in which it is suggested to adopt new techniques of farming and to try new breeds of animals for better production and to meet the demands of milk and meat in the country (NCCP, 2012). As the duration of crop growth cycles is related to temperature, an increase in temperature will speed up crop growth and shorten the time between sowing and harvesting. This shortening could have an adverse effect productivity of crops and fodder for livestock.

Latest technology can play a vital part in this context, laser leveling, GIS techniques to access the temporal changes, crops diversifications and betterment in livestock through genetic engineering. All these scientific terms and new techniques are the part of global environmental discourse.

Human Health: Climate change not only creates a direct impact on the lives of the people but also creates an indirect impact on them; especially it hits the women and children. In national climate change policy, it is mentioned that floods and storms have a direct catastrophic effect on the lives of people. Deforestation is one of the major causes behind this sad condition. The natural calamities destroy the human living structures and their aftermaths are more horrible because it leaves different types of diseases like diarrheal disease because of insufficient clean water, dengue fever and malaria.

It is vulnerable to all sorts of droughts and floods (rain, riverine and flash floods) whether their origin is local or in the upper catchments of the Indus and its tributaries. Frequency of both these extremes has increased considerably since the last decade. There is a complete consensus of the scientific community that frequency and intensity of such extreme events will further increase with the passage of time due to ongoing trend of global warming (Ejaz, 2012).

This is an indirect environmental discourse which is used in this section of national climate change policy and this section has more material on human health issues and the government is taking measures which can be called sufficient at the level of policy description but ground realities are still worse.

Floods and storms not only increase the risk of death and injuries, they have other health implications such as diarrheal disease because of insufficient clean water availability for drinking, personal hygiene or for washing food (NCCP, 2012).

Whenever this country faces such terrible natural calamities, it is a bare fact that majority of poor population remains unable for so many year to recover from bad health problems and economic conditions. It presents a clear reflection of shallow environmentalism.

Forestry: National Climate Change Policy 2012 has presented the details about forestry; the discourse which is used in this section supports the shallow environmentalism at macro level. Meso and micro levels of discourse analysis technique issued in this particular section are quite weak and less authentic solutions and suggestions are forwarded in this direction for the betterment. Timber theft, illegal trade and other crimes are highlighted at micro and meso level in shallow environmentalism. At meso level, it is discussed about floods and the role of forests in the preventions of floods in specific areas. Some visible lacks are evident that no ground work is in progress in this direction, it has become limited just at the state of recommendations. Forests are the most important assets for any country and the people who live there because climate mostly depends on good number of forests, it supports the climate with oxygen, save from floods and land sliding.

Adaptation in the forestry sector entails the need to restore and enhance Pakistan's forests under sustainable forest management, with particular focus on how these are affected by climate change. This will not only benefit state forests but forest dependent communities and society as a whole (NCCP, 2012).

In Pakistan, deforestation is at its peak; no one is giving attention towards it even though it is a crime in most of the civilized countries. They get timber and wood for different purposes but they also try growing new artificial forests and saving them for their upcoming generations. Forests save the area from the rapid climate change and support to reduced or at least stable the temperature on a larger scale it is helpful to save the world from global warming.

Due to rise in temperature, visible changes in hydrological cycle have been observed in the form of changing precipitation pattern, cropping pattern, droughts, water availability periods, frequency and intensity of heat waves, precipitation events and weather-induced natural disasters (Bosshard, 2006).

In this section of national climate change policy, lack of coherence is visible. No solid grounds have presented there for future, just used the environmental discourse for the global world that Pakistan is taking positive steps in this direction but no such plan is presented which can be applicable in short or long term policy on ground. Awareness is an important factor in the global world, educated people can understand its worth but literacy rate in Pakistan is quite low in the country, people do not understand that they are committing a crime while cutting the forests. This sense of responsibility should be increased in people and it should be the part of national

environmental discourse. This task can be achieved through print and electronic media. The environmental discourse is used in this section of forestry to attract the global audience but at micro and meso level it does not represent its real needs regarding forests in the country. All the points which are discussed in this section of the policy are outdated and it was presented many decades ago. It could not bring any change in the climate of the country rather situation has become worse.

Biodiversity: Certain measures have been suggested in this policy for the protection of this biodiversity:

“Climate change is likely to have multi-faceted adverse effects on the ecosystem as a whole, particularly on the already vulnerable forestry sector in Pakistan. The most likely impacts of climate change will decrease productivity, changes in species composition, reduced forest area, unfavorable conditions for biodiversity, higher flood risks and the like, as portrayed in the Planning Commission Task Force on Climate Change (TFCC) report” (NCCP, 2012).

Shallow environmentalism is one of the major factors in this national climate change policy which is discussed in it with its full detail. Environmental discourse, which is used to present the whole agenda, is mainly to attract the global audience. This section of biodiversity has the detailed policy measures but it is not as clear in its detail as it should be. Different words and suggestions like seed banks, zoos, botanical garden and gene banks to conserve the biological diversity are used in this environmental discourse, but in reality how much work has been done and how many suggestions have been applied on ground that is still a question.

CONCLUSION

A realistic approach in the management of ecosystem should be carried out with the special emphasis on imperative environment segments such as protection of biodiversity, water conservation and soil erosion protection and carbon sequestration etc. In Pakistan, supply of drinkable water and sanitation requires special attention as presently a large number of households do not have access to enough drinkable or shallow water, numerous also lack in proper sanitation system and toilets. Poor sanitation leads to sickness as well as negative impact on environment. Therefore, a strategy to improve sanitation and to expand access to clean drinkable water particularly in rural areas is being implemented with the help of provincial governments. Due to the water scarcity in the country, the wastewater treatment is imperative for the continuous and affluent supply of water for agriculture in future. For increased forest cover and enhancement of natural resources, a strategy to developed forest cover along with conservation and restoration of the natural resources of the country should be implemented through applied approach of ownership. Another strategy will be designed to

prepare locals to manage forests areas and wild lands around their residences. Strategy should also include provision of alternative energy resources to the residents of forest cover areas at affordable price. The plan should also focuses on the achievement of following targets in the area of sustainable environment. Pakistan is a resource scarce country and the careful allocation of resources is planned to achieve the optimum growth without the cost of environmental degradation. Through critical discourse analysis of the specific part of National Climate Change Policy 2012, it has become clear that this policy has value in its approach but the results and productivity is based on applicability and implementation of new rules and new technology. Who will make sure the implementation of all these suggestions and bring these measures on ground to practice that is another question. It is very clear that the shallow environmentalism is prevailing in the country and deep ecology is needed in a specific context. Environmental discourse is used at macro level to attract the global researchers and policy makers but at meso and micro level of discourse analysis has proved that this policy has scant discussion on less issues while assigning the task to the individuals and their national and moral responsibility to bring some betterment in rapid climate change at every level.

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