

Documentary on Environmental Issues in Vidarbha Region

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In Vidarbha the main issues of environmental concern are depletion of forests, mining and power plants.

Forest degradation in Vidarbha:

The forest degradation is quite evident from low level of growing stock in Vidarbha forests and decline in dense forests in the country. In the forested landscapes of Vidarbha, livelihood of people living close to forests and also within forests is inextricably linked with the forest produces (MFP) and to forest ecosystem. People depend on forests for a variety of forest produces for, for food, fodder, agriculture, housing, and an array of marketable MFP and this activity is not sustainable but it degrades the forests considerably. **So the documentary projects that the livelihood concerns of millions of people living in and around forests contribute considerably to forest environment and ecosystem degradation.**

Shifting Cultivation:

It is still being practiced in some regions of Vidarbha and causes a major damage in concerned areas. With increased crop cycles and declining fallow period in shifting cultivation in recent decades the impact of this age old practice on surrounding eco system is more severe. **Shifting Cultivation is highlighted in the documentary.**

Joint Forest Management:

Greater involved of local communities in the management of forests and devolution of power through access and ownership rights ensures greater tenurial security and improved forest management and conservation. In recent years many multifold efforts both by State Govt and N.G.O's have been made to evolve a model of Joint Forest Managemet which can effectively manage forest resources and and control forest degradation. In fact Vidarbha has pioneered in this field and degradation and depletion of forest is effectively controlled wherever JFM committees are empowered and strong. **Efforts to control depletion are also covered.**

Mining and pollution:

In Vidarbha coal mining is a crucial and controversial issue. Coal mining raises many challenges including soil erosion, dust, noise and water pollution and ground water depletion in a radius of 1-2 kilometers and also results in silting of nearby water stream rivulets and rivers. It also impacts local biodiversity. Steps have been taken to control many of these factors. They may be inadequate but the process has gained some momentum in the last ten years. However what has been done by coal giants is not sufficient at all. **The documentary amoly underlines this.**

Thermal Power Generation Plants:

Continuous improvements in technology have dramatically reduced or eliminated many of the environmental impacts traditionally associated with the use of coal vital in electricity generation and steel making industries. But this sector is still a major polluter in Vidarbha. However what has been done like Public Sector Giants like WCL has been well recored in the documentary.

More recently efficient technologies have been installed to measure pollutants like oxides of Sulpher (Sox) and nitrogen (Nox) and particulate and trace elements such as mercury. Recently Greenhouse gases (GHG) like Carbon Dioxide (CO₂) and Methane (CH₄) have become a concern due to climate change. **The documentary reveals that because of excessive pollution particularly in Cahndrapur District are under the scanner** of Maharashtra Pollution Controll Board (MPCB). It also exposes how four industrial clusters including Chandrapur, Ballarpur, Ghuggus and tadali have been put under industrial moratorium.

Transportation Activities:

The documentary also highlites pollution due to transportation of coal in coal mining areas. Major concern is dust in generation of coal cement sand and other such products. Trucks carrying these entities are not properly covered with Tarpaulin and due to bad condition of roads spillages of coal usually occurs on roads resulting into regeneration of dust.

Thus the major environmental issues in Vidarbha are covered.