

CONTINUATION: ENVIRONMENTAL CONCEPTS (Lecture 2 – discussed already in class)

Basic Principles of Environmental Management

Environmental principles offer protection to the natural world. They act as guidance for judges and decision-makers, giving laws shape and meaning. They are used in a whole host of government and public authority decisions, including planning applications, management of marine protected areas and dealing with contaminated land.

1. The precautionary principle: This principle states that where there is uncertainty about the risk of environmental harm, the precautionary principle allows protective measures to be taken without having to wait until the harm materializes. This principle is valuable in managing risk where there is uncertainty about the environmental impact of an issue. It ensures that substance or activity posing a threat to the environment is prevented from adversely affecting the environment, even if there is no conclusive scientific proof of linking that particular substance or activity to environmental damage. The words 'substance' and 'activity' are the result of human intervention. Where there are threats of serious or irreversible damage. Lack of full scientific certainty shall not be used as a reason for postponing cost effective measures to prevent environmental degradation. Therefore, the principle is essential for the protection of environment and human health by implementing in the field of production and distribution of energy resources.

2. Principle of Effectiveness and Efficiency: It is essential that efficiency of resources use may also be accomplished by the use of policy instruments that create incentive to minimize wasteful use. It also applies to various issues of environmental governance by streamlining processes and procedures in order to minimize environmental costs.

3. The User Pays Principle (UPP): It is considered as a part of the PPP. The principle states that all resource users should pay for the full long-run marginal cost of the use of a resource and related services, including any associated treatment costs. It is applied when resources are being used and consumed.

4. The Principle of Responsibility:

It is the responsibility of all persons, corporations and states to maintain the ecological processes. Further, access to environmental resources carries attendant responsibilities to use them in an ecological sustainable economically efficient and socially fair manner.

5. The Principle of Participation: It is the duty of all the persons to participate in collectively environmental decision making activities. Some participation areas are related to the use of trees and other plants, minerals, soils, fish and wildlife for purposes such as materials and food as well as for consumptive and non-consumptive recreation. The second issue concerns solid waste i.e. garbage, construction and demolition materials and chemically hazardous waste etc. The third issue of participation is related to pollution generating activities.

6. The Principle of Proportionality: The principle of proportionality is based on the concept of balance. A balance is to maintain between the economic development on the one hand and environmental protection on the other hand. It cannot be disputed that no development is

possible without some adverse effects on ecology. Therefore, it is essential to adjust the interest of the people as well as the necessity to maintain the environment. Moreover, comparative hardships have to be balanced and benefits to a larger section of the people have to be maintained.

7. The polluter pays principle (PPP): As the name suggests this principle holds that the person who causes pollution should bear the costs of the damage caused and any remedy required. It plays a significant role in environmental management, acting as a deterrent and directing accountability for harm.

For the last two decades, many economists have suggested that firms discharging polluting effluents to the environment should somehow be made to pay a price for such discharges related to the amount of environmental damage caused. The principle states that if measures are adopted to reduce pollution, the costs should be borne by the polluters. Polluter Pays Principle.” The essential concern of this principle is that polluters should bear the costs of abatement without subsidy. An example is payment by developed world for carbon emissions.

There are practical implications on the allocation of economic obligations in relation to environmentally damaging activities, particularly in relation to liability and the use of economic instruments.

Revision Questions

1. Citing relevant examples, briefly discuss the basic principles of environmental management (25 marks)