

# Rural Diversification in Punjab: Perspectives and Challenges

**PATRON**

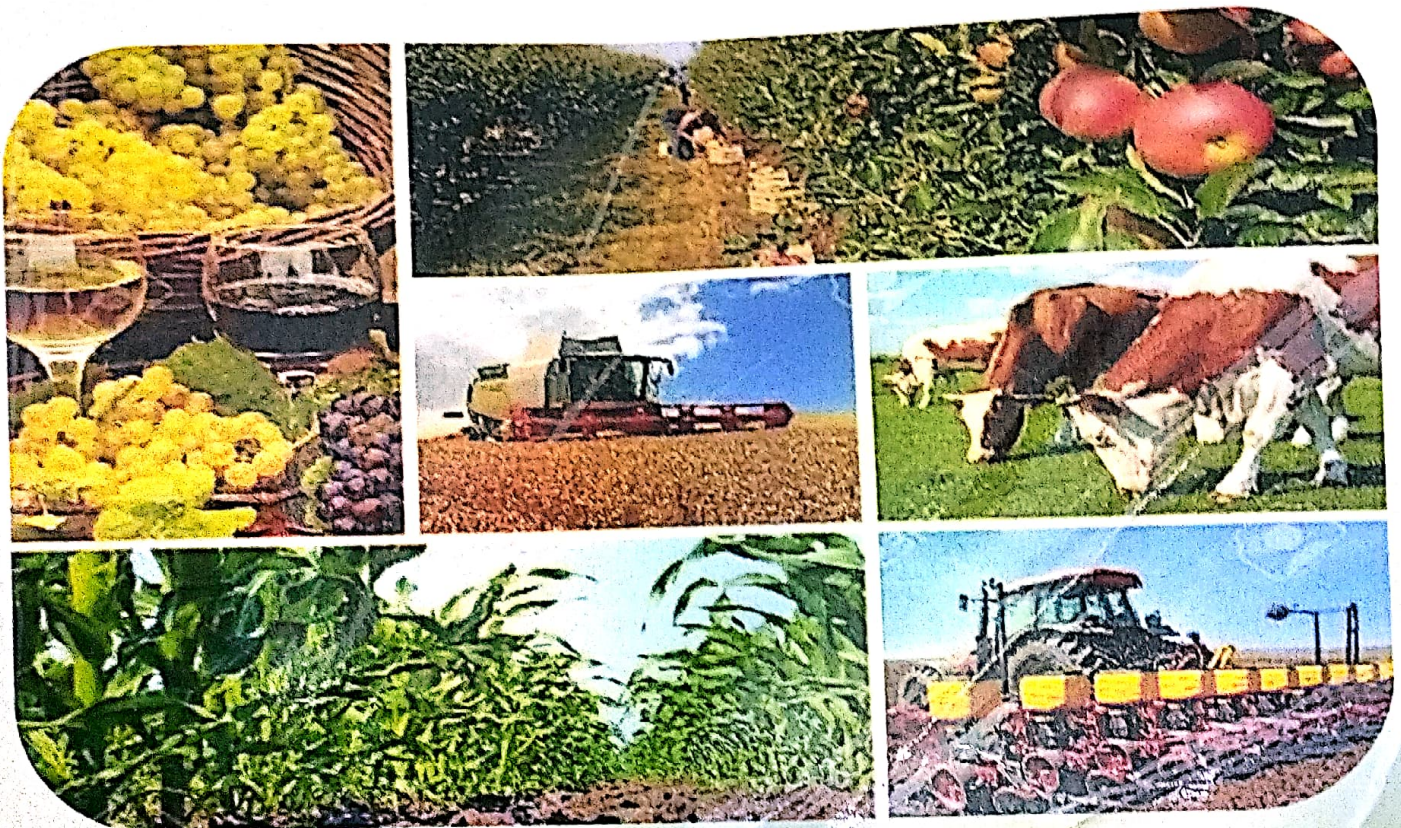
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# ENVIRONMENT DEGRADATION AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC SYSTEMS

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## ABSTRACT

Environmental problems of shortage of water, forest, fertile lands and the like are very often the cause of violent conflicts in the world. There is need to manage limited natural resources in a careful manner as human welfare ultimately depends on ecological services. Ignoring environment will increase the risk of undermining long run prospects for development. The linkage between and co-evolution of environment and socio-economic system underlines the need to consider their joint sustainability. Today there are widespread calls for a paradigm shift from wealth to sustainability. It is important to flesh out the core spirit of the SDGs—the determination to leave no one behind—by adding a further vision of building a society where all can socially and economically prosper leaving no one behind.

## INTRODUCTION

Environment provides basic services essential to humanity such as supplying materials, energy and absorbing waste products, supporting life. Environmental economics deals with the issues related with excessive, unethical or immoral behavior of human with the environment. It is an application of scientific theories and general application of welfare economics. It evolves the development that meets the need of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. An environmentally sustainable system maintain a stable resource base, avoiding over-exploitation of renewable resource systems and depleting non-renewable resources to the extent that investment is made in adequate development and enhance the quality of life with equitable distribution and provision of social services including health and education. So these three areas economic, environmental and social are interrelated. Solution to one problem can make another problem worse. Now a days- developing countries are facing both environmental crisis and development crisis. On one side there is increase in the economic problems of poverty, unemployment, inadequate infrastructure, overcrowding of places and on the other side environmental degradation has grown further. The exuberant life style and wasteful consumption threatens the ecological balance on the earth. Cutting down of trees for fuel, ships, buildings and for other economic reasons threatens the atmosphere. It has resulted in global warming and slows down the green house effect. The increasing of CO<sub>2</sub> imposed damage on the economy, particularly on vulnerable sectors including agriculture, the coastal zones, the human morality and natural eco-systems. With the warmer climate, the sea level is rising and coastal areas are sinking posing threat to humanity. Warmer temperature is also damaging agriculture. Climate change is leading to decreased soil moisture, increased incidence of pests and diseases and many other global issues.

Land, rivers, even whole seas have been converted into sewer and industrial dumps. Increased industrialization leads to littering of plastics, chemicals, oil spills into the sea threatening all marine life. As a consequence lot of the world's Marine species are already extinct or are on the verge of extinction. Humans have been responsible for major habitat changes leading to genetic and more species diversity. More the species living in an ecosystem the higher the productivity and the greater is its ability to withstand drought and other kinds of environment stress. Technological advancement for the comfort of mankind is disturbing the ecological balance. The exploitation of biodiversity for life style of the industrialized world is a sure recipe for ecological disaster. Economic Growth leads to larger discharges of waste water and solid wastes per capita. Inadequate investment in waste collection and disposal mean that large quantities of waste enter both ground water and surface water. The increased demand for water for domestic, agricultural and industrial use means more interbasins transfers lowering the ground water levels and less water for domestic use by an ever increasing population. According to U.N Comprehensive Fresh Water Assessment 1997, global water use has been increasing at more than twice