

International Conference on
'Strengthening Climate Justice Initiatives at the Local Level for
Sustainable Livelihood with a Focus on Farmers'

Institute of Law, NIRMA University, Ahmedabad

8th November 2014

Speech to be delivered by Shri O.P Kohli , Hon'ble Governor of Gujarat at the International Conference on "Strengthening Climate Justice Initiative: livelihood Challenges at local level with a focus on farmers."

Date-12th January,2015

Time -10.00 Venue:

Nirma University: Ahmedabad

Respected Justice H.L Dattuji, Hon'ble Chief Justice of India,

Respected Justice V.M Sahaiji, Hon'ble Justice of Gu7jarat High Court,

Respected Shri bupendra Chudasamaji, Education Minister Government of Gujarat.

Respected Justice B.P Singhji, Former Judge, Supreme Court of India.

Respected Dr Kirit Shelatji,Chairman ,NCCSD,

Respected Dr Anup Singhji, Vice Chancellor, Nirma University.

Respected Shri Purushottam Rupalaji, Ex.M.P.,

Respected prof Purvi Pokhariyaji.Director and Dean, Institute of law, Nirma University,

Distinguished participants from the country and abroad research's, academicians, ladies and gentlemen. It is a privilege for me to address of legal luminaries opinion leaders, researchers, academicians, practitioners of law and enablers of justice. The deliberation proposed here is of paramount importance because their subjects pertain to the climate change and related justice.

If we look at the modern world, we can see that during the last few decades the world has made tremendous progress in almost all the spheres. But as in everything else, this development has cost us heavily; it has caused serious environmental damages impairing the quality of life of not only our generation, but also of future generation as well. It is in this context that concern about environment and development has become a global concern. Global warming and climate change is one of such concerns.

As we all know, global warming refers to change in the surface temperature of the earth and related change in the demographical distribution and chemical quality of rainfall perceived to have been caused by heat in the atmosphere consequent upon the rising concentration and emission of the so called green house gases like carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide which are playing havoc in the modern times.

Adverse consequences of global warming have shown up in the decreasing forest bio-mass and decreasing agriculture production. Forest and agriculture produce are likely to fall further as global mean temperature increase. It is in this context that we should appreciate the need of increasing mitigating measures.

Our world today is faced with an ecological crisis largely of our own making, the consequences of which would be none not only by our generation, but also drastically by future generation. The world is faced with unprecedented mass extinction of floral and faunal species and rise in sea levels and temperatures. All these have led to serious consequences like severe cyclonic storms and flooding leading to unrestrained ecological destruction. On the other hand, unregulated industrialization and ever increasing consumption by a globally concerned and market driven society has worsened this situation.

There are close links between poverty and development. Should the present trend of population growth continue unaffected in the next few years, disastrous results are likely to follow? Population pressure has caused a great damage to our environment. Deforestation has taken place on a massive scale. Excessive industrial growth has been responsible for air pollution water pollution and water contamination. Our forests, coastal and inland coral and other systems have degraded. Tropical forests have declined. Extinction of species is occurring at a high speed. Emission of poisonous gases from industry and transport has imposed serious costs on our health and productivity. The buildup of carbon dioxide and other gases is going raise average temperature very high

upon earth. Land degradation and desertification in the arid and semi arid areas have taken place on a massive scale. Alkalization, Salinization water logging industrial pollution-all these processes have led to soil erosion. This has also reduced the ability of soil to grow crops to a considerable degree.

The above phenomenon makes us think about the need to have a sustainable development –the development that could be sustained forever. For this .It is very necessary to preserve our environment at all costs. We need to orient our research and technology towards conservation of natural resources. We need appropriate environmentally sound policies with long term commitment. We need to create off-farm employment opportunities to decrease the demographic pressure on land. We need to encourage indigenous soil and water conservation techniques. We need to encourage agro-forestry programmes. And above all action, we need to take a participatory conservation-oriented development strategy. We also need to involve the stake holders which are the resource users.

Pujya Mahatma Gandhi, Father of the nation, had grasped the very essence of sustainable development long before the concept of the global warming became popular. He had said *"The earth enough for everyone's need but not for anyone's greed"*

This means that our sustainable development should start from a search for ways to redirect development that is more benign for nature conservation. We should meet our own needs without compromising the ability of the future generation to meet their own. Whether our children will be able to enjoy the fruits it depends upon what legacy we are going to leave behind us for them today. It is in this context that it has become absolutely necessary to accelerate the pace of development in an environmentally responsible manner. This should involve substantial shifts in policies and priorities.

I am happy to learn that during this 2 day Conference, all the expert and learners gathered here will deliberate upon the various dimensions of the climate change in greater detail. I would also expect from the participants that they may make some suggestion and chalk out an action plan for the use of Netter planning in future so that the humanity at large gets its benefits.

Our Indian culture is base on the wisdom nurtured by vedic Rishis, Socio-political leaders, thinkers and philosophers. Our saints and Rishis believe in "Vasudaivam Kutumbkam" In other words, our philosophers have seen the entire world as one family. Our scriptures have also said:

This means:

"Let all the living beings upon the earth be happy;

Let all be healthy and free from diseases;

Let all get the ultimate bliss;

Let no one be unhappy;

With these few words, I conclude my speech .I thank the organizers for inviting me to this important Conference and share my views with you on this forum. I wish every success ti this Conference.

Thank you.

Jai Hind