



**“Our greatest weakness lies in giving up. Only actions bring change”.**

**– Mr. Pradip Burman, *Chairman, Mobius Foundation***

### **Environment Positive: Viewpoint**

India celebrated its 72nd Independence Day on 15 August 2020 in the shadow of COVID-19 pandemic. There were some environment positive takeaways from the Prime Minister’s speech on the occasion e.g. launch of Project Dolphin and Project Lion, special programme to reduce pollution in 100 cities etc. The Independence Day used to be a joyous occasion with celebrations in schools, colleges and universities across the country. This year the pandemic has forced students to remain confined to their homes and education is mostly happening online. In such a scenario, the launch of the New Education Policy 2020, on 29 July 2020 brought cheers for those concerned with the future of education.

Our education system has mostly been rigidly structured, promoting the culture of cramming to secure good marks making rote learning more important than education. The NEP 2020 in this context is forward looking with focus on overhauling the system with flexible curriculum, reduced syllabus retaining only to core essentials, easier examinations and thrust on experiential learning and critical thinking. As per policy, classroom transactions will shift, towards competency-based learning and education. The policy recommends for fun courses for hands-on experience of crafts such as carpentry, electric work, metal work, gardening, pottery making, etc., as per the local skilling needs. Practice-based curriculum, bag less period, internship with local vocational experts such as carpenters, gardeners, potters, artists, etc. for 6-8 grade is also recommended. Similar internship opportunities to learn vocational subjects may be made available to students throughout Grades 6-12, including holiday periods. Vocational courses through online mode will also be made available. Students will be given increased flexibility and choice of subjects to study, particularly in secondary schools - including subjects in physical education, the arts and crafts, and vocational skills.

The NEP recommends for strengthening online and e-education both at school and higher education level for ensuring alternative modes of providing quality education when traditional and in-person modes of education are not possible due to epidemics and pandemics. Finally, the NEP is aligned to the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) thus promoting global citizenship. We hope that policy liberates the education from the age old dogmas and becomes an instrument of fostering scientific temper along with a culture of innovation and creativity.

**Dr. Ram Boojh**  
CEO, Mobius Foundation

### **Highlight of the Month**

#### **The Bee is Declared the Most Important Living being on the Planet**

The Earth watch Institute concluded in the last debate of the Royal Geographical Society of London, that bees are the most important living being on the planet, however, scientists have also made an announcement: Bees have already entered into extinction risk. Bees around the world have disappeared up to 90% according to recent studies, the reasons are different depending on the region, but among the main reasons are massive deforestation, lack of safe places for nests, lack of flowers, use uncontrolled pesticides, changes in soil, among others.



The agriculture of the world depends on 70% of these insects, to put it more clearly and directly, we could say that 70 of 100 foods are intervened in favour by bees. Also, the pollination that the bees make allows the plants to reproduce, of which millions of animals feed, without them, the fauna would soon begin to disappear.

There are indeed solutions; the problem is that it is very difficult to carry them out, because there are very entrenched practices in production and agriculture.

Source: <https://www.thesciearth.com/2020/08/the-bee-is-declared-most-important.html?m=1>

#### **Empower local communities for extensive forest restoration and climate change mitigation: Study**

Providing communities with the right to manage forests and implement forest restoration offers a just and sustainable way to address climate change. The study reveals that most forest restoration opportunity areas and their associated populations are found in countries with strong legal foundations for community forest ownership. It found that 22 countries, including India, with pre-existing legal framework and evidence of community forest ownership, contain two-thirds of forest restoration opportunity areas. Further, these 22 countries contain 70 per cent of people living in or near forest restoration opportunity areas.

The study - ‘Global forest restoration and the importance of prioritising local communities’ - was published on August 25 in the Nature Ecology and Evolution journal. This is one of the first comprehensive studies to examine the extent to which opportunities for tropical forest restoration overlap with global populations and levels of economic development.



Source: <https://indianexpress.com/article/cities/pune/empower-local-communities-for-extensive-forest-restoration-and-climate-change-mitigation-study-6569939/>

## Positive Affirmations

### Protecting half of the planet is the best way to fight climate change and biodiversity loss – we've mapped the key places to do it

Humans are dismantling and disrupting natural ecosystems around the globe and changing Earth's climate. Now the world is also contending with a global pandemic. In geographically remote regions such as the Brazilian Amazon, COVID-19 is devastating Indigenous populations, with tragic consequences for both Indigenous peoples and the lands they steward.

The Global Deal for Nature provided a framework for the milestones, targets and policies across terrestrial, freshwater and marine realms required to conserve the vast majority of life on Earth. Yet it didn't specify where exactly these safeguards were needed. That's where the new Global Safety Net comes in. Tropical deforestation increases forest edges – areas where forests meet human habitats. These areas greatly increase the potential for contact between humans and animal vectors that serve as viral hosts.

Achieving the Global Safety Net's goals will require nature-based solutions – strategies that protect, manage and restore natural or modified ecosystems while providing co-benefits to both people and nature. They are low-cost and readily available today. The nature-based solutions that we spotlight include: - Identifying bio-diverse non-agricultural lands, particularly prevalent in tropical and sub-tropical regions, for increased conservation attention. - Prioritizing eco regions that optimize carbon storage and drawdown, such as the Amazon and Congo basins. - Aiding species movement and adaptation across ecosystems by creating a comprehensive system of wildlife and climate corridors.



Source: [https://theconversation-com.cdn.ampproject.org/v/s/theconversation.com/protecting-half-of-the-planet-is-the-best-way-to-fight-climate-change-and-biodiversity-loss-weve-mapped-the-key-places-to-do-it-144908?usqp=mq331AQFKAGwASA%3D&amp\\_js\\_v=0.1#referrer=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.google.com&amp\\_tf=From%20%251%24s&ampshare=https%3A%2F%2Ftheconversation.com%2Fprotecting-half-of-the-planet-is-the-best-way-to-fight-climate-change-and-biodiversity-loss-weve-mapped-the-key-places-to-do-it-144908](https://theconversation-com.cdn.ampproject.org/v/s/theconversation.com/protecting-half-of-the-planet-is-the-best-way-to-fight-climate-change-and-biodiversity-loss-weve-mapped-the-key-places-to-do-it-144908?usqp=mq331AQFKAGwASA%3D&amp_js_v=0.1#referrer=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.google.com&amp_tf=From%20%251%24s&ampshare=https%3A%2F%2Ftheconversation.com%2Fprotecting-half-of-the-planet-is-the-best-way-to-fight-climate-change-and-biodiversity-loss-weve-mapped-the-key-places-to-do-it-144908)

### We've worried about overpopulation for centuries. And we've always been wrong.

The world we live in now, despite approaching a population of nearly 8 billion, looks almost nothing like the one doomsayers were anticipating. Starting in the 19th century in Britain and reaching most of the world by the end of the 20th century, birth-rates plummeted - mostly because of women's education and access to contraception, not draconian population laws.

In wealthy societies where women have opportunities outside the home, the average family size is small; in fact, it's below replacement level (that is, on average, each set of two parents has fewer than two children, so the population shrinks over time). Called the demographic transition, it is one of the most important phenomena for understanding trends in global development. All around the world, birthrates are declining rapidly. Global population growth has been slowing since the 1960s, and global population will almost certainly start to decline. The world is absolutely not, as is sometimes claimed, on track to have 14 billion people by 2100.

Under the mainline UN estimates, global population will grow for the rest of this century, but slowly, and this will be the last century with a growing population. The UN has an impressive track record in this area, but some European analysis groups think that the UN is estimating fertility that's higher than realistic, and that population numbers will fall much sooner. It should be clear by 2030 who is correct.

Source: <https://www.vox.com/future-perfect/2019/8/20/20802413/overpopulation-demographic-transition-population-explained>

### Funny Side



### Food for Thought

#### Faith, Hope and Charity link to Sustainability

As Leo Tolstoy said 'One of the first conditions of happiness is that the link between man and nature shall not be broken'.

Virtue ethics is an old idea in philosophy, it is concerned with things like moral character and how we should choose to live our life. But being a genuinely virtuous person is often difficult, as it requires us to constantly make the most honest choice all of the time.

How do we act virtuously towards the environment? We can make decisions that seek to reduce the harm we do to our environment. Faith, hope, charity are the theological virtues and virtues need to be cultivated to become prevalent in life because this helps in their contribution to sustaining and preserving the natural environment.

**Faith**-motivated calls to environmental action can be successful and able to lead people to do things. All faith traditions have teachings about how to live in right balance with creation and the Earth.

**Hope** has positive expectations about the future but is driven by our capacity to identify goals and set strategies to achieve them. We simply need to be hopeful; otherwise there is no point in doing anything towards sustainability.

**Charity** is a giving heart, a generous way of viewing other things. Volunteering as a means to help conserve and protect the environment has a lot of upsides is entitled to charity work.

Those environmental virtues are continuous and reliable dispositions, internally motivated and doing those things that we should all do and yet we easily tend to forget eg turning off lights. It is the gap between minding and being reminded that encouraging the virtues of environmental citizenship can make an important difference.

Faith, Hope and Charity are absolutely free, because if they are rooted in us deeply enough they are also able to draw strength from whatever opposes them!

- Kavya Singh Yadav, Environmentalist, Mobius Foundation

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