



## ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION THROUGH NGOs IN PUDUCHERRY REGION

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### **Abstract:**

At the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century environmental issues have emerged as a major concern for the welfare of the people. In India, the concept of environmental protection can be seen starting from the period of Vedas. The protection of environment is an urgent issue. Every individual, organization and institution has an obligation and duty to protect environment. Environmental protection encompasses not only pollution but also an sustainable development and conservation of natural resources and the eco system. Present day, the necessity of environmental awareness and enforcement is more demanding and urgent than ever before. The emergence of Non-Governmental Organizations being one of the most effective media to reach the people today, may play a significant role in environmental protection. There are more than 28 NGOs and Voluntary Organizations in Puducherry region out of which large numbers of them are focused on human wastage, air and water pollution. They played very important role in conservation of natural resources and environmental protection. A non-governmental organization is a social service organization working towards a better society. A similar recognition of the role of NGOs working on environmental programmes is gaining increasing recognition at the local level. These are in addition to older groups whose work touched upon some environment related activity involving natural resources, settlement planning, pollution and create awareness among the people on current environmental issues and solutions. Puducherry region has a number of NGOs that work in the field of environmental protection and conservation. For Mahatma Social Service Society, Pondicherry Citizens Action Network, Holistic Approach For People’s Empowerment, Shuddham, Centre For Environment And Agricultural Development etc.,. This research paper outlines the important role that can be played by non-governmental organizations in helping to try to deal with environmental issues in puducherry region.

**Key Words:** NGOs, Environment Protection, Social Services, Awareness & Conservation

### **Introduction:**

‘Think globally, act locally’ has been the watchword of environmentalists and global institutions involved in environmental protection. NGOs are non- governmental organizations usually referred to as organizations which are not part of government though could be funded by the government. The primary objectives of these organizations is public service, maintenance of the purity and the safety of the environment in the face of increasing urbanization, industrialization and mechanization has been emerging as the most challenging problem facing mankind at this juncture, both national and international arena. The growth of civilization has basically manifested into concentration of communities in towns and cities and stepping up to agricultural and industrial activities. The congregation of vast quantities of liquid gases and solid wastes originate mainly from the collection of excreta in the form of sewage. The huge quantities of pollutants – solids, liquid and gaseous forms are being let out into the air, water and land systems and investing in the relations between man and nature with new complexities. Several steps have been taken by the Government and NGOs considering the magnitude of the problem. But still concentrated efforts on every person, organization and various institution has an obligation and duty to protect environment. The role of NGOs in the protection of environment assumes greater importance in the context of their widespread presence, the initiative and role they have been already playing, the capabilities developed in the last few years in the sphere of environment protection. NGOs typically take up causes related to environment such as; climate change , pollution, deforestation, ozone layer depletion, waste management, biodiversity and land use, energy conservation, environmental degradation and land degradation some of the prominent examples of NGOs working in puducherry region are Mahatma Social Service Society, Pondicherry Citizens Action Network, Holistic Approach For People’s Empowerment, Shuddham, Centre For Environment and Agricultural Development etc.,. The NGOs have been successful in protecting the environment a great extent.

### **Brief Note on Union Territory of Puducherry:**

The Union Territory of Puducherry consists of four regions namely, Puducherry Region, Karaikal Region, Mahe Region, Yanam Region. All the focus regions are at different locations, geographically separated from each other. Puducherry and Karaikal are on East Cost of Tamil Nadu, while Yanam is on the East Cost in Andhra Pradesh, Mahe is located on the Malabar stretch of West Coast in Kerala State.

### **Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs):**

NGOs are difficult to define and the term NGO is not used consistently. As a result, there are many different classifications in use. The most common focus on orientation and level of operation. An NGOs

orientation refers to the type of activities it takes on. These activities might include rights, environmental or development work. An NGOs level of operation indicates the scale at which an organization works. Such as local, regional, national and international. Rising to the occasion are many organizations, formed with the objectives or helping those in misery. These organization concentrate on one or more areas like, rural development health services, social development, human rights and environmental protection, etc. Many of these organizations have interacted with heads of governments to achieve their objectives. These organizations are basically not associated with the government, but are self motivated groups and are broadly termed as Non Governmental Organizations.

#### **Role of NGOs in the Protection of Environment:**

On the basis of the object of environmental protection, NGOs can be classified into two categories. Firstly, NGOs for environmental protection, secondly, NGOs for socio- economic developing, but having concern for safe environment. Many of the NGOs are belonging to the latter category. Only very few NGOs are working directly for the cause and object of environmental protection.

The role of NGOs in the protecting the environment can be classified into two categories;

- a) Protecting the environment by way of using some techniques, i.e. action oriented programmes such as planting of trees for conservation of soil, growing endangered and rare tree species etc.,
- b) Creating awareness among the people about environmental degradation and finding solutions to protect the environment involving the people.

#### **Environmental NGOs in Puducherry Region**

There are NGOs working in the field of environmental protection at national and local levels. The organizations use various means to achieve their objective. The Environmental NGOs in different areas and the impact they have created in the respective local is enumerated below.

##### **Pondicherry Citizen's Action Network (Pondy CAN):**

The Pondicherry Citizen's Action Network is working in Puducherry, India. It is a broad based, non-profit organization committed to preserve and enhance the natural resources as well as protect the environment. Pondicherry Citizen's Action Network was founded in march 2007. It is one of the important Non-Governmental organization in Puducherry Region. Many prominent volunteers, having in this organization, especially is one of the prominent valunteers probir Banerjee. Auralice Graft Kapur have been associated with it. Auralice Graft Kapur became increasingly concerned about mounting environmental problems in the region and joined the Pondy CAN team in 2010 as director of the Seeds of Change program. She also co-executive directs the Eco Service a community solid waste management program in Auroville that emphasizes limiting air, ground, and water pollution through sustainable solid waste management practices. They given more importance for solid waste management and water pollution.

##### **Shuddham:**

Probir Banerjee was co- founder in Shuddham organization in Puducherry region. Which is established in the year 2001. This organization is a non profit, non- government organization with the mission of fostering a "Beautiful India collaboration to make our surroundings clean", forming partnership between the government and civil society to recycle urban waste – a fast growing contributant to environmental degradation, natural resources depletion, all with dramatic public health impact. Shuddham is Pondicherry's first initiative that involved a whole neighbourhood, where residents are trained to segregate garbage which has collected and processed by Shuddham. Organic waste was converted to Vermicompost and paper plastics were recycled through local recycling channels. Shuddham also ran programs to train school children in waste management. This work is stopped when the Puducherry Government engaged a single agency to take care of the waste management of the whole town making the management of waste a struggle like in the rest of the country.

##### **Centre for Environment and Agricultural Development (CEAD):**

Centre for Environment and Agricultural Development, founded on 9 March 2003, is one of the familiar non-governmental organization working in Puducherry, India. It's works in the area of Environment and natural resource management, Disaster managements, Food and Agriculture, Science & Technology, etc.

Their main aim to create environmental awareness in the communities, to give equal opportunities to all citizens and ensure their basic needs to undertake environmentally sustainable and economically viable activities for the needed. CEAD had been creating awareness about the environmental challenges facing in Puducherry. Searching for solutions that people and communities can implement themselves. They promotes environmental awareness, to produce and disseminate basic educational and reference material on environment and to take up environmental projects. Also it works in the field of environmental education.

##### **Mahatma Social Service Society (MASS):**

Mahatma Social Service Society, founded on 27 May 2002, it is a non-governmental and not for profit organization. This society in a grass root level organization working the most vulnerable i.e., education, socio-economic empowerments, water and sanitation, environment etc, in Tamil Nadu and Puducherry states. The administrative office is at Puducherry. Mahama Social Service Society has created awareness on water and sanitation among the school children and coastal fishing women in Puducherry region.

It has been conducting a variety of programmes to spread awareness and interest among the school children, teachers, NGO's women and youth, on all aspects of the environment and ecological with the purpose of promoting conservation of nature and natural resources. This society was mainly focused on drinking water in schools, qualities of underground water, environmental conservation and sanitation in Puducherry region.

**Holistic Approach for people's Empowerment (HOPE):**

Holistic Approach for People's Empowerment is a non profit and non-governmental organization working on environmental and social issues. Founded on 12<sup>th</sup> September 1996 at Puducherry. HOPE in Puducherry has been assigned to cover the Union Territory of Puducherry. They are giving more important for environmental issues ranged from water pollution, conservation of agricultural lands for other purposes, industrial pollution, depletion of natural resources and to loss of livelihoods, etc. It is one of the citizen action group set up to inculcate understanding and concern on environmental issues. It also aims to conduct research in environmental problems, to campaign on environmental issues and to evolve a holistic environmental perspective. They have worked in the field of eco-developments, creating awareness about water and energy conservation.

**Conclusion:**

The issues of environmental protection is not the responsibility of the state alone. It is the concern of every individual groups. The world community is now concerned about environmental protection. Now a days NGOs are playing virtual role in the protection of Environment, conservation and development. Government, with the collaboration NGO and people is in the imminent need of the hour. NGOs as the watch dogs of the environmental issues. Multi sectoral co-ordination, convergence, holistic and sustainable development can be achieved with participation of NGOs.

It can be assessed by the above discussion that the very existence of NGOs and the role played by them in the protection of the environment is not only important but also necessary because no government alone with any amount of laws and acts can achieve the objectives of environment protection without individual and public participation which can be achieved only through a network of motivated and dedicated voluntary organizations, like the NGOs.

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