

Press / Media Release

Indian Institute of Sustainable Development (IISD), New Delhi

Email: sustainableinstitute@gmail.com, Mob: +91-9891992711

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India is a Country of 1.25 billion population, with 3.48 million sqkm i.e 2.47% of planet's land mass , implying huge pressure to our natural resources i.e land, water, forests, minerals etc. When we are going through a transition, while tackling the issues of global warming and climate change now, Deforestation is a major concern. Deforestation occurs because of many things such as Open Caste Mining, Large Hydro Projects, Timber Logging, Forest Fire, Construction, Agriculture, Rise in Aspiration, Lifestyle and Consumerism, Economic, Development Policies as well as domestic and industrial consumption of wood based charcoal. FAO in 2010 estimates India witnesses 30% of South East Asia's Deforestation and about 13 % global Deforestation due to charcoal production. Deforestation has many adverse impacts such as Climate Change and Global Warming, Decreased Biodiversity, Habitat Loss and Conflicts, Erosion of Top Soil, Loss of Water Resources, Flash Flooding, Economic Losses and Social Consequences etc.

Charcoal as a fuel and raw material, has been used by mankind since pre historic times. There is a clamour across the world to promote charcoal production as a substitute to other biomass sources to be used as fuel. But the majority of Charcoal available comes from illegal deforestation and degradation of Forests across the world, especially from the tropical regions in Africa, South & South East Asia and Latin America. In India, there is a lot of deforestation taking place and also for the sourcing of charcoal for domestic house hold uses like Cooking, Space heating, Laundry Applications (Ironing the Clothes) etc, and Industrial Processing such as (Metallurgical, Pharma, Water Purification, Carbon Disulphide Manufacturing, Food Processing etc) across the regions of Western and Eastern Ghats, North Eastern Forests and Himalayas especially in Indian states Like Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Meghalaya, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharastra, Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Odisha among Others. There are also organized Supply Chain Mechanisms from our Forests work at different part of the country for Charcoal Production to Industrial Consumption.

The industrial consumptions of Charcoal, produced in India, from forests annually affects a forest areas of 22,000 Sq Km and Charcoal produced in Industrial use has a latent affects on an area around 4, 400 Sq Km of Forested land. This massive scale of Deforestation largely goes unnoticed.

There are alternative technologies which uses natural gas in place of charcoal, which is a cleaner fuel, has efficient process economics, and can potentially stop this deforestation for charcoal procurement and thus save thousands of sqkm of India's precious forest resources. In addition, various clean energy sources like solar photovoltaic and thermal and other renewable energy sources also can replace use of charcoal in boilers and furnaces, in addition to replace charcoal as a fuel substitute.

In a country like India, it is not possible to restrict wood based charcoal use in domestic house hold sector, because of socio economic reasons, but there could be some restrictions could be imposed to industrial use of wood based charcoal, where alternate cleaner technologies and fuel sources are available, which offer even some times cheaper options and especially when wood based charcoal use in industries, have been either already banned or restricted in many part of the world