

Role of Consultancy Services in the field of Environment Management with respect to Pohara Forest Region, Dist. Amravati, Maharashtra, India

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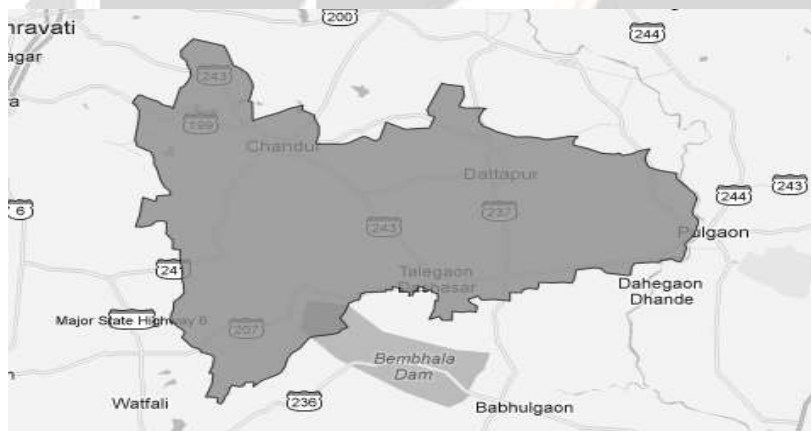
Abstract

The problems of environmental pollution are becoming acute day by day due to emergence of free economy and large scale industrial development. Therefore, the role played by a consultancy organization in the field of environmental management assumes great significance. Moreover, there is urgent need to impart education and training to masses in areas like Pohara forest for the development of scientific and technical manpower to meet the growing needs of environmental protection. In the present paper, an attempt has been made to describe the scope of consultancy services along with requirements and future prospects for the consultancy services in the Environmental Management with respect to Pohara Forest of Amravati District in Maharashtra State.

Key words: Pohara forest, EIA, Eco-tourism, Sustainable development, Environmental Managemet.

Introduction:

Technology Policy Statement (TPS) of Government of India emphasizes that development should not upset the ecological balance for short as well as long-term considerations. Due regard is to be given to the preservation and enhancement of the



ecological and environmental quality in the choice of technologies. Measures to improve environmental hygiene needs also to be evolved. In view of large number of industrial, tourism and infrastructural projects being taken up with the emergence of free economy and investment agencies, the problem of environmental pollution is becoming critical day-by-day.

Due to this, in the coming years there is going to be vast scope for consultancy services in the field of environment management. In the present paper, an attempt has been made to describe significant contributions expected from a consultancy agency or organization, with respect Pohara forest in Amravati District of Maharashtra State.

About Pohara forest:

Pohara forest in Amravati district (Vidarbha region) of Maharashtra State is one of the undisturbed natural habitats of tropical dry deciduous forest maintaining natural resources and biodiversity. The forest is endowed with characteristic environmental features pertaining to temperature, humidity, rainfall, etc. that favour the growth and development of rich vegetation. It is located between 20°57' N and 77°57' E longitude. The total area is about 80 Km². The area is impinged by villagers who are mostly small to very small farmers. They mostly graze their sheep and cattle on available grasslands and take annual produce mostly from Jawar and Bajara. There are 10 reservoirs in this forest range namely – Indla, Pohara, Bhivapur, Chattri, Wadali, Sawanga, Basalpur, Amravati University, Kondeshwar and Ghatkhed. The specific environmental conditions surrounding these reservoirs in Pohara forest provides ecological niche for rich and diversified vegetation along with wild fauna.

The Pohara forest’s vegetation consists of natural forests type i.e. semi-evergreen, dry-deciduous along with Teak (*Tectona grandis*), Palas (*Butea monosperma*), Khair (*Acacia catechu*) and Salai as dominant plantations. It possesses more than 324 plant species belonging to about 48 families and also noteworthy faunal diversity.

Need for Environmental Consultancy:

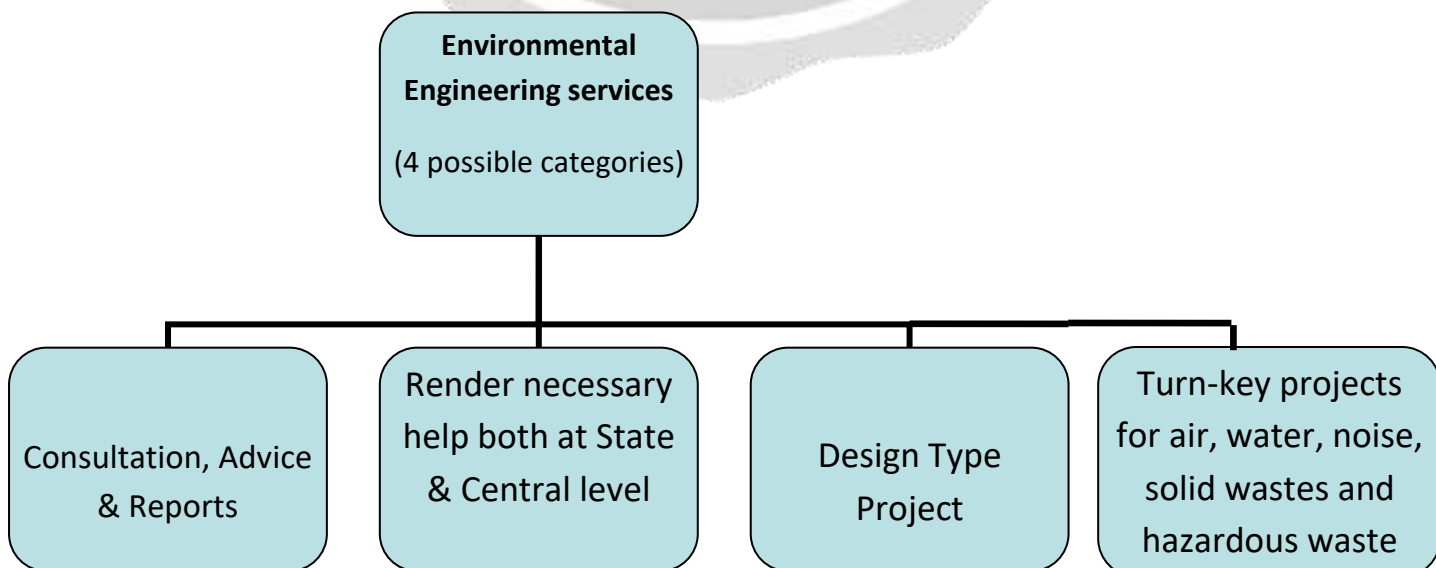
Provision of safe water to all, and basic sanitation facilities to a large segment of population is the goal set for which India is committed. Municipal sewerage, sewage treatment and solid waste management systems are being planned for various cities and towns. Environmental planning of human habitat and environmental impact assessment of large developmental projects have of late resulted into integration of the project formulation of development schemes covering site selection, pollution control, ecological protection, socio-economic considerations, etc.

From socio-economics to ecology, and engineering solutions based on scientific and ecological appraisal, the environmental planning and control measures lead to multidisciplinary and inter-institutional efforts. Development of overall environmental programs therefore, need specialized and integrated consultancy expertise services depending on the situation.

This forest has distinct beauty and hence number of tourists visits this natural area during June to January from surrounding districts. Their activities as a whole, has directly related with soil, water reservoirs, wildlife, vegetation, environment; thereby disturbing the natural habitats. Conserving and safeguarding the rich bio-diversity and their habitats is not only essential but urgent in this region, which may be fulfilled through consultancies of environmental management.

Scope and Services:

The engineering services performed by a consultancy firm or consultancy engineer or Environmentalist, can be grouped under four broad categories.



There is a vast scope for the consultancy organizations to the work in the area of EIA, Risk Assessment, Environmental audit and carrying capacity-based developmental planning project. This is necessary in view of the stringent guidelines of Ministry of Environment and Forests (Govt. of India), as also State pollution control boards and the scope has widened further due to necessity of implementing various environmental safeguards for sustainable development.

Environmental engineering consultancy organization can come under any of the following categories:

1. Consultants providing engineering services supplement by testing, evaluation and field investigation services.

2. Individual Consultants



REQUIREMENTS FOR THE CONSULTANT:

Consultancy today is not just advising. Today the world is changing rapidly and so are the ways of doing consultancy business. The dissemination of information at a very low cost and very high speed coupled with reliability is leading to the reconstruction of value chain.



With the change becoming an inevitable part of every aspect of consultancy business, the role of consultant is becoming more and more challenging and exciting. Today the client aspect from the consultant a turn-key type of work to be done by him rather than wasting time and money for selecting different consultants for different task.

For example, for establishing waste water treatment plant for an industry, it is expected from the consultant to analyze the problem, design the ETP and undertake its construction including successful trial runs so as to fulfill the requirement of regional regulatory agency.

Similarly, there may be instances when the client needs inputs from multi-disciplinary group of experts to solve his specific problem. In such cases, the consultant has to keep capabilities for doing multi-disciplinary jobs.

Prospects of Consultancy in Pohara Forest:



With the depletion of sources of energy such as coal, wood, petroleum products, etc. and the resultant increasing levels of pollution caused by the use of these resources, there is going to be drastic change on energy front in the coming decades, in Pohara forest region. In view of the projections for future as also in view of the importance that the environmental protection and conservation of natural resources will get, the prospects for the future of the consultancy organizations dealing with environment-related areas appears to be bright and the consultants will have to play a major role in the society for solving variety of problems related to ecology and environment of Pohara forest, for example, - Eco-tourism Concept



The IUCN Eco-Tourism programme defines “Eco-tourism” as “Environmentally responsible travel and visitation to relatively undisturbed natural areas in order to enjoy and appreciate nature, that promotes conservation, has low visitor impact and provides for beneficially active socio economic development of local population”. However, for tourism to be called eco-tourism, it should be fully compatible with the conservation goals of the country, while at the same time pose minimum threat to the continuation of local culture and society. Moreover, it should contribute to management of

ecosystems. (Brown *et al.*, 1997)

Prababale solutions from Environmental Consultancy:

To ensure responsible growth for tourism without causing irreversible damage to natural environment, activities relating to tourism should take care of following in Pohara forest:

- Promotion of tourism based on careful assessment of the carrying capacity and support facilities such as transport, fuel, water and sanitation.
- Development of tourism in harmony with the environmental conditions and without affecting the lifestyles of local villagers living here.
- Restriction of indiscriminate growth of tourism and strict regulation of tourist activities in sensitive areas like – Malkhed, Savanga & Chattri lake.
- Awareness campaigns, environmental education, hospitality training and vocational education can develop more responsible tourists, more responsible workers and developers at all levels in the tourism industry and the more responsible inhabitants in host community .
- To involve the tourists in conservation efforts at the destinations.

As number of tourists coming in reserve are increasing, tour operators have the opportunity to become more actively involved with the conservation of biodiversity through environmental education.

With this kind of tourism, visitors, have the opportunity to meet and interact with people other than those who are involved only in providing tourism services – as is the case in conventional tourism. The local people too have the opportunity to meet them as friends from outside who express an intension to jump across the cultural barrier as well as traditional structure of tourism. In such a way, the alternate tourism provides a lot of scope of being closer to the environment. It also helps in retaining the intrinsic cultural values of the communities where such visits are made. At the same time this form of tourism acts as the real instrument for sustainable use of natural resources, maintenance of biodiversity and economic development of a region as a whole.

Concluding Remarks:

The problems faced in the environmental management are of varied type and multi-disciplinary. The traditional concept of rendering advice on specific environmental problem, design and specifications for water/ waste water treatment plants has become outdated. In the era of free economy and global competition, many National and international consultancy firms are establishing their offices across, which may need inputs from Indian Counterparts. It is necessary to plan and implement appropriate strategies for the growth and prosperity of consultancy organizations in our country.

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