

# GREEN HRM, A REQUIREMENT OF 21ST CENTURY

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## **ABSTRACT**

*The Green Human Resources Management is based on green movement related to Protection of Environment and save the planet Earth from future disasters. The “Magna Carta” on Human Environment was declared in the first United Nation’s (International) Conference on Human Environment held in June 1972 in Stockholm declared that, to defend & improve the human environment for present and future generation has become an imperative goal for mankind.*

*The Green Human Resource Management will play an important role in industry to promote the environment related issues by adopting it, in management philosophy, HR policies and practices, training people and implementation of laws related to Environment Protection.*

*The Green HRM will also help the employers, manufacturers in image and brand building and by strictly implementing the ISO 14000 standards, environmental audit, thus changing the organizational culture, thinking about waste management, pollution and helping the society and its own people, those are getting effected by pollution. It will also make employees and society members aware of the utilization of natural resources more economically and encourage eco-friendly products.*

*In this paper an attempt has been made to promote the importance of Green HRM in polluting industries for e.g. the case of Union Carbide.*

**Keywords:** Green HRM, Clean HRM, Protective Environment, Natural Resources

## **INTRODUCTION**

The Green HRM is the requirement of 21<sup>st</sup> Century as day in and day out, it is reported in the news paper that because of the excess consumption of natural resources as a raw material by the industries and other commercial organization there is tremendous pressure on the natural resources of planet Earth. The situation is so alarming that the scientist and the environmentalist are discussing the issues of ecological imbalances and the bio-diversity. In every International Conference on environment the nations are discussing about the carbon credits, global warming and the changes in the climate, resulting into earthquakes, frequent floods and vanishing of certain species and animals.

The responsibility of the present generations, HR managers is to create awareness amongst the youngsters and among the people working for the organization about the Green HRM, Green Movement, utilization of natural resources and helping the corporate to maintain proper environment, and retain the natural resources for our future generation i.e. sustainable development.

### **OBJECTIVES OF THE PAPER**

An attempt is made to spread the awareness amongst the industries, across the country on Green HR, thereby helping the organizations and its people, to understand the environmental related issues and reduce environmental problems, hazards and pollutions.

### **Green Movement**

Green Movement is a political movement which advocates four important principles, environmentalism, sustainability, non-violence and social justice. Supporters of the Green Movement are called Greens, adhere to Green Ideology and share many ideas with ecology, conservation, environment, feminist and peace movements. In March 1972, the World's First Green Party, the United Tasmania Group was formed, at the same time, in Canada, a small party was formed, then it spread to the other countries. In India the Bishnoi Community, the traditionally lovers and protectors of trees and animals like deer and cinkara were responsible for green movement in Jodhpur, Rajasthan.

Green ideology emphasizes participatory democracy and the principle of "thinking globally acting locally".

The Green movement encompasses the green parties of various countries and relies on the ideals of the larger Ecology Movement, Peace Movement, Conservation Movement, Environmental Movement and general trend towards environmentalism. The Green Movement in India focused on the environment related issues and it covers movements like Chipko Movment, Narmada Bachao Andolan, Project Tiger Scheme, Tiger Task Force.

ONGC Participation in Green movement with responsibility towards society and the world e.g.1) IPSHEM ONGC, Goa celebrates World Environment Day.

- 2) ONGC launches Green Vadodara Movement with Indian Express.
- 3) World Environment Day celebrated in ONGC Vadodara.
- 4) ONGC Eastern Region celebrates World Environment Day.

### **The Green HR**

The Green Movement across the world gave birth to Green HR. Human Resource Management is responsible for managing, developing and retaining employees in the organization. 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Century was an era of industrialization, especially in Europe the Industrial Revolution started in 19<sup>th</sup> Century, manufacturing large quantity of consumer goods, the factory system and demand for different products, the advancement of technology put lot of pressure on the natural resources of planet Earth e.g. exploitation of resources like air, water, exploitation of flora and fauna. E.g. timber, minerals, chemicals including animals and forest for commercial needs of the society. Large number of human being left their traditional business of farming, trained themselves and were employed by industries

like mines, textiles, transportation, chemicals, pharmaceuticals, etc. The result of industrialization was that the world community started discussing about natural resources, pollution, ecological imbalance and bio-diversity. As the strength of industrial workers increased a separate department or cell was created to handle the employees, it was early called as Personnel Department and now Human Resource. The responsibilities given to this department was to ensure and get right person for the right job, trained them, retain and develop them as per the requirement of industry. The result was that these employees recruited started using natural resources as a raw material to manufacture required goods or products, resulting in industrial wastage and polluting the surrounding climate or environment.

**The Impact of Industrialisation on Environment**

The impact of industrialization was so great that the industries became the major consumer of natural resources like air, water, land minerals, plants and animals, thus effecting the environment and becoming the basic cause for pollution and ecological imbalances. The table below indicates the industries effecting natural resources :

| Sr. No. | Industry      | Natural Resources used  | Products                                   | Impact /Effects                   |
|---------|---------------|-------------------------|--------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1.      | Paper         | Plants & Trees          | Paper                                      | Forest                            |
| 2.      | Pharma        | Plants and animals      | Medicines                                  | Flora and fauna<br>Bio-diversity  |
| 3.      | Automobiles   | Petroleum Products      | Cars & trucks                              | Air pollution                     |
| 4.      | Food Products | Plants & animals, water | Human consumption product                  | Air, water pollution              |
| 5.      | Chemicals     | Soil, ores, minerals    | Agricultural products, Industrial products | Pollutes environment (air, water) |

The exploitations of natural resources globally has lead to serious issue like global warming, depletion of ozone layers and increase of CFC and CO2 in the atmosphere. The result is melting of ice/snow near the poles and increase in the sea-water levels. Exploitations of natural resources had also effected the flora and fauna, results in reducing the forest animals, disturbing the food chains and the eco-systems. The result was the world environmentalist started discussing ecological issues globally. The United Nations Conference on the human environment having met at Stockholm in June 1972.

The Second Conference was held in the year 1992, June is called as Rio-Declaration because of these conference the impact was that the respective governments started passing laws to protect the environment in their countries. In India, the government has passed the laws to protect natural resources –

e.g.(a) The Water (Prevention & Control of Pollution)Act, 1974.

(b) The Air (Prevention & Control of Pollution) Act, 1974.

(c) The Environment (Protection) Act, 1986.

To protect the flora and fauna laws like –

- (a) The Forest(Conservation) Act, 1980
- (b) The Wildlife Protection Laws, etc. was enacted.

**The questions arises is, ‘Are these laws will be helpful to protect environment and Green Movement?’**

The Cocoyoc Declaration on Environment and Development in the early 1970’s used the term “Sustainable Development”. The term was brought into common use by the World Commission on Environment and Development (The Brundtland Commission) in its Seminar Report 1987 “Our Common Future”. The Brundtland Report has given a very comprehensive definition of sustainable development in the following words.

“Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of the future generations to meet their own needs.”

Sustainable development does not imply absolute limits to growth and its is not a new name of environmental protection. It is a new concept of economic growth. It is a process of change, in which economic and fiscal policies, trade and foreign policies, energy, agricultural and industrial polices, all aim to induce development paths that are economically, socially and ecologically sustainable. The Brundtland report emphasized that sustainable development means an integration of economic and ecology in decision making at all levels.

Therefore, the Green Movement, Green HR Industrialization, sustainable development are all related to environment and its management to protect the planet Earth. By discussing or passing laws the problem is partly solved but still the main issues are making the corporate world to understand, the employees working for various industries to understand and ultimately the society and the consumer of the products. These understanding will leads to manufacturing of Eco-friendly product, Eco-friendly Technology and Eco-friendly raw materials and to monitor this we require ISO 14000 or Green Audit.

### **Introduction of Green Thinking In The Organisations**

HR plays an important role in Management of people, which is regarded as an Asset of an organization. The people in the organizations must realize the importance of Green Movement, Green HR and Green Audit.

The responsibility of the present generation HR Managers is to incorporate the Green HR Philosophy in corporate mission statement, HR-Polices. It should also spread it with the help of training programmes, in recruitment,etc.

### **Towards Clean Hr**

- a) ISO 14000 environmental management standards exists to help companies to minimize the operational affects on natural resources and environment, to comply with pollution laws and improve, organizations applying for ISO 14000 series, conducting environmental audits and using eco-friendly technology and producing eco-friendly products. It is a step towards Clean HR e.g. in many manufacturing

companies are shifting from old packing material like tin containers, plastic bags to eco-friendly packing material.

- b) Paperless Office : Banks and other service sector were major consumer of paper, but today with introduction of IT, the consumption of paper has come down. E-business, e-learning has changed the methods and procedures at offices.
- c) Wastage-Disposal : This recent development in disposal of industrial waste, domestic waste, the sewerage system, bio-medical waste is an example of “Protective Environment” or we care for environment.

### **Corporate Social Responsibilities And Green Hr**

CSR is also known as Responsible Business or Corporate Social Performance. It is a form of corporate self regulation integrated into a business model. CSR policy emerges from the corporate vision, mission and objectives. Corporate does not operate in a vacuum, they are part of society, responsible to different stakeholders. Business would put responsibility for the impact of their activities on the environment, consumer, employees, communities stakeholders and all other members of public spheres. There are different approaches for CSR by corporate, community based development projects are regarded as CSR – Programmes. Few cases are discussed below where the traces of Green Human Resource Management and **CLEAN HR** are seen.

**Indian Oil Corporate Social Responsibility** has been the cornerstone of success right from inception in the year 1964. The corporation’s objectives in this KPA are enshrined in its mission statement to help, enrich the quality of life of the community and preserve ecological balance and heritage through a strong environment conscience” Indian Oil have defined a set of Core values e.g. Care, Innovation, Passion and Trust. Indian Act is also committed to the Global Compact Programme of the U.N. and endeavors to abide by the 10 principles of the programme. Bhopal Case Tragedy, the Case of Union Carbide of Indian was an eye-opener. It occurred on the night of December 2<sup>nd</sup> -3<sup>rd</sup> 1984, a leak of Methyl isocyanate gas and other chemicals from the plant resulted in exposure of hundreds of thousands of people, estimates vary on the death toll. The official toll which the Madhya Pradesh Govt. has confirmed was 3787 deaths and about 38,478 temporary partial and 3900 severely and permanently disabled. The environmentalist have warned that the contamination may lead to decades of slow poisoning. This has forced the government to take necessary steps by amending the laws like The Factories Act, 1948.

The Green Building Movement spearheaded by CII Godrej since 2001 has come a long way, LEED India NC (New Construction) a fully indigenous rating to suit the National context has been launched effectively. 1<sup>st</sup> Jan 2007, LEED India CS (Core & Shell) has also been launched effectively in September 2007. The Indian Green Building Council (IGBC) would administer the LEED India rating system. Some of the salient features of a green building are :

- Minimal disturbance to landscapes and site conditions.
- Use of recycled and environmental friendly building material.
- Use of non-Toxic and recycled / recyclable materials.

- Efficient use of water and water recycling.
- Use of Energy Efficient and Eco-friendly Equipment.
- Use of renewable energy.
- Indoor air quality for Human Safety and Comfort.
- Effective Controls and Building Management System.

## **CONCLUSION**

More than half of the employers practice strategic environmental management, according to a new survey conducted by M/s. Buck Consultants in U.S. in 2008. The research examined the types of “green” initiatives employers are in workforce management and HR practices. A key finding of “The Greening HR Survey” indicates that 54% organizations, incorporated environmental management in their business operations, 74% used web to reduce travel, 76% promote reduction of paper use & 60% implement wellness/fitness programmes for employees. In India, green movement and Green HR is still in infancy, though through CSR – programmes Green awareness is generated and some organizations have started environmentally friendly HR-practices and the preservation of knowledge capital. Green HR involves reducing the carbon footprint via less printing of paper. To conclude one can say that HR has a role in the pursuit of greener business practices, a role to save planet earth and recruit new employees and enforce greener working practices and change environmentally unfriendly behaviours. HR has significant opportunity to contribute the green movement and motivate employee / people to work for greener business. A report published in DNA paper on March 27, 2010. “Corporations are going the green mile, points out that number of consultancy and corporate taking initiatives on Green HR and Green Movement e.g. Gensol Consultants (P) Ltd., the Hyatt Regency, id 8 Media Solutions adopted Green lifestyle. Lastly, the giant Pepsico has reduced its water use by 15%.

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