HUMAN INTERFERENCE TO THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT IN THE BRITISH PERIOD: AN EXPERIENCE FROM THE INDIAN SUNDARBANS

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Abstract
The ways that man interacts with the environment has changed with the passage of time. The emergence and flourish of colonialism made the world capitalized, industrialized, and technologically sound but has been accelerated human interference to the natural environment. Moreover, burgeoning trend of population growth was another outcome of industrial revolution. With rapid increase of population, more and more demand and exploitation of resource is an inevitable phenomenon. Thus, nature has been exploited recklessly and defaced drastically. The Sundarbans of India does not show any exception to this. Since long past, the region experienced long-term downgrading of environment. But, in the British period (after 1765) it attained accelerated rate with the process of land reclamation. Deforestation, construction of embankments and fisheries, crowding of people all together are co-lateral consequences in the colonial Sundarbans. With this mind set, this paper provides an overview of human interference to the natural environment as an effect of colonialism and its subsequent impact on the natural ecosystem.

Keywords: Human interference, reclamation, deforestation, settlement development, embankment