

## **Environmental Issues**

The position you have been assigned in the Constituent Assembly is to draft an amendment that addresses the concerns of the environment and land use in Nepal.

Natural resources are considered an important economic and cultural asset in Nepal. Effectively managing those resources to maximize economic benefits while preserving a balanced ecology is a challenge for the nation. 21% of the land in Nepal is suitable for agriculture, as the population grows there is a constant demand for an expanded food supply. Deforestation, overuse of wood for fuel, lack of oil or natural gas reserves as energy alternatives plague Nepal. Fuel wood accounts for more than 90% of fuel consumption in Nepal and has contributed to deforestation. This loss of forests and degradation of the remaining forests contributes to soil erosion which decreases the agricultural productivity of the land. This problem is exacerbated by overgrazing, hillside cultivation and improper farming techniques.

Air pollution and solid waste disposal are areas of concerns for urban areas such as Kathmandu which has become one of the most polluted cities on the planet.

Natural conditions are also troublesome as the mountains are the site of landslides and earthquakes. The monsoon can bring flooding.

Biodiversity is under threat in Nepal due to deforestation, desiccation, illegal hunting and poaching. Tourism is an important industry that is closely tied to the environmental condition of Nepal but the civil disruption of the 1990's had a negative impact that is still being felt.