



Environmental threats, vulnerability, and adaptation

CASE STUDIES FROM INDIA



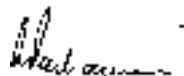
The Energy and Resources Institute

Preface

The issue of vulnerability and adaptation acquires great importance in the context of the impacts of climate change. The Third Assessment Report (TAR) of the IPCC clearly put forward the prospect that irrespective of what happens globally in mitigation of emissions of greenhouse gases, the world will face climate change for a long time to come extending possibly over centuries. Consequently, adaptation would have to be a significant part of the strategy for dealing with climate change, requiring a clear assessment of vulnerability of different locations as well as the impacts on ecosystems and communities which are vulnerable. It is important that in analysing this issue and mapping out different options, we do not see the issue of vulnerability and adaptation in isolation of past experience. The world has dealt with naturally-induced climate change in the past, and even more so with extreme weather events that have produced harmful impacts on ecosystems and human civilization over the years. Consequently, our knowledge on how to deal with human-induced climate change and its undesirable impacts would be strengthened considerably by an assessment of how ecosystems and human communities have dealt with naturally-induced climate change phenomena in the past.

This compilation of case studies from India provides just such an analysis and in-depth study of vulnerability and adaptation based on a range of experiences in different parts of India. The universal relevance and value of this compilation is inherent in

the fact that India is a country of enormous diversity, not only in the range of ecosystems that exist and have been sustained for thousands of years in different corners of this subcontinent, but also because the country has enormous diversity of culture, social systems, and levels of economic development. Hence, the case studies produced in this volume would be of direct use to different regions of the world. It is, therefore, hoped that the material contained in these pages would be of value in enhancing the knowledge of different societies, thus enabling them to deal with the impacts of climate change wherever this challenge is faced.



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