

Introduction

Over the past three decades the issue of environmental preservation was on the top of the agenda of global and international concerns as one of the most important issues at both the national and international levels.

Environmental preservation means the maintenance of all types of flora and fauna, and natural resources and the prevention of all practices and activities that can lead to the extinction or endangering of natural resources, being invaluable wealth for future generations, and a live stock of renewable genes, capable of accommodating much of the future potential biotechnological developments that are currently unforeseen, and which can ensure global food for all human beings and achieve prosperity for all mankind.

International concern with environmental issues has escalated in the wake of the increase in adverse human activities and practices towards the environment in recent years as a result of the massive population increase. Many natural habitats were destroyed containing flora and fauna; the natural plant cover has been removed and replaced with agricultural and industrial systems that have become a hazardous pollution source. This was associated with housing, transport and energy systems that led to the rise of gigantic cities, which in turn had its destructive impact on the environment causing the disappearance of many rare living species and their natural habitats in unprecedented rates and in a manner posing a threat to the Earth's ecological systems.

Global concern with environmental issues has thus grown and was reflected in many international fora. Many international and

regional conventions and treaties have been ratified binding signatory countries to establish legislative and administrative structures and adopt local and regional policies for protecting the environment and its natural wealth. Many international donor institutions and programs have also been established for supporting local environment protection programs and policies, particularly in developing countries through the provision of financial and technical assistance for supporting such programs.

Egypt, as most countries seeking to achieve socio-economic development, is facing many environmental problems due to the rapid population growth, which doubled one and a half folds over the last 40 years and is expected to reach in early 2025 about 103 million. Such increase has placed pressure on natural resources due to the expansion in industrial, agricultural and tourism activities in order to achieve the economic development that fulfills the requirements of such increase in population.

Internal rural-urban migration has also increased leading to the tripling of urban population in Egypt during the last two decades putting more pressures on the urban environment in general.

Therefore, and for emphasizing Egypt's cultural role, regionally and internationally, Egypt has directed significant concern to environmental issues and participated in ratifying many international conventions and treaties aiming at the implementation of rational environmental policies.

Egypt has also started establishing its legislative and institutional structure that works to protect its natural resources and habitats.

In this respect, many Egyptian Legislations have been promulgated with the aim of protecting the Environment, most important of which are:

- Law 45/49 on noise and sound amplifiers control.
- Law 66/53 on using fuel, coal and oil raw materials.
- Law 21/58 on Industry.
- Law 86/56 on Mines and Quarries.
- Law 59/60 on Ionizing activities.
- Law 79/61 on marine disasters and debris.
- Law 53/66 on Agriculture.
- Law 38/67 on Public Cleaning.
- Law 1/73 on Industrial establishments and noise abatement.
- Law 106/76 on Housing.
- Law 52/81 on Pollution Prevention.
- Law 173/82 on Work Environment.
- Law 3/82 on Urban Planning.
- Law 93/82 on Sanitary drainage and liquid wastes.
- Law 48/82 on Protecting the Nile and water ways from pollution.
- Law 102/83 on nature protectorates.
- Law 12/84 on Irrigation and drainage.
- Law 4/94 on Environment Protection.

In addition to many ministerial and administrative decrees and decisions.

The Presidential decree no. 631/82 on establishing EEAA for charting the general policy for the environment and coordinating with the competent administrative authorities.

In 1997, and for the first time in Egypt, a Ministry of State for Environmental Affairs (MSEA) has been established, bringing under its direct affiliation EEAA to act as the general coordinator for environmental policies in Egypt responsible for their monitoring and implementation. Parliamentarian

representatives responsible for the environment were also assigned to the Health and Environment Committees in both the People's and Shura Councils.

Environmental action philosophy in Egypt is focused on striking a balance between pressing economic and social requirements in Egypt on the one hand and maintaining natural resources and wealth in a manner that would ensure protecting the environmental rights of future generations.

This report aims at highlighting the most important features of the state of environment in Egypt and factors affecting such state, as well as the efforts of MSEA and all state institutions concerned with environmental issues in supporting environmental policies and improving environmental quality in Egypt.