

13. ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE

Unit 1: The Multidisciplinary nature of environmental studies

Definition, scope and importance

Need for public awareness.

Unit 2: Natural Resources:

Renewable and non-renewable resources:

Natural resources and associated problems.

- a) Forest resources: Use and over-exploitation, deforestation, case studies. Timber extraction, mining, dams and their effects on forests and tribal people.
- b) Water resources: Use and over-utilization of surface and ground water, floods, drought, conflicts over water, dams-benefits and problems.
- c) Mineral resources: Use and exploitation, environmental effects of extracting and using mineral resources, case studies.
- d) Food resources: World food problems, changes caused by agriculture and overgrazing, effects of modern agriculture, fertilizer-pesticide problems, water logging, salinity, case studies.
- e) Energy resources: Growing energy needs, renewable and non renewable energy sources, use of alternate energy sources. Case studies.
- f) Land resources: Land as a resource, land degradation, man induced landslides, soil erosion and desertification.

Role of an individual in conservation of natural resources.

Equitable use of resources for sustainable lifestyles.

Unit 3: Ecosystems

- Concept of an ecosystem.
- Structure and function of an ecosystem.
- Producers, consumers and decomposers.
- Energy flow in the ecosystem.
- Ecological succession.
- Food chains, food webs and ecological pyramids.
- Introduction, types, characteristic features, structure and function of the following ecosystem:-
 - a. Forest ecosystem
 - b. Grassland ecosystem
 - c. Desert ecosystem
 - d. Aquatic ecosystems (ponds, streams, lakes, rivers, oceans, estuaries)

Unit 4: Biodiversity and its conservation

- Introduction – Definition: genetic, species and ecosystem diversity.
- Biogeographical classification of India

- Value of biodiversity: consumptive use, productive use, social, ethical, aesthetic and option values
- Biodiversity at global, National and local levels.
- India as a mega-diversity nation
- Hot-spots of biodiversity.
- Threats to biodiversity: habitat loss, poaching of wildlife, man-wildlife conflicts.
- Endangered and endemic species of India
- Conservation of biodiversity: In-situ and Ex-situ conservation of biodiversity

Unit 5: Environmental Pollution

Definition

Causes, effects and control measures of :-

a. Air pollution

b. Water pollution

c. Soil pollution

d. Marine pollution

e. Noise pollution

f. Thermal pollution

g. Nuclear hazards

- Solid waste Management: Causes, effects and control measures of urban and industrial wastes.
- Role of an individual in prevention of pollution
- Pollution case studies
- Disaster management: floods, earthquake, cyclone and landslides.

Unit 6: Social Issues and the Environment

- From Unsustainable to Sustainable development
- Urban problems related to energy
- Water conservation, rain water harvesting, watershed management
- Resettlement and rehabilitation of people; its problems and concerns. Case studies.
- Environmental ethics: Issues and possible solutions.
- Climate change, global warming, acid rain, ozone layer depletion, nuclear accidents and holocaust. Case studies.
- Wasteland reclamation
- Consumerism and waste products.
- Environment Protection Act.
- Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act.
- Water (Prevention and control of Pollution) Act
- Wildlife Protection Act
- Forest Conservation Act
- Issues involved in enforcement of environmental legislation
- Public awareness.

Unit 7: Human Population and the Environment

- Population growth, variation among nations.
- Population explosion- Family Welfare Programme
- Environment and human health.
- Human Rights.
- Value Education.
- HIV / AIDS.
- Women and Child Welfare.
- Role of Information Technology in Environment and Human Health.
- Case Studies.

Unit 8: Field work

- Visit to a local area to document environmental assets-river / forest / grassland / hill / mountain