

ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES



Meaning

- Environmental Studies is a multidisciplinary academic field – which systematically studies human interaction with the environment in the interests of solving complex problems.
- Environmental studies are the scientific study of the environmental system and the status of its inherent or induced changes on organisms.
- It includes not only the study of physical and biological characters of the environment but also the social and cultural factors and the impact of man on environment.

- Environmental science is the study of how the environment interacts biologically, chemically and physically.
- Environmental Studies brings together the principles of Sciences, Commerce/ Economics and Social Sciences so as to solve contemporary environmental problems.
- It is a broad field of study that includes also the natural environment, built environment, and the sets of relationships between them.

- In today's world because of industrialization and increasing population, the natural resources has been rapidly utilised and our environment is being increasingly degraded by human activities, so we need to protect the environment.
- It is not only the duty of government but also the people to take active role for protecting the environment, so protecting our environment is economically more viable than cleaning it up once, it is damaged.

- The role of mass media such as newspapers, radio, television, etc is also very important to make people aware regarding environment.
- There are various institutions, which are playing positive role towards environment to make people aware regarding environment like BSI (Botanical Survey of India, 1890), ZSI (Zoological Survey of India, 1916), WII (Wild Life Institute of India, 1982) etc

- This interdisciplinary examination of ecosystems covers topics such as biodiversity, groundwater contamination, conservation, climate change, soil contamination, waste management, air pollution, water quality and sustainable management.
- The field encompasses study in basic principles of ecology and environmental science, as well as associated subjects such as ethics, geography, policy, politics, law, economics, philosophy, environmental sociology and environmental justice, planning, pollution control and natural resource management.

Objectives

According to UNESCO (1971), the objectives of environmental studies are:

- (a) Creating the awareness about environmental problems among people.
- (b) Imparting basic knowledge about the environment and its allied problems.
- (c) Developing an attitude of concern for the environment.
- (d) Motivating public to participate in environment protection and environment improvement.
- (e) Acquiring skills to help the concerned individuals in identifying and solving environmental problems.
- (f) Striving to attain harmony with Nature.

Guiding Principles

According to UNESCO, the guiding principles of environmental education should be as follows:

- (a) Environmental education should be compulsory, right from the primary up to the post graduate stage.
- (b) Environmental education should have an interdisciplinary approach by including physical, chemical, biological as well as socio-cultural aspects of the environment. It should build a bridge between biology and technology.
- (c) Environmental education should take into account the historical perspective, the current and the potential historical issues.

Guiding Principles

- (d) Environmental education should emphasise the importance of sustainable development i.e., economic development without degrading the environment.
- (e) Environmental education should emphasise the necessity of seeking international cooperation in environmental planning.
- (f) Environmental education should lay more stress on practical activities and first hand experiences.

Importance

1. To clarify modern environmental concept like how to conserve biodiversity.
2. To know the more sustainable way of living.
3. To use natural resources more efficiently.
4. To know the behaviour of organism under natural conditions.
5. To know the interrelationship between organisms in populations and communities.
6. To aware and educate people regarding environmental issues and problems at local, national and international levels.

Environmental Education

- Environmental education (EE) refers to organized efforts to teach how natural environments function, and particularly, how human beings can manage behavior and ecosystems to live sustainably.
- It is a multi-disciplinary field integrating disciplines such as biology, chemistry, physics, ecology, earth science, atmospheric science, mathematics, and geography.

- The term often implies education within the school system, from primary to post-secondary.
- However, it sometimes includes all efforts to educate the public and other audiences, including print materials, websites, media campaigns, etc..
- Environmental Education (EE) is the teaching of individuals, and communities, in transitioning to a society that is knowledgeable of the environment and its associated problems, aware of the solutions to these problems, and motivated to solve them

- The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) states that EE is vital in imparting an inherent respect for nature amongst society and in enhancing public environmental awareness.
- UNESCO emphasises the role of EE in safeguarding future global developments of societal quality of life (QOL), through the protection of the environment, eradication of poverty, minimization of inequalities and insurance of sustainable development (UNESCO, 2014a).