

Environmental Politics and Human Rights

The importance of environmental science and environmental studies cannot be disputed. The need for sustainable development is a key to the future of humankind. Continuing problems of pollution, solid waste disposal, degradation of environment, issues like economic productivity and national security, Global warming, the depletion of ozone layer and loss of biodiversity have made everyone aware of environmental issues. The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992 and World Summit on Sustainable Development at Johannesburg in 2002 have drawn the attention of people around the globe to the deteriorating condition of our environment. It is clear that no citizen of the earth can afford to be ignorant of environment issues.

In spite of the deteriorating status of the environment, studies of environment have so far not received adequate attention in our academic programme. This course helps students to understand how their decisions and actions affect the environment, builds Knowledge and skills necessary to address complex environmental issues, as well as ways we can take action to keep our environment healthy and sustainable for the future.

The syllabus for environmental studies and Human Rights includes Classroom teaching and field work. Field study as essential as class work and form an irreplaceable synergetic tool in the entire learning process. As part of this course, the students should conduct a field study and submit the report for internal assessment. Besides to Field study in V semester, a study tour is proposed to make a comparative study of Environmental protection and Human Rights initiatives of Government level agencies during V or IV semester for cognitive knowledge sake

Module-I - Environmentalism: concepts and Perspectives

- a. Evolution of the idea of environmentalism-relationship between political science and environmental studies – impact of industrial revolution – anthropocentric (shallow ecology) vs. bio centric (deep ecology) debates.
- b. Green Politics and Grassroots democracy, Green Parties
- c. Various perspectives : Liberal perspectives (Individualism – private property- natural rights) Marxist(ecological rift and alienation) – green liberalism - Gandhian (Sarvodaya)
- D. 1992 Rio declaration – the Paris Agreement.
- c. Brundtland report – earth summit 20 hrs

Module II-Global environmental Problems and Initiatives

- A. Major transnational environmental problems- global warming ,biodiversity loss and Threats, Hot-Spot of biodiversity, Pollution-Different types of Pollution

B. International Summits and Declarations-

UN Conference on Human Environment 1972 ; UNEP-World Commission on Environment and Development 1987 ;

Sustainable Development – Evolution of the theme, Millennium development Goals and Sustainable development Goals. World Summit on Sustainable development 2002

Environmental Justice Movement – 1980s

C. International Non-Governmental organisation - Sierra Club foundation - Greenpeace – World Wildlife Fund

20 hrs

Module III

Constitutional and other laws for Environmental Preservation:

Constitutional Provisions: Article 14, 21, 48 A and 51 A (g) of Indian Constitution.

National Environmental Policies: Environmental Protection Act 1986 - National Environment policy 2006, Supreme Court and Polluter Pays Principle, Green Tribunal Act 2010: Structure and functions. Forest conservation act, Wild life Act, Air (Prevention and Control pollution) Act, Water (prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, Forest Rights Act

20 hrs

Module IV

Major Environmental Movements and Conservation Practices

A. Bishnoi Movement, Chipko Movement, Appiko Movement, Silent Valley Movement, Narmada Bachavo Andolan, Plachimada Struggle - Chaliar Agitation,

B. Conservation Strategies: Water Conservation, Rain Water Harvesting, Water Shed Management, Ground Water management

15 hrs

Module V

Human Rights

An Introduction to Human Rights, Meaning, concept and development –History of Human Rights-Different Generations of Human Rights- Universality of Human Rights- Basic International Human Rights Documents - UDHR, ICCPR, ICESCR.-Value dimensions of Human Rights

Human Rights co-ordination within UN system- Role of UN secretariat- The Economic and Social Council- The Commission Human Rights-The Security Council and Human rights- The Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination- The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women- the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights- The Human Rights Committee- Critical Appraisal of UN Human Rights Regime.

Human Rights in Indian Constitution – Fundamental Rights- The Constitutional Context of Human Rights-directive Principles of State Policy and Human Rights- Human Rights of Women-children –minorities- Prisoners- Science Technology and Human Rights- National Human Rights Commission- State Human Rights Commission- Human Rights Awareness in Education.

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