MAHATMA GANDHI UNIVERSITY

B.Sc. BOTANY PROGRAMME

Semester V Course 6 BO5B06U

ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE AND ECOTOURISM

(Theory :54 hours; Practical : 45hours) (Theory Credit 3, Practical Credit1)

Course Objectives:

1. Acquaint the student with the significance of Environmental Science.
2. Help the students to understand the extent, limitations and depletion of natural resources
3. Help the student to design novel mechanism for the sustainable utilization of natural resources.
4. Enable the students to understand the structure and function of the Ecosystems
5. Make the students to identify the nature and interactions of populations in the ecosystem
6. Enable the students to understand various kinds of pollution in the environment, their impacts on the ecosystem and their control measures
7. Make the students aware about the nature and structure of various environmental laws in India
8. Make the students aware about the role of various movements in the protection of nature and natural resources.
9. Make the students aware about the extent of the total biodiversity and their conservation.
10. Make the students to assess the positive and negative impacts of Ecotourism and its role in the sustainable utilization of resources for tourism.

ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE **48 hours**

Module 1 **1 hour**

Environmental science and its multidisciplinary nature

Introduction, relevance and scope, public awareness

Module 2 **6 hours**

Natural Resources

- Types of resources-renewable and non renewable
- Forest resources: Timber extraction, mining, dams, over exploitation, deforestation, MFP (minor Forest products) , Joint Forest Management (JFM)
- Water resources: surface and ground water, drinking water, dams-benefits and problems, conflict over water, Rain water harvesting, Water shed conversation
- Food resources: major food crops in India. Causes of food shortage. Food security, world food problems.
- Energy resources: Energy plantation, - *Jatropha*
- Land resources: Land use, land degradation, desertification, EFL(Ecologically Fragile Land)
- Conservation of Biodiversity , ecological footprints

Module 3 — 10 hours

Ecosystems:

- Structure and function of ecosystem: Ecosystem components- abiotic and biotic, Productivity – primary and secondary-gross and net productivity. Decomposition in nature, homeostasis in ecosystem
- Ecological energetics: energy flow, trophic levels, food chain and food web, ecological pyramids
- Nutrient cycles: Biogeochemical cycles of C, N and S.

Module 4 — 4 hours

Community ecology

- Population: size, density, natality, mortality.
- Community characteristics: Species diversity and species richness, dominance, growth forms and structure, trophic structure.
- Association of communities: plant association, ecotypes, ecotone, edge effect, ecological indicators.
- Ecological succession: types of succession, process – migration, ecesis, colonization, stabilization and climax community; hydrosere, xerosere, lithosere.

Module 5 — 4 hours

Plants and environment

Ecological complexes and factors affecting plants growth and response:

- Climatic factors: temperature and pressure; water - precipitation, humidity, soil water holding capacity; light - global radiation.
- Topographic factors: altitude and aspects
- Edaphic factors - profile and physical and chemical properties of soil
- Biotic factors: interactions – positive and negative.

Species – ecosystem interaction: Habitat, ecological niche, microclimate

Adaptation of plants to environment: To Water- Xerophytes, Hydrophytes; Temperature – thermo periodicity, vernalization; light – photoperiodism, heliophytes, sciophytes; salinity – halophytes, mangroves.

Module 6

Environmental pollution and Management — 12 hours

- Definition and general introduction
- Air pollution: Causes and sources, types of pollutants-particulates-aerosol, mist, dust, smoke, fume, plume, fog, smog. Effect of air pollution on plants and animals, Bhopal Gas Tragedy.
- Water pollution: Sources and types of pollutants. Water quality standards, water quality assessment. Ground water pollution-blue baby syndrome. Cycling of heavy metals, hydrocarbons. Eutrophication, BOD, Minamata disease.
- Soil pollution: Causes and sources-waste dumps, municipal wastes, agrochemicals, mining, solid waste management-vermi composting.

- Noise pollution: Sources, standards and measurements, effect on health, control techniques.
- Thermal pollution: Sources and effects
- Nuclear hazards: Sources and impacts.
- EIA: Environmental Impact Assessment in polluted areas

Module 7

Social issues and the environment: **2 hours**

Climate change, global warming and green house gases, IPCC, Acid rain, Ozone layer depletion, nuclear accidents and nuclear holocaust.

Module 8

Environmental legislation and laws: **1 hour**

(1) Environment (protection) Act, 1986, (2) Air (Prevention and control of pollution) Act, 1981, (3) Water (Prevention and control of pollution) Act, 1974, (4) Wildlife (protection) Act, 1972, (5) Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 (briefly)**.**

Module 9 **6 hours**

Biodiversity and Conservation biology:

- Endemism: Definition-types-factors. Hotspot of endemism-hotspots in India. IUCN-threat categories. Red data book., Western Ghats as the hottest spot and its conservations.
- Biodiversity loss: Causes and rate of biodiversity loss, extinction-causes. Alien species, negative and positive impacts
- Conservation efforts: Rio Earth Summit, Agenda 21, Kyoto protocol, COP 15(15^{th} Conference of the Parties under the U N Framework Convention on Climate Change), IPCC (Inter Governmental Panel for Climate Change) and its contribution. Conservation strategies and efforts in India and Kerala, In situ and ex situ conservation methods. Role of NGOs in biological conservation

Module 10 **2 hours**

Organizations, movements and contributors of Ecological studies

- *Organizations*: BNHS, WWF, CSE, NEERI, , MoEF, Green Peace, Chipko
- *Famous contributors of Ecology in India:* Salim Ali, M.S. Swaminathan, Madhav Gadgil, M.C. Mehta, Anil Agarwal, Medha patkar, John C. Jacob, Sunderlal Bahuguna

ECOTOURISM: **6 hours**

Definition, concept, introduction, history, relevance and scope. Components of ecotourism: Forms and types of ecotourism in India and Kerala, ecotourism resources-biological, historical, cultural, and geographical. Ecotourism centers in Kerala. Positive and negative impacts of ecotourism.

Practicals – 45 hours

1. Estimation of CO_2, Cl, and salinity of water samples (Titremetry)
2. Determination of pH of soil and water
3. Assessment of diversity, abundance, and frequency of plant species by quadrate method (Grasslands, forests)
4. Study of the most probable number (MPN) of coliform bacteria in water samples
5. EIA studies in degraded areas (Sampling – line transect, Quadrate)
6. Visit to any forests types including grasslands and preparation of the list of Rare and threatened (R&T) plants (no collection of specimens)
7. Collection, identification and preparation of the list of exotic species in the locality.
8. Identification of pollutant to respective pollution types.
9. Study of anatomical, morphological, physiological adaptation of plants to the environment (Xerophytic, Hydrophytic, Epiphytic, Halophytic).
10. Collection and recording of rain data by using simple rain gauge.

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