

GEOG1016 Nature Conservation for Sustainable Societies (6 credits)

Course Teachers: To be confirmed

Objectives

The course adopts a synoptic and critical survey of human interactions with nature and natural resources, the attendant problems of their misuse and overuse, and the enlightened approaches to nature conservation to contribute towards sustainable societies.

Course Synopsis

The consumption of the Earth's resources has reached an alarming level, bringing intensive and pervasive deleterious impacts. This course surveys the major issues related to human-nature interactions, their current status as well as prognosis for the future. A synoptic view on the cultural roots of the exploitative utilization of our planet sets the backdrop for a systematic assessment of the diverse but interrelated components of the resource system. Major natural resources such as water, soil, forest, fishery and biodiversity are discussed mainly at the global scale in the light of their uses and misuses in different human societies, and the possibility for a more enlightened approach towards a sustainable future. Adopting a non-technical approach, this course appeals to students with a background in humanities, social sciences or science disciplines.

Lecture Topics

- Overview of natural resources
- Water resource and its sustainable management
- Soil degradation and sustainable agriculture
- Non-renewable and renewable resources
- Sustainable management of forests
- Biodiversity loss and conservation

Assessment

Coursework 100% (consists of written exercises and a multiple-choice quiz).

Learning Outcomes

Knowledge:

- Limitations and fragility of the Earth's natural resource base
- Human misuse and mismanagement of natural resources and prognosis of environmental future
- Changes in resource ethics to conserve natural resources to sustain future human needs

Skills:

- Establishment of a comprehensive and holistic perspective of human tenure on Earth
- Realization that the Earth is both a source and a sink in satisfying human needs
- Critical and independent thinking on the stressed relationship between humans and Mother Earth

Recommended Reading List

1. Chiras, D.D. & Reganold, J.P. (2014) *Natural Resource Conservation: Management for a Sustainable Future*, 10th edition (Pearson New International Edition). Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Pearson Education.
2. Wright, R.T. & Boorse, D.F. (2014) *Environmental Science: Towards a Sustainable Future*, 12th edition (International Edition). Benjamin Cummings, Boston.