Environmental Studies (AECC)

Unit 1 : Introduction to environmental studies

- Multidisciplinary nature of environmental studies;
- Scope and importance; Concept of sustainability and sustainable development.

Unit 2 : Ecosystems

- What is an ecosystem? Structure and function of ecosystem; Energy flow in an ecosystem: food chains, food webs and ecological succession. Case studies of the following ecosystems :
  a) Forest ecosystem
  b) Grassland ecosystem
  c) Desert ecosystem
  d) Aquatic ecosystems (ponds, streams, lakes, rivers, oceans, estuaries)

Unit 3 : Natural Resources : Renewable and Non---renewable Resources

- Land resources and landuse change; Land degradation, soil erosion and desertification.
- Deforestation: Causes and impacts due to mining, dam building on environment, forests, biodiversity and tribal populations.
- Water : Use and over---exploitation of surface and ground water, floods, droughts, conflicts over water (international & inter---state).
- Energy resources : Renewable and non-renewable energy sources, use of alternate energy sources, growing energy needs, case studies.

Unit 4 : Biodiversity and Conservation

- Levels of biological diversity : genetic, species and ecosystem diversity; Biogeographic zones of India; Biodiversity patterns and global biodiversity hot spots
- India as a mega---biodiversity nation; Endangered and endemic species of India
- Threats to biodiversity : Habitat loss, poaching of wildlife, man---wildlife conflicts, biological invasions; Conservation of biodiversity : In---situ and Ex---situ conservation of biodiversity.
- Ecosystem and biodiversity services: Ecological, economic, social, ethical, aesthetic and Informational value.

Unit 5 : Environmental Pollution

- Environmental pollution : types, causes, effects and controls; Air, water, soil and noise pollution
- Nuclear hazards and human health risks
- Solid waste management : Control measures of urban and industrial waste.
- Pollution case studies.

Unit 6 : Environmental Policies & Practices

- Climate change, global warming, ozone layer depletion, acid rain and impacts on human communities and agriculture

- Environment Laws: Environment Protection Act; Air (Prevention & Control of Pollution) Act; Water (Prevention and control of Pollution) Act; Wildlife Protection Act; Forest Conservation Act. International agreements: Montreal and Kyoto protocols and Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD).
- Nature reserves, tribal populations and rights, and human wildlife conflicts in Indian context.

Unit 7 : Human Communities and the Environment

- Human population growth: Impacts on environment, human health and welfare.
- Resettlement and rehabilitation of project affected persons; case studies.
- Disaster management : floods, earthquake, cyclones and landslides.
- Environmental movements : Chipko, Silent valley, Bishnois of Rajasthan.
- Environmental ethics: Role of Indian and other religions and cultures in environmental conservation.
- Environmental communication and public awareness, case studies (e.g., CNG vehicles in Delhi).

Unit 8 : Field work

- Visit to an area to document environmental assets: river/ forest/ flora/fauna, etc.
- Visit to a local polluted site---Urban/Rural/Industrial/Agricultural.
- Study of common plants, insects, birds and basic principles of identification.
- Study of simple ecosystems---pond, river, Delhi Ridge, etc.