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Sample Question Paper - I

(Solved)

T.S.-5

Ecology, Environment and Tourism

Disclaimer/Special Note: The Sample Question Paper and their answers given here provides you just the approximate pattern of the actual question paper. However, the actual question paper might somewhat vary in its contents, distribution of marks and its level of difficulty. These Sample Answers/Solutions are prepared by the author for the help of the student to get an idea of how he/she can answer the questions. Sample answers may be Seen as the Guide/Reference Guide. Any Omission or Error is highly regretted though every care has been taken while preparing these Sample Answers/Solutions. Please consult you Teacher/Tutor or refer to the prescribed and recommended study material of the university, if you have any doubt or confusion before appearing in the exam.

Time: 3 Hours] *[Maximum Marks: 100*

*Note: Attempt **any five** questions. **All** questions carry **equal** marks.*

Q. 1. Highlight the importance of Biodiversity and explain how is it related to the balance in an ecosystem.

Ans. Biodiversity conservation is a major environmental issue of present times. So, let us study its importance, reasons for loss and its conservation.

What is Biodiversity?

Biodiversity refers to the totality of genes, species and ecosystems. Total genes or genetic diversity refer to variation of genes with in species. It includes:

(i) Various populations of the same species like thousands of traditional wheat varieties in India.

(ii) The genetic variation within population which is for instance very high among Indian rhinos and is very low among cheetahs.

The total species or species diversity refers to the variety of species in a region while the ecosystem diversity refers to the species or genetic diversity of communities.

Importance of Biodiversity

- Flowering plants are the sources of numerous life saving medicines.
- Micro-organisms have also been widely used in the manufacture of medicines.
- A large number of unexploited and unexplored wild plant and animal species could be potential food sources for future.
- A large number of commercial value products are derived from forests including timber, gum, resins, oils, waxes, dyes and rubber.
- The tribals and other forest communities are largely dependent on wildlife for food, fodder and even recreation.
- The wildlife gene pool is of prime importance in agriculture since many genes from wild have been utilized in crop improvement.

Biodiversity and Ecological Balance

Biodiversity has its inherent role in maintaining the ecological balance which is absolutely essential for survival of life on this planet. A high level of biodiversity is believed to confer a high degree of stability to an ecosystem. For instance,

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the extremely complex ecosystems such as tropical rainforests are not affected much even if one or two species are eliminated due to some disturbance but simplified ecosystems like a wheat field are extremely vulnerable to change and may collapse if abiotic and biotic factors shift much. So, biodiversity has tremendous repercussions for the integrity of an ecosystem and, hence, deserve special consideration in the context of environment preservation.

Causes of Biodiversity Loss

Several factors are responsible for the loss of biodiversity.

(i) **Loss and fragmentation of habitat:** Undisturbed habitats have gradually shrunk over time with the rapid increase in human population and resource consumption which have encroached on the natural habitat.

(ii) **Species introduction:** Whether intentional or unintentional plays an important role in biodiversity loss in an area. The species introduced being superior competitor survives and gets established at the expense of original species on account of which there is loss of original biodiversity.

(iii) **Over exploitation of plant and animal species:** Indiscriminate exploitation of forest, fisheries and wildlife resources for food, precious commodities (e.g., ivory, skin) and as pets have in many cases resulted in the extinction of several endemic species.

(iv) **Pollution:** Pollutants of different kinds like heavy metals from industries, pesticides and fertilizers from agriculture, gaseous pollutants like CO, SOx and NOx from vehicular exhaust, chemical spills, oil spills in seas and oceans create adverse conditions for the very survival and growth of soil biota, terrestrial species and marine life.

(v) **Global climate change:** Anthropogenic activities have resulted in the increase in the atmospheric concentrations of green house gases that have brought about a global temperature rise of 1–3°C over the last century. Further the sea level rise, increase in frequency of extreme events like floods, droughts, would threaten the endemic flora and fauna species of these areas.

Conserving Biodiversity

Biodiversity conservation is essential for maintaining ecological balance which is absolutely essential for survival of life on this planet. The conservation of biodiversity is, therefore, important and must be addressed urgently to prevent species on verge of extinction. The need is to devise strong strategies to enhance awareness and ensure involvement of all sections of the society. The three basic elements of biodiversity conservation include preserving it for future, investigating its potential and its sustainable and equitable utilisation.

1. To slow down biodiversity loss, it's important to have an understanding of its role in ecosystem, its significance for human well being and potential benefits from it. This can be done by maintaining and saving biological resource base (in form of representative samples of ecosystems, species and populations).
2. Greater incentives exist to reduce the biodiversity loss, if its immediate or potential value to humans is enhanced.
3. For sustainable utilization of biodiversity, an integration of traditional and modern knowledge about biodiversity is required.
4. User needs should prioritize the research in biodiversity.

Q. 2. How many Biogeographical regions are there in India? Briefly describe each of them.

Ans. According to Rodgers and Panwar, (1989) India can be divided into 10 biogeographical zones with variation of soil, climate, vegetation, flora and fauna.

Tundra

Location: Ladakh region, parts of Sikkim and Bhutan.

Vegetation: Low shrubs and grassy meadows. Alpine vegetation in parts of NW, Western, Central and Eastern Himalayas on higher altitudes.

Temperate Coniferous Forests

Location: 1600 m altitude on Himalaya and Nilgiri mountains.

Vegetation: Conifers attain height of 20-25 m. Pines and Oak forests.

Tropical Evergreen Rain Forests

Location: Western Ghats, Assam, West Bengal, and parts of Andaman.

Vegetation: Great diversity of species with stratification of herbs, shrubs, epiphytes, lianas. Dense evergreen vegetation

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that include–*Dipterocarpus, Artocarpus, Hopea, Mangifera, Emblica* etc.

Tropical moist semi-evergreen forests in northern India. Trees shed their leaves for brief period. Few evergreen species (*Eugenia, Artocarpus*) mixed with deciduous species like Terminalia, Shorea.

Tropical Deciduous Forests

These can be divided in two categories:

Tropical moist deciduous forests are found in Kerala, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, parts of Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Bengal, and Orissa. Sal and Teak forest are dominant in these forests.

Tropical dry deciduous forests are found in Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, Bihar, Orissa. In these types of forests thorny scrubs, grasses, bamboo with trees like Acacia, Terminalia, Emblica mixed with Sal and Chirongi trees are dominant.

Savanna

Grassland vegetation with scattered trees and shrubs. Grasslands with mixed Acacia, Mimosa, Zizyphus, Calotropis species.

Grasslands

8 types of grasslands based on dominant species and are spread from North to South, East to West parts of the country. There is a mixed growth of trees and shrubs.

Desert

Location: Parts of Rajasthan, Punjab, Kutch and Gujarat.

Climate: Desert climate with hot dry summer and cold winter. Rainfall between 20-70 cm and in some regions as low as 10-15 cm.

Acacia arabica is dominant shrub, others include *Tamarix, Prosopis species, Acacia species* etc.

Q. 3. Discuss the significance of the concepts of Preservation and Conservation in tourism development.

Ans. Conservation basically implies the preservation of some level of biodiversity that is essential for the functioning of ecosystems and for the survival of Mankind on the Earth.

North-south Dialogue on Environmental Conservation

Historically the perspective of people in industrialized countries on environment has differed from those of developing countries. North Americans due to their cultural history, glorify nature to decry its defilement and to propose "back to nature" type solution. While on account of their colonial history, the so called Third world people have been more concerned with social origins and the consequences of anthropogenic environmental degradation. The clash in views of environmental leaders and scientists from both Northern (developed countries) and Southern (developing countries) was evident at the UN Conference in Stockholm. The 1987 report of the World Commission on Environment and Development reflected both the views. However, a positive development has been a new synthesis arising among the world leaders and the differences between the North and South appear to be diminishing. Northern workers are becoming more aware of the environmental damage caused by their activities, while southern people are gaining a broader understanding of the importance of ecosystems and processes of development.

History of Conservation in Modern Times

Conservation of biodiversity has a long and complicated history. World wide the modern conservation behaviour has largely been influenced by major political, economic and intellectual revolutions experienced by the western society.

Western viewpoints on conservation are based on basic western philosophy rooted in Judeo-Christian view of man and nature which combines two ideas i.e., the right to exploit and the responsibility of stewardship.

A fundamental Judeo-Christian belief is that nature was created to serve the human race so the exploitation of nature is legitimate. However, till the beginning of the 18th Century, the rights and rewards of exploitation of nature were with the elite aristocracy. The democratic revolutions of the late 1700s including the American Revolution of 1775-1783 and French Revolution of 1789 restructured the framework of most western societies. And the right to exploit nature was extended to individuals at large in society for improving their economic and social status. Around the same time the industrial and scientific revolutions had begun. The sources of energy were harnessed to enable resources to be processed on large scales and with greater efficiency. The steam engine opened new areas to exploitation. Scientific discoveries lead to a change in basic concept of nature in which God the supreme power was replaced by a world that functioned according to laws of physics and chemistry. Both industrial and scientific revolutions gave enormous ability to exploit nature to create income and wealth. In the middle decades of 19th Century biology underwent a drastic change in its perspective of natural world i.e., the replacement of a static, creationist view of life by an evolving

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mechanistic view. This change was brought about by the theory of natural selection proposed by Charles Darwin and Alfred Wallace. This theory also brought attention to the fact that anthropogenic changes could lead to the extinction of many kinds of organisms. Sudden impact of World War II diverted focus from conservation issues and initiated an era of explosive technological and human growth. Several new things like synthetic fibres, plastics, pesticides, fuels and many other toxic products were introduced. These products caused widespread air, water and soil pollution which exceeded the natural mechanisms of environmental decontamination of pollutants. The Literature of this period addressed environmental concerns in books like Rachel Carson's, *Silent Spring* (1962) and Paul Ehrlich's, *The Population Bomb* (1968).

Presently the various industrial, agricultural and other development activities are rapidly destroying nature and its delicately maintained balance and interdependence which were developed over million of years. Much of destruction has accelerated in last two decades. The worst crime that man has committed is the destruction of forests that sustain life and provide the life giving oxygen. The ecological situation has become very critical today so much so that if urgent steps are not taken things would go beyond control and restore.

Hence, the protection and regeneration of ecology is the only solution for the society. The need is to develop as "part of nature" and not outside of it with fundamental changes in industrial, agriculture and socio-economic political strategies.

Q. 4. What do you understand by 'Responsible tourism'? How can the Government, Industry and Locals contribute to its success?

Ans. Responsible tourism is a kind of tourism which in addition to safeguarding the experience of tourism also enhances the mutual understanding between people, prevents environment and cultural damage and the exploitation of local residents.

Alternative tourism signifies responsible tourism and can help in overcoming the problems caused by this industry. It can also be termed as Appropriate, Sustainable, Soft, Green etc. In this form of tourism the host community plays an important role in decision- making on tourism development. It also involves raising the awareness of tourists prior to arrival at the destination and sensitizes them to local environment.

The idea of alternative tourism is based on two contemporary ideological pre-occupations that include firstly, the complete denial of modern mass consumer and secondly, the concern for impact of industrial development on the developing societies. Both these ideologies bring to the surface the problems of conventional tourism and criticise it through different angles.

Counter Cultural Alternative Tourism

This form inverts the values, motives, attitudes and practices of conventional tourism. The counter cultural alternative tourist does not visit for mere recreation or entertainment but is an adventurer and tries to experience the authentic life. Such tourists travel themselves in groups, according to their interests are self-reliant and accept the hospitality of local residents. They also participate in conservation efforts and contribute towards environmental protection.

Concerned Alternative Tourism

Concerned alternative of tourism is termed as a 'just form of travel' between the hosts and guests and seeks to promote mutual understanding, solidarity and equality among them, leading to personal and economic benefits from the encounter. The principle means of promotion of this type of tourism are several small-scale projects in developing countries established with local participation. Small groups of tourists visit these places and directly interact with residents about the problems faced by them. The visitors pay for the trip and no exploitation is involved.

What is Being Attempted: In many countries NGOs, governments, tourism bodies etc. have initiated efforts towards sustainable and responsible tourism. Based on a tourism sector study in Canada (1994), James Gregor cited seven guiding principles for tourism:

1. Limiting global and regional human impact to a level within the carrying capacity.
2. Maintaining the stock of biological wealth in the region.
3. Minimising the exploitation of non-renewable resources fuels, metals etc.
4. Promoting long-term economic development through renewable energy resources.
5. Provision of equitable distribution of costs and benefits of resource use and environmental management.
6. Provides for effective community participation in decision-making.
7. Promotion of values that achieve sustainability.

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Role of Governments

The governments have responsibility for making the idea of responsible tourism a success. It is worthy to note that environmental issues cannot be tackled by merely passing laws. Firstly, there should be co-ordination among various government departments so that there is no confusion and no room for flouting laws and regulations. Secondly, the laws should be well drafted, with a minimum number of loopholes so that they regulate open breaching of environmental standards.It is much important to ensure the implementation of the laws. Government's policies are important to reduce the problems of tourism industry and of environmental degradation. Certain measures that must be initiated and implemented by the government include:

(i) The carrying capacity of each region must be defined with specific guidelines.

(ii) Environment friendly construction guidelines should be drafted for land use planning integral to tourism.

(iii) Defaulters should be severely punished and there should be no political pressure for flouting laws/ regulations.

(iv) Media should be encouraged for promoting environment awareness. If the government acts tough against industry and tourists as far as environmental protection is concerned results are bound to come.

Role of Industry

Industry has been using eco-tourism as a ploy only to maximise its profits. They have a major role to play in this regard next only to government if they want their future generations to be in same business. The role to be played by industry includes:

1. Sensitising tourists on environmental issues (regarding rules) at time of sale of package.
2. Educating and training own staff towards responsible tourism.
3. Ensuring that their construction and infrastructure development is eco-friendly.
4. Undertaking environmental audits for assessing performance in that area.
5. Promoting business among firms with similar approaches towards environment.

Role of Locals

In addition to the government and industry, the locals of a place should also shoulder the responsibility for promoting alternative tourism, since it is ultimately the locals who would suffer the adverse impacts/wrong policies. It is usually observed that to maximise profits locals damage their own environment through deforestation for increasing area of resorts/ hotels, lack of proper garbage disposal leading to long-term losses. So, it is important that locals play a significant role in alternative tourism development.

- Creating environmental awareness among fellow locals.
- Strict check over construction activities.
- Promoting use of renewable energy resources.
- Role in determination of carrying capacity of the place.
- Protesting against misuse of natural resources for tourism development.

Hence, through coordination between government, tourism industry and locals responsible tourism can be a success.

Q. 5. Discuss the various considerations in planning for development of a coastal settlement as a tourist resort.

Ans. The global trend towards development of coastal areas is towards

- Large scale urbanisation.
- Concentration of trade and industries around major port cities.
- Extensive exploitation of marine resources.
- Increasing domestic and international tourists for leisure and recreation.

The major port cities lure not only the location-specific port and maritime activities but also allied activities (trade, industry and commerce) and uses (institutional). Such activities result in the depletion of coastal tourism resources like beaches. Therefore, an integrated policy approach is necessary for overall development of coastal settlement to meet both tourism and non-tourism functions. The scientific planning approach for development of coastal settlement involves:

1. Sea resorts and beach tourism complexes should be developed as independent entities to avoid conflict in tourism and non-tourism activities.

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