



# Environment and Society

**Lecturer: Dan Tamir**

3 weekly hours, 3 credits , Undergraduate

This is an introductory course to the environmental social sciences. Students will acquire knowledge of central theories and approaches in the social sciences, and of their application to environmental issues. A special emphasis is given to the interaction between social structure, technology and ideology in shaping environmental changes and responses to them.

## **Grading:**

Active Participation: 20% // Midterm task: 40% // Final Exam: 40%

## **Textbooks:**

- C. L. Harper. Environment and Society: Human perspectives on environmental issues. 4th ed. (Pearson Prentice Hall, 2008)
- R. S. Frey. The Environment and Society Reader (Allyn and Bacon, 2001)

## **Programme:**

### **1. Introduction**

Course administration • Global environmental problems • Systems thinking

Recommended Reading:

- Frey ch.1

### **2. Paradigms in social and Economic theory**

Ecosystems and social systems • Paradigms: order and conflict, atomic and relational

Required Reading:

- Harper ch.1
- Frey ch.3

Recommended:

- Ch.1-2 of F. Buttel, A. Gijswijt, P. Dickens and R. Dunlap, Sociological Theory and the Environment (Rowman & Littlefield, 2002)

### 3. Resources: Plenty and Scarcity

Soil, Water and Biodiversity • Waste and Pollution • The debate around the Commons - Modern population dynamics • Population and poverty • Stabilizing population

Required:

- Harper ch. 2
- G. Hardin, "The Tragedy of the Commons", Science, Dec. 1968
- T. Dietz, E. Ostrom and P. Stern, "The Struggle to Govern the Commons", Science, Dec. 2003

Recommended:

- W. Adams, D. Brockington, J. Dyson and B. Vira. "Managing Tragedies: Understanding Conflict over Common Pool Resources". Science, Dec. 2003

### 4. Environmental Perceptions: Humans and Animals, Climate and the Biosphere

Required:

- D. Shome and S. Marx. 2009. The psychology of climate change communication [http://cred.columbia.edu/guide/pdfs/CREDguide\\_full-res.pdf](http://cred.columbia.edu/guide/pdfs/CREDguide_full-res.pdf)
- Lindemann-Matthies, Junge & Matthies, "The influence of plant diversity on people's perception and aesthetic appreciation of grassland vegetation", Biological Conservation 143 (2010) pp. 195-202

Recommended:

- I. Lorenzoni, S. Nicholson-Cole and L. Whitmarsh. "Barriers perceived to engaging with climate change among the UK public and their policy implications". Global Environmental Change 17, 2007
- Frey ch.10

## 5. Energy

The energy cycle • energy regimes: old and new • Peak oil • Technological and social alternatives

Required:

- Harper ch.4
- A. Grubb, "Peak Oil Primer". <http://energybulletin.net/primer>
- J. B. Foster, Peak Oil and Energy Imperialism. Monthly Review, Jul. 2008. <http://www.monthlyreview.org/080707foster.php8>.
- Ian Chapman, „The End of Peak Oil: Why this Topic is Still Relevant“, Energy Policy 64 (2014) pp. 93-101.

Recommended:

- Richard Heinberg (2005) *The Party is Over: Oil, War and the Fate of Industrial Societies*. New Society Press.

## 6. Environmental Justice

Group, class and exposure • Environmental democracy • Case study: Israel's Bedouin

Required:

- Frey ch.5
- Ch.10 of Alon Tal, Pollution in a Promised Land: An Environmental History of Israel. University of California Press, 2002.

Recommended:

- Frey ch.6
- S. Swirsky and Y. Hasson. "Invisible Citizens: Israel government policy toward the Negev Bedouin". Adva Center, 2006 [www.adva.org/UPLOADED/NegevEnglishFull.pdf](http://www.adva.org/UPLOADED/NegevEnglishFull.pdf)
- I. Meallem and Y. Garb. "The exposure of Bedouin women to waste related hazards", *Women and Environments*, Fall/Winter 2006.

## 7. Environmental movements and NGOs [Guest Lecturer: Dr. Simon Zeller]

History of Environmentalism • Mobilization dynamics • Lobbying and Campaigning

Required:

- Harper ch.8
- Frey ch.14

Recommended:

- Frey ch.13

## 8. Genocide and Environment

Required:

- Diamond, Jared. (2005) *Collapse: How Societies Choose to Fail or Succeed*. Penguin Group, New York. ch. 10 pp. 311-328.
- Joachim Wolschke-Bulmahn, "Violence as the Basis of National Socialist Land-scape Planning in the 'Annexed Eastern Areas'", in Brüggemeier, Cioc and Zeller (eds.), *How Green Were the Nazis?* (Ohio University Press, 2005), pp. 243-256.

Recommended:

- Boudreux K (2009) Land Conflict and Genocide in Rwanda, *Electronic Journal of Sustainable Development* 1, pp. 61-73.

## 9. Armed Conflicts and the Environment

- Environmental destruction in war • militarised landscapes • post-conflict peacebuilding

Required:

- Pearson, Chris (2011) Researching Militarized Landscapes: A Literature Review on War and the Militarization of the Environment, *Landscape Research* 37, pp. 115-133.
- Ken Conca & Jennifer Wallace (2012) Environment and peacebuilding in war-torn societies: Lessons from the UN Environment Programme's experience with post-conflict assessment, in Assessing and Restoring Natural Resources in Post-Conflict Peacebuilding, London: Earthscan.

Recommended:

- Tsutsui, William (2003) Landscape in the Dark Valley: Toward an Environmental History of Wartime Japan, Environmental History 8, pp. 294-311.

## 10. Is "Sustainable Development" Possible? Environmental Economics vs. Ecological Economics

Globalization • Economic growth and the environment • Sustainable development

Required:

- Harper ch.6
- Frey ch.20

Recommended:

- Pearce, David (2002) "An Intellectual History of Environmental Economics", Annual Review of Energy Env. 27, pp. 57-81.
- S. Beder, "Hijacking Sustainable Development: A Critique of Corporate Environmentalism", Chain Reaction 81.

<http://www.uow.edu.au/~sharonb/esd/chainreaction.html>

## 11. The Middle East: Population, Climate, Economics and the Environment

Climatic History • Aridity • Challenges • social-environmental specificities of the ME •

Required:

- Schneider and Adali, “No Harvest Was Reaped: Demographic and Climatic Factors in the Decline of the Neo-Assyrian Empire”, *Climatic Change* 127 (2014), pp. 435-446.
- Werrell CE, Femia F (2013) *The Arab Spring and Climate Change: A Climate and Security Correlations Series*. Center for American Progress.

Recommended:

- GTZ, The Water Security Nexus: Challenges and Opportunities for Development Cooperation. August 2010
- Langgut et al. “Climate and the Late Bronze Collapse: New Evidence from the Southern Levant”, *Tel Aviv* 40 (2013), pp. 149-175.

## 12. Environmental Conflicts and Cooperations in the Middle East

Cross-boundary cooperation • Challenges • social-environmental specificities of the ME

Required:

- United Nations Environment Program, From conflict to peace building: The role of natural resources and the environment, February 2009
- Francesca De Chatel, “The Role of Drought and Climate Change in the Syrian Uprising: Untangling the Triggers of the Revolution”, *Middle Eastern Studies* 50 (2014) pp. 521-535.
- Marwan Haddad & Eran Feitelson Joint Aquifer Management: Institutional Options, in: Alon Tal & Alfred Abed Rabbo (eds.) Water Wisdom: Preparing the Groundwork for Cooperative and Sustainable Water Management in the Middle East (Rutgers University Press, 2010) pp. 313-321.

Recommended:

- GTZ, The Water Security Nexus: Challenges and Opportunities for Development Cooperation. August 2010

## 13. Summary, Closing Discussion and Conclusions

**Final exam**