

Department of Environmental Engineering

PhD Entrance Exam Syllabus

Section 1: Environmental Chemistry

Water chemistry: Water quality parameters and their measurement; Acid-base equilibria; Buffer solution; Carbonate system; Solubility of gases in water; Complexation, precipitation, and redox reactions; Inorganic and organic contaminants in water and their speciation.

Soil chemistry: Organic matter, nitrogen, phosphorous, potassium, cation exchange capacity, base saturation, and sodium absorption ratio.

Atmospheric Chemistry: Composition of the atmosphere; Reactivity of trace substances in the atmosphere; Urban atmosphere—smog and particulate pollution; Chemistry of ozone formation; Chemistry of stratosphere.

Section 2: Environmental Microbiology

Prokaryotic and eukaryotic microorganisms: Characteristics of diverse groups of microorganisms; Classification of microorganisms; Microbial diversity; Plant-microbe and soil-microbe interactions; Role of microorganisms in wastewater treatment, bioremediation and biogeochemical cycling.

Microbial metabolism: Anabolism and catabolism; Phosphorylation; Glycolysis; TCA cycle; Electron transport chain; Fermentation; Anaerobic respiration; Energy balances; Enzymes and Enzyme kinetics.

Growth and control of microorganisms: Bacterial nutrition and growth; Specific growth rate and doubling time; Monod's model; Types of culture media; Batch and continuous culture; Effects of environmental factors on growth; Control of microbes using physical and chemical methods.

Microbiology and health: Pathogens and modes of transmission; Indicator organisms; Quantification of coliforms using MPN and membrane filtration techniques.

Section 3: Water Resources and Environmental Hydraulics

Global Water Resources: Structure, properties and distribution of water; Water quality; Threats to water resources; Water conservation.

Surface Water Resources: Hydrological cycle and water balance - precipitation, infiltration, evapotranspiration, runoff; Flow hydrographs; Unit hydrographs; Stage-discharge relationship; Reservoir capacity; Reservoir and channel routing; Surface run-off models; Surface water management; Rainwater harvesting and storage.

Groundwater Resources: Geologic formations as aquifers; Vadose and saturated zones; Confined and unconfined aquifers and their parameters - porosity, permeability, transmissivity and storage coefficient; Darcy's law and applications; Steady state well hydraulics.

Section 4: Water & Wastewater Treatment and Management

Water and wastewater quality parameters; Eutrophication and thermal stratification in lakes; River pollution - Oxygen sag curve.

Water treatment methods - screening, sedimentation with and without coagulation, filtration, desalination, disinfection; Water distribution and storage

Point and non-point sources of wastewater; Population forecasting methods; Design of sewer and storm water sewers; Sewer appurtenances; Preliminary, primary, secondary and tertiary sewage treatment; Sludge generation, processing and disposal methods; Sewage farming.

Sources and characteristics of industrial effluents; Concept of Common Effluent Treatment Plants (CETP); Wastewater recycling and zero liquid discharge.

Kinetics and reactor design: Mass and energy balance, Order and rate of reactions, Batch reactors, completely mixed flow reactors, plug flow reactors.

Section 5: Air and Noise Pollution

Structure of the atmosphere; Natural and anthropogenic sources of pollution; Atmospheric sources, sinks, transport; Indoor air pollution; Effects on health and environment; Air pollution: gases and particulate matter; Air quality standards; Primary and secondary pollutants; Criteria pollutants, ambient and source standards, air quality indices, visibility.

Particulate pollutants: measurement and control methods; Control of particulate air pollutants using gravitational settling chambers, cyclone separators, wet collectors, fabric filters (Bag-house filter), electrostatic precipitators (ESP).

Gaseous Pollutants: Measurement and control methods; Control of gaseous contaminants: absorption, adsorption, condensation and combustion; Control of sulphur oxides, nitrogen oxides, carbon monoxide, and hydrocarbons; Vapour-liquid and vapour-solid equilibria; Diffusion, Fick's law and interfacial mass transfer.

Automotive emission controls, fuel quality, diesel particulate filters, catalytic converters.

Air quality management: Point, line and area sources; Inventory; Influence of meteorology - wind rose diagrams, stability, mixing height, topography, dispersion modelling, monitoring.

Noise pollution: Sources; Health effects; Standards; Measurement and control methods.

Section 6: Solid and Hazardous Waste Management

Integrated solid waste management; Waste hierarchy; Rules and regulations for solid waste management in India.

Municipal solid waste management: Sources, generation, characteristics, collection and transportation, waste processing and disposal (including reuse options, biological methods, energy recovery processes and landfilling).

Hazardous waste management: Characteristics, generation, fate of materials in the environment, treatment and disposal.

Soil contamination and leaching of contaminants into groundwater.

Management of biomedical waste, plastic waste and E-waste: Sources, generation and characteristics; Waste management practices including storage, collection and transfer.

Section 7: Environmental Management and Sustainable Development

Environmental Management Systems; ISO14000 series; Environmental auditing; Environmental Impact Assessment; Life cycle assessment; Human health risk assessment

Environmental Law and Policy – Objectives; Polluter pays principle, Precautionary principle; The Water and Air Acts with amendments; The Environment (Protection) Act (EPA) 1986; National Green Tribunal Act, 2010; National Environment Policy; Principles of International Law and International treaties.

Energy and Environment: Energy sources – overview of resources and reserves; Renewable and non-renewable energy sources; Energy-Environment nexus.

Sustainable Development: Definition and concepts of sustainable development; Sustainable development goals; Hurdles to sustainability; Environment and economics