



GLOSSARY

DARK GREEN HEADER



INDENTED LIGHT GREEN HEADER

HOW IT WORKS:

TWO LEVELS OF LEARNING:

LEVEL 1: Strengthen your foundational knowledge with terms that help you explore environmental issues in your community. Whether you're starting out or getting to grips with the basics, this level provides the essential definitions and concepts to get you involved.

LEVEL 2: Deepen your understanding with more advanced terminology. If you're a student looking to enhance your problem-solving skills or want to engage more critically with environmental issues, this level will support your growth and development.

Agriculture

Agriculture is the science and/or practice of farming. It includes cultivating the soil for the growing of crops and the rearing animals that provide food, wool, and other products.

Animal

Animal refers to living organisms that responds rapidly to stimuli. From a western perspective, *animal* includes a 'vast array of creatures', with humans not being included in the definition¹.

Animal welfare

Animal welfare refers to how an **animal** is coping with the conditions in which it lives.



Anthropocene

A proposed geological epoch characterised by significant human impact on Earth's geology and ecosystems². The term, derived from the Greek words "anthropos" (human) and "kainos" (new), suggests that human activities have become the dominant influence on the planet's climate and environment³. While the exact start date is debated, many scientists associate it with the Industrial Revolution in the late 18th century or the mid-20th century "Great Acceleration" of global changes. Key indicators include increased greenhouse gas emissions, widespread deforestation, biodiversity loss, and pervasive pollution. [CLICK HERE FOR MORE](#)



DID YOU KNOW! Did you know that the term "Anthropocene" refers to the **age of humans** and suggests that our activities have significantly altered Earth's geology and ecosystems? In fact, scientists estimate that human actions have already transformed over **50% of the planet's surface!** This dramatic change has led to discussions about whether we should officially recognise this new epoch in geological time! Interested? Continue learning about Anthropocene by Citizen Scientist Bryce Neale – student at the University of Pretoria.

Biodegradable

Biodegradable refers to the ability of most organic material to decompose rapidly under natural conditions.

Biodiversity

Biodiversity is a term abbreviated from biological diversity⁴. It was first coined in 1988 by E.O. Wilson and is a collective term used to refer to the diversity and variety of living organisms: big, small, plant, animal and insect species on earth⁵. It consists of three basic levels: the difference in species, genes and ecosystems⁶.



One of the biggest biggest problems associated with *biodiversity* is the fact that we do not know the exact number of species on earth⁷.

Biofuel

Biofuel refers to fuel produced from 'organic matter or combustible oils'⁸.

Biomass

Biomass refers to the biodegradable refuse and residues created from municipal waste, industries, agriculture, forestry etc.⁹. *Biomass* can be used to produce energy or be converted into biofuels¹⁰.

Biopolitics

Biopolitics has had different moments in history that have advanced its definition and expanded its understanding. As early as the 1920s, *biopolitics* was used to describe the eugenics programme being implemented by the Third Reich. In the 1960s, political scientists popularised the term, relating the term to and interest in the relationship between evolutionary biology and politics¹¹. By 1981, the Association for Politics and Life Science formalised the definition, defining *biopolitics* as 'any investigation into the effects of biology on politics'¹². According to current discourse, updated understandings of *biopolitics* show a decline in its association to political sciences, with its definition being linked to 'ideological schisms around the regulation of biotechnology'¹³.



Biosphere

Biosphere refers to 'three environmental matrices' that support life on earth¹⁴.

These matrices include air, water and soil¹⁵.



Carbon finance

Carbon finance refers to the exploration into the costs and implications of 'living in a carbon-constrained world'¹⁶. It is a new branch of environmental finance that can also be used to refer to projects and financial instruments that focused in and invest towards in the reduction of **greenhouse gas** emissions¹⁷.

Carbon footprint

Carbon footprint refers to the calculation of carbon or **greenhouse gas** emissions consumed or released by an individual, organization, event or product¹⁸. It can be divided into two categories: physical carbon accounting and financial carbon accounting:

- Physical carbon accounting refers to 'quantifying physical amounts **greenhouse gas emissions** to the atmosphere'¹⁹
- Financial carbon accounting refers to the financial market value of carbon²⁰



Carbon pricing

Carbon pricing refers to the price of emission permits or carbon tax²¹.

Carbon pricing is commonly used as a tool to 'assess the economic costs of mitigation' and as a proxy to reflect the 'level of effort in mitigation policies'²².

Carbon tax

Carbon tax refers to a set of surcharges or taxes based on the fuel's carbon content of carbon emissions²³. It is aimed at discouraging the use of fossil fuels in order to reduce carbon dioxide emissions within the atmosphere²⁴.

Citizen science

Citizen science refers to the general public participating in the 'collection and / or analysis of environmental data'²⁵.

Climate

In its most narrow form, the *climate* refers to a state and to the 'statistical description' of weather patterns over a period of time²⁶. It is usually measured over a period of decades and includes variables like wind, precipitation and temperature²⁷.

Climate Change

Climate Change refers to the alteration or shift in the 'global climate system', including changes in temperature, precipitation and wind patterns, over a long period of time²⁸. These shifts and alterations can be caused by human activity



or 'other environmental changes' that alter the 'composition of the global atmosphere'²⁹. The UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) uses *climate change* to refer to human-caused change, which is distinct from 'climate variability' i.e. changes caused by other natural phenomenon³⁰.

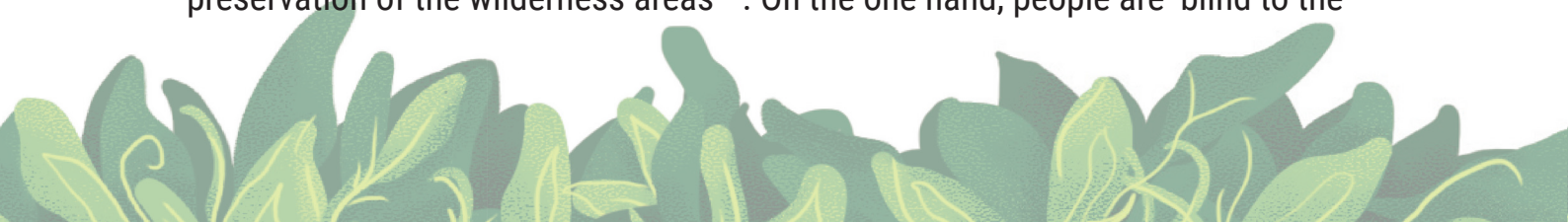
Conference of Parties

The *Conference of Parties (COP)* is part of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)³¹. *COP* is an annual meeting for member states who are signatories a to the **Kyoto Protocol**. Member states meet annually to review the implementation of commitments to **climate change**³².

Conservation-Preservation

Conservation-Preservation are two terms used interchangeably to refer to the protection, management and use of the natural environment and renewable resources³³. This type of protection is done in an effort ensure long term societal benefits³⁴. Individually, *conservation* refers to 'biological limits', management and/ or protection of endangered species³⁵. Broadly, when considering the implementation of *conservation*, it calls for the use, maintenance, restoration and enhancement of natural resources³⁶. In other words, humans would need to consider the 'biological limitations of the environment' when they want to address their needs³⁷.

On the other end, *preservation*, refers to the 'non-use or nonconsumptive use of natural resources in an area'³⁸. In some cases, this could mean that some areas are 'completely off limits to humans' or that there is a limit to the usage of an area i.e. only used for camping or hiking³⁹. There are also negative implications to *preservation*, with the discourse highlighting the 'overemphasis on the preservation of the wilderness areas'⁴⁰. On the one hand, people are 'blind to the



intensive of normal landscapes', at the same time nature is considered to be 'separate and apart from humans'⁴¹.

Consumption

Traditionally, *consumption* is viewed in two ways. First, *consumption* is viewed as a problem. According to the discourse we are harming the environment through our types and levels of consumption. We are either consuming too much or are consuming the 'wrong kinds of things'⁴². Secondly, *consumption* can be viewed as a solution⁴³. By having a 'more sustainable relationship with our planet' and being better and smarter with our habits, we can avoid our negative *consumption* habits, and the impact that they have on the environment⁴⁴.

From a sociological standpoint, the relationship between consumption and environmental impacts are rooted in inequality⁴⁵. This sociological discussion is based on two pillars: a) the elite in society contributing to overconsumption and b) the underprivileged and vulnerable using consumption as a means to meet their material needs for basic survival⁴⁶. This kind of consumption by the vulnerable and underprivileged is seen as a desperate ploy, because it comes at the expense and / or threat of the environment⁴⁷.

Convention of Biological Diversity

The *Convention of Biological Diversity* as simply known as the Biodiversity Convention, is an international and legally binding treaty on the sustainable use and fair and equitable sharing of genetic resources⁴⁸. It arose from the UN Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992 and is aimed at developing national strategies for the **conservation** and sustainable use of **biological diversity**⁴⁹. The focuses on setting principles for the fair and equitable sharing of ecosystems, species and genetic resources⁵⁰. It links traditional



conservation efforts to the economic goal of using biological resources sustainably⁵¹.



Degradation

Degradation has a variety of different meanings and perspectives. It can have a technical, cultural, political, environmental and moral meanings. From a technical and cultural perspective, it can refer to 'a biological process' i.e. the decay and breakdown of organic matter. It can also be used to describe a 'chemical process' i.e. the deterioration of inorganic matter under the right conditions⁵². While from a mechanical perspective, it can refer to the loss of efficiency⁵³. Politically and morally, *degradation* can refer to process of robbing people of their dignity or the 'deliberate debasement of human social actors'⁵⁴. From an environmental perspective, *degradation* typically refers to a loss in the 'richness and resilience of a place or system'⁵⁵. This is a process that can be natural or man-made and result in the destruction of 'natural habitats, species extinctions and the loss of ecosystem services'⁵⁶.

Desertification

Desertification refers to the process in which fertile land and vegetative cover progressively becomes destroyed or degraded and becomes desert⁵⁷. This destruction and **degradation** is typically caused by climatic variations i.e. 'drought, deforestation, poor agricultural techniques, or climate change' or human activities⁵⁸.





Ecology

The term *ecology* was coined in 1866 by zoologist Ernst Haecke. During the 19th century, ecology referred to the study of the 'functional interrelationships of living organisms' and their physical environments⁵⁹. During the 1920s, *animal ecology* gained prominence with its focus on a 'more theoretical, quantitative, and predictive orientation'⁶⁰. This focus on *animal ecology* was based on the works of two mathematicians, Alfred Lotka (1925) and Vito Volterra (1926). Their work centered around the 'behavior of interacting predator and prey species'⁶¹. This work laid the foundation for 'analytical, *mathematical ecology*', focused on 'individuals, populations, and species rather than on communities'⁶². In the 1930s, Arthur Tansley conducted work based on the 'ecosystem as a dynamic unit'⁶³. This was later further developed by Eugene and Howard Odum in the 1950s, with their focus on *systems ecology*⁶⁴. They used a systems approach to 'explore the physical laws governing the transformation of energy'⁶⁵. These shifts in the definition of *ecology* led to an *evolution* of the term to include 'synthetic' and 'analytic' concentrations⁶⁶. *Synthetic ecology* referring to 'functional and organisational characteristics of a system', while the *analytical ecology* focused on the 'developmental and evolutionary pathways'⁶⁷.

Eco-terrorism

The term *eco-terrorism* has often been misinterpreted, confused and misused. It was first thought to have been introduced by Ron Arnold, an anti-environment activist. Arnold defined *eco-terrorism* as crimes

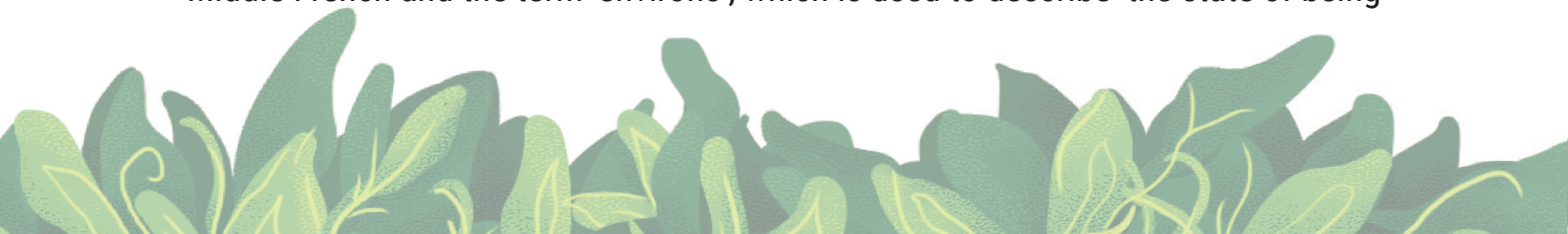
‘committed to save nature’ or ‘violent act against property or persons in the defense of pro-environment or animal rights ideology’⁶⁸. *Eco-terrorism* has since then broadened to include discourses by activists and scholars who highlight how corporations are central to the harm and destruction of ‘ecosystems and nonhuman animals’⁶⁹. *Eco-terrorism* can also be used to describe ‘unlawful actions taken by groups’, who ‘deliberately target and harm an ecological resource base needed to sustain a human population’⁷⁰. This definition is typically used to refer to Global North radical movements who mainly focus is on the Earth and animal liberation. *Eco-terrorists* seek to ‘challenge the dominant social order with respect to human/nonhuman relations’ and it has taken stance⁷¹. During the 1980s and 1990s, there was an evolution in ‘ecological politics’⁷². This time period gave rise to radical movements and groups like Earth First! And Earth and Animal Liberation Fronts (in the US and UK). These movements proposed a radical analysis, discourse and advocated for direct action including vandalism, arson, tree spiking⁷³. These acts of direct action caused economic damage and led to a questioning of ‘violence of state policy and capitalism’⁷⁴. By the late 1990s and early 2000s, the *eco-terrorism* discourse had broadened and had links to ‘ecology, social justice, anti-oppression and animal liberation’⁷⁵.

Emissions

Emissions refer to the release of substances - usually gas - into the atmosphere due to human activities⁷⁶.

Environment

The *environment* is a complex and contradictory term. It can be traced back to Middle French and the term ‘environs’, which is used to describe ‘the state of being



encompassed or surrounded'⁷⁷. *Environs* could also be used as a verb to describe the act of – ‘circumnavigating, encompassing, or surrounding something’⁷⁸.

By the 18th century, the *environment* came to be understood as ‘the area surrounding a place or thing’, with the meaning further shifting in the mid-19th to 20th century⁷⁹. It came to represent ‘the natural world’ in the 20th century, with the OED defining it as ‘the physical surroundings or conditions in which a person or other organism lives, develops, etc., or in which a thing exists; the external conditions in general affecting the life, existence, or properties of an organism or object’⁸⁰.

More broadly, and in its current interpretations, the *environment* has come to denote ‘contested terrains located at the intersection of economic, political, social, cultural and sexual ecologies’⁸¹. These views were particularly strong within the Global South understandings of the term. In postcolonial, indigenous decolonial and globalism studies, the *environment* was bound to a ‘colonial logic’, ‘colonial civilisation, and progress’⁸². There is less of a sentimentality and romanticism attached to the *environment*⁸³. According to these perspectives, the *environment* is understood to be ‘the enclosure of bodies of land, water, people, plants, and nonhuman animals’, which are the used ‘to exploit and appropriate biodiversity and indigenous knowledge’⁸⁴.

Environmental Humanities

Explore how Sune’ Erasmus utilises the lens of environmental humanities in a visual essay entitled: **Unveiling the Quiet Destruction of Our Planet.**

[CLICK HERE FOR MORE](#)

An interdisciplinary field that combines traditional humanities disciplines with environmental studies to explore the complex relationships between human culture and the natural world⁸⁵. It examines how cultural, ethical, and social factors shape our understanding of environmental challenges, encouraging critical analysis of ideologies and practices while providing

historical context to inform contemporary solutions⁸⁶.

Environmental Justice

Environmental justice refers to the 'social, political and moral struggle for human rights, healthy environments and thriving democracies'⁸⁷. It emerged in the late 20th century, with the activism of people of colour in the US and is now used to refer to 'global network of social movements fiercely critical of the disparities and depredation caused by the unchecked expansion and neocolonial logic of fuel-driven modern industrial development'⁸⁸.

Activists challenge the way in which 'toxic contamination, waste dumping, and ecological devastation' disproportionately affects and burdens that low-income areas, marginalised and vulnerable groups, who have to bear the brunt of progress and development⁸⁹. *Environmental justice* provides a way of establishing policies that will allow for these communities to equally participate in meaningful 'environmental decision making'⁹⁰. Not only do *environmental justice* advocates call for the establishment of better environmental policies, but they also encourage more of a focus on 'realities of people living in polluted areas'⁹¹.

Environmental justice is also a movement that has led to the creation of important summits advancing environmental and social justice activism and the broadening of 'coalition building' and alliances⁹². In the 1990s, the *environmental justice* movement shifted its focus on public awareness around **climate change**. They began channeling a people science approach and visibilising the local effects of 'planetary scale environmental issues'⁹³. This was due to the fact that impoverished and marginalised communities bore the brunt of the effects of **climate change**, but were the least responsible for creating 'harmful pollution' and who did not benefit from economic advancements and development⁹⁴. The



principles of *environmental justice* include an 'analysis of interconnectedness', 'dismantling oppressive binary systems that have created divisions i.e. local and global, economic and ecological, human and environmental' and working together in 'collaborative research and solution-based initiatives'⁹⁵.

Environmentalism

The discourse on *environmentalism* can be divided into four main currents: the Cult of Wilderness, the Gospel of Eco-Efficiency and the Mantra of Environmental Justice and Environmentalism of the Poor⁹⁶. Under core of the Cult of Wilderness, *environmentalism* is described as a movement towards nature **conservation**. During the 19th century, *environmentalism* was largely concerned with the preservation of nature and the 'active protection of wildlife'⁹⁷. It did not include or focus on humans or their economic livelihoods.

The 19th century also brought a shifting focus towards the economic policies and technologies and their impact and concern on the environment⁹⁸. It was during this time that the Gospel of Eco-Efficiency became the more powerful currents of *environmentalism*, and focusing on environmental policies⁹⁹. It was also a time were the concepts of **sustainability** and **sustainable development** became synonymous with *environmentalism*¹⁰⁰.

Under the current of the Mantra of Environmental Justice, *environmentalism* shifted its focus to include networks and local resistance movements concerned with the impact of unjust and environmental burdens on ethnic minorities¹⁰¹. This shifting connects with the Environmentalism of the Poor and the combining of 'livelihood, social, economic, and



environmental issues with involvement in extraction and pollution conflicts'¹⁰². Environmentalism of the Poor focused on how the pursuit of the world economy disrupts and pollutes nature and human livelihoods. This exacerbates poverty and leads to 'inevitable resistance' and calls for compensation by the poor, especially from women¹⁰³.

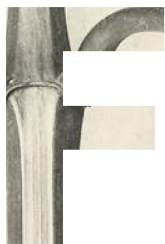
Evolution

Broadly, *evolution* refers to change over time¹⁰⁴. It can be understood as '**ecology** operating over vast periods of geological time'¹⁰⁵. The evolutionary discourse can be categorised into Darwinism and Neo-Darwinism thought. For Darwin, *evolution* was linked to natural selection and reproduction. Under this thought, organisms reproduce, adapting to their environments and eventually leading to the creation of a new species¹⁰⁶. This adaptive nature is *evolution* at work. Neo-Darwinism, on the other hand, is a narrower interpretation of Darwin thought¹⁰⁷. It is focused on 'mathematical models of changes in gene frequency'¹⁰⁸. These models of change are also evolutionary in nature.

Extinction

Extinction refers to the disappearance, loss of **biodiversity**, 'dying out or termination of a species'¹⁰⁹. It became an ecological fact in the 19th century and is a 'basic characteristics' within **ecology**¹¹⁰. *Extinction* is related to **evolution** in the sense that it is a natural occurrence. It is the gradual adaption and change that leads to the disappearance of **species** at 'the so-called background rate'¹¹¹. According to Darwin, *extinction* and speciation is a result of the process of mutation and natural selection and results in the creation of new species.





Fauna

Fauna refers to the 'entire animal life of a given region, habitat or geological stratum'.

Flooding

Flooding refers to a 'general and temporary condition' in which a 'great flow along a watercourse' partial or completely inundates 'normally dry land areas'¹¹².

Forest Damage / Deterioration

Forest Damage / Deterioration refers to the 'reduction of tree population in forests'. This typically occurs because of 'acidic precipitation, forest fires, air pollution, deforestation, pests and diseases of trees, wildlife, etc.' within an area.

Fossil Fuels

Fossil fuels are non-renewable and carbon-based fuels made up of deposits including oil, peat, coal and natural gas¹¹³. These fossil fuels are made up of deposits buried in the ground which are chemically and physically processed within the Earth's crust¹¹⁴. These fossil fuels are typically burnt and used in energy production which can lead to the release of huge quantities of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases' which have been linked to the harmful effects of climate change¹¹⁵.



Fracking

Fracking, also known as hydraulic fracturing, is the process of extracting oil and gas from the ground¹¹⁶. This is done through the injection of pressurised chemical liquids into the ground, which allows for the release methane and other products¹¹⁷.



Global warming

Global warming is a term that is used interchangeably with climate change or global heating¹¹⁸. It refers to gradual increase and/or change in the average temperature surface temperature due to the emissions of greenhouse gases over a long period of time¹¹⁹.

Globalisation

Globalisation is a fairly new term having emerged in the late 1980s¹²⁰. It replaced 'internationalisation' and 'transnationalisation' for two reasons:

- a) The two terms were considered to be too narrow for the modern era. The late 20th century brought the realisation that there were other actors beside states that had a powerful effect on shaping world development. These actors included MNCs¹²¹, TNCs¹²², NGOs^{123, 124}
- b) *Globalization* represented a better explanation of the 'social developments and the expanding 'networks of cross border human relations' over shortened periods of time¹²⁵.



More broadly, *globalisation* refers to a 'diversity of social processes' i.e. increased exchange in information around the environment, 'enhanced global environmental politics, global diffusion of environmental norms and values, global value chains and networks in organic and fair-trade products'¹²⁶. At the same time, *globalisation* refers to the 'all kinds of global networks and institutions, such as carbon markets, multilateral environmental agreements, global transparency and disclosure regimes, and the failures of these institutions to address climate change'¹²⁷.

There is a multidimensional link between *globalization* and the environment, with researchers stating that *globalization* is a double edge sword that 'structures environmental deterioration and environmental reform'¹²⁸. Here, the focus of *globalization* is on the 'transboundary pollution and waste, global mobility, global green product flows, labelling and environmental information flows, environmentally sensitive trade and investment, carbon credits, global biodiversity and invasive species, and the global networks'¹²⁹. *Globalization* is also a contested by environmentalists and environmental advocates. Traditionally, *globalization* has been 'associated with the dynamics' of the neo-liberal global capitalism system¹³⁰. It has been linked to the advent of climate change and environmental destruction¹³¹. For hyperglobalists, the increasing *globalization* is an inevitability and beneficial reality that can address the modern-day issues around sustainability¹³².

Greenwashing



Explore how this "Cup of Contradiction" is a visual representation of Greenwashing. Can you think of any example in your everyday life? See how this student visually captures environmental issues in their everyday experience.

[CLICK HERE FOR MORE](#)

The practice of making misleading or unsubstantiated claims about the environmental benefits of a product, service, or company policy¹³³. It involves conveying a false impression or providing misleading information

about how a company's products are more environmentally sound than they actually are¹³⁴. This deceptive marketing tactic is used to capitalize on growing consumer demand for environmentally friendly goods and services.

Greenhouse effect

The *Greenhouse effect* refers to the natural warming of the Earth's surface and troposphere¹³⁵.

Greenhouse gases

Greenhouse gases refers to any gas that absorbs and emits radiation and contribute to global warming, climate change and the greenhouse effect¹³⁶. These gases include carbon dioxide, water vapour, nitrous oxide, and ozone methane, primary *greenhouse gases* in Earth's atmosphere etc¹³⁷.



Habitat

Habitat refers to the place where an organism lives or occurs¹³⁸.





Indigeneity

Indigeneity refers to the 'ecological nativeness' of a place¹³⁹. It can be used interchangeably with 'native' and 'indigenously' and typically refers to the natural presence of a species within a region¹⁴⁰. *Indigeneity* can also refer to groups of humans who have a 'more original claim to a place' than 'settlers or newcomers'¹⁴¹.

Indigenous knowledges

Indigenous knowledges explains knowledge derived from the 'understandings, skills and philosophies' developed by indigenous cultures and their history of interaction with the natural environment¹⁴². It refers to how individuals are situated in relation to other beings, entities, and systems' and how they participate and observe that system over a long period of time¹⁴³. Indigenous peoples use *indigenous knowledge* 'to support their sustenance and self-determination'¹⁴⁴.

Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)

The *Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)* is an 'international group of experts' working together to provide 'objective science-based information on climate change and its impacts'¹⁴⁵. The *IPCC* was created in 1988 by the UN Environmental Programme and the World Meteorological



Organisation¹⁴⁶. It consists of experts from 195 member states who provide authoritative surveys and policy advice to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)¹⁴⁷.



Just Transition

The *Just Transition* is a framework focused on 'greening the economy' and emphasizing the fair treatment of workers and communities during shifts to more sustainable economies¹⁴⁸. Its focus is on transitioning from high carbon environments and often involving the phasing out of certain industries to reduce their environmental impact¹⁴⁹. A *Just Transition* framework seeks to maximise 'the social and economic opportunities', as well as minimise and manage the challenges of climate action¹⁵⁰.



Kyoto Protocol

The *Kyoto Protocol* is a part of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). It was adopted in 1997 in Kyoto, Japan and contains legally binding commitments to address climate change and reduce the emissions of *greenhouse gases* 'by at least 5% below 1990 levels'¹⁵¹. The commitment period for the *Kyoto Protocol* was 2008 – 2012,



with the commitment being superseded by the Paris Agreement in 2015¹⁵².

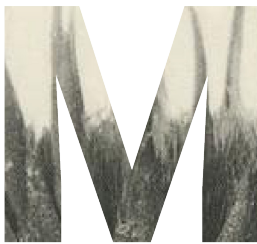


Landscape

The *landscape* is a 'socially constructed entity' with many iterations and understandings across history and geography¹⁵³. It generally refers to the visible 'traits, patterns, and structure of a specific geographical area'¹⁵⁴. It is a contested term, with much of the debate and focus built on an idealized piece of the environment and the ways in which humanity has contributed to the degradation and destruction of the land¹⁵⁵. *Landscape* is considered as an 'instrument of cultural force', central to the nation building and the creation of 'social identities'¹⁵⁶.

Landscape can be defined as an 'expanse of scenery' or the 'depiction of scenery in a picture', painting 'or as a branch of art'¹⁵⁷. The earliest understanding of *landscape* can be traced to 7000 BC and the Assyrians who used reserves for 'riding, hunting and combat skill'¹⁵⁸. The Persians, 'influenced by the design of reserves', developed the term further using *landscapes* them for the 'development of royal hunting enclosures'¹⁵⁹. For the Greeks, *landscapes* were used to describe public places i.e. plazas or agoras, which were used for 'public gatherings, rest and relaxation'¹⁶⁰. In Europe, *landscape* first emerged in 1598, originating from the Dutch word 'landschap', which referred to a 'region, tract of land'¹⁶¹. In its more English roots, *landscape* referred to a 'a picture depicting scenery on land'¹⁶². While in medieval Europe, *landscapes* denoted 'open spaces', 'maintained exclusively for the use of the ruling classes' for recreation, hunting and private estates¹⁶³.

In the US, the definition of *landscapes* evolved past the picturesque and reserved depictions of Europe. *Landscapes* came to represent a mechanism 'to stimulate environmental awareness and challenge power relations'¹⁶⁴. During the 1840s, transcendentalists from the US advocated for a 'greater concern for the land'. They advocated for less of a focus on promoting the 'conquering and exploiting resources and racial minorities in the name of progress' land¹⁶⁵. In the 1980s, the global environmental justice movement was particularly interested in the expansion of the range of *landscapes*¹⁶⁶. They focused on industrial *landscapes* and the growing 'social inequalities' from the use and operation of these spaces¹⁶⁷. They were particularly interested in the impact of these industrialised spaces on poorer communities, calling for a transformation of *landscapes* and the creation of spaces like 'forests, parks, urban farms, and community gardens' that were not exploited¹⁶⁸.



Millenium Development Goals (MDGs)

The *Millenium Development Goals (MDGs)* are a 'set of time-bound and measurable goals' agreed at the UN Millennium Summit in 2000¹⁶⁹.

The *MDGs* focused on eradicating poverty, hunger, disease, illiteracy, discrimination against women and environmental degradation by 2015¹⁷⁰.

The MDGs were later superseded by the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in 2015.

Mitigation

Mitigation refers to human interventions to reduce the impact, severity and frequency greenhouse gas emissions from the atmosphere¹⁷¹.

Montreal Protocol

The *Montreal Protocol* is an international environmental agreement targeted at protecting to ozone layer¹⁷². It was signed in Montreal, Canada in 1987, with amendments in 1990, 1992, 1995, 1997 and 1999¹⁷³. The *Montreal Protocol* advocates for the 'phasing out of the production and use of ozone-depleting substances'¹⁷⁴. It was later superseded by the Kigali Agreement in 2016¹⁷⁵.



Natural Disaster

Natural disaster refers and describes a 'naturally occurring environmental event' that violently changes the environment and has an adverse effect for humans¹⁷⁶. Some examples of these events include tornadoes, tsunamis, wildfires, hurricanes, floods, droughts, earthquakes volcanic eruptions¹⁷⁷. In 1962, Rachel Carson published an article, 'Silent Song', in New Yorker magazine. The article focused on natural disasters and their implication on human life¹⁷⁸. In it, Carson illustrated the negative effects associated with humanities continual drive to dominate the environment¹⁷⁹. This contributed to the 'growing toxicity' of the planet and the inevitability of 'an uninhabitable world'¹⁸⁰. The UN Economic and Social Council



concluded with Carson's article, releasing its own report in 1968, warning against the continued trends of human violence on nature which could 'endanger the future of life on earth'¹⁸¹.

Nature

Nature is an essentially contested term which can be used to refer to and describe number of different concepts including 'race, sex, biodiversity, genes, wilderness, animals, environment'¹⁸².

Non-renewable energy

Non-renewable energy refers to energy sources that are finite and cannot be replenished within a human timescale, including fossil fuels (coal, oil, natural gas) and nuclear energy¹⁸³. These resources are formed over millions of years and once consumed, cannot be replaced.



Ozone layer

The *ozone layer* forms as part of the Earth's stratosphere and is a protective layer that absorbs the 'harmful ultra violet radiation' from the sun's rays¹⁸⁴.





Pastoral

Traditionally, *pastoral* has been used to describe a 'nostalgic and idealized portrayal of the life of shepherds and their rural surroundings'¹⁸⁵. In its more ideological definition, *pastoral* described class relations, specifically the exploitation of the rural class¹⁸⁶.

Permits

Within domestic systems, *permits* refer to emissions trading¹⁸⁷. Permits are tradable units issued by regulatory authorities in emissions trading systems that grant the holder the right to emit a specified amount of a pollutant, typically one tonne of carbon dioxide equivalent¹⁸⁸. These permits serve as the currency of cap-and-trade programs, can be allocated, auctioned, or traded among participants, and are used to incentivize cost-effective emissions reductions across industries.

Planetary Boundaries

A framework identifying nine critical thresholds that define the safe operating limits for human activities on Earth, aimed at maintaining a stable and resilient environment¹⁸⁹. Transgressing these boundaries—such as climate change, biodiversity loss, and biogeochemical flows—risks destabilizing the Earth system and undermining human well-being¹⁹⁰.



Pollution

According to Herbet Marcuse, *pollution* is a material, mental and a physical phenomenon¹⁹¹. It is an 'interplay of harmful material substances and harmful discourses and practices' introduced into the environment, and which have a harmful impact on humans¹⁹². For more than two centuries, *pollution* has been linked to industrial development and to understanding oppression. It also showcases *pollution* as a moral phenomenon¹⁹³. One that reveals the abuses and inequalities, political failings, discriminatory practices and socio-ecological decline that take place within 'uneven societies'¹⁹⁴.



Renewable Energy

Renewable energy refers to the energy from infinite sources¹⁹⁵. These include water, heat from the earth, wood, waste wind and solar radiation¹⁹⁶. Unlike fossil fuels, renewable energy does not release *greenhouse gases*¹⁹⁷.

Reservoir

A *reservoir* is a component or components that allow for the storage, accumulation or release of substances of concern i.e. *greenhouse gases*, carbon or precursors¹⁹⁸.





PHOTO: Image depicts a pack of wild dogs photographed close to Punda Maria rest camp, Kruger National Park.

What's the link between wild dogs and slow violence?

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Slow Violence

Slow violence refers to gradual, often invisible forms of harm that occur over extended periods and across wide areas. Coined by Rob Nixon, it describes environmental degradation, pollution, and climate change impacts that unfold slowly but have severe, long-term consequences, particularly affecting vulnerable populations¹⁹⁹. This concept highlights how these attritional forms of damage often go unrecognized due to their cumulative nature and lack of immediate visibility²⁰⁰.

Species

Species is a term intrinsically tied to *biodiversity* and is used to explain the accurate identification of 'kinds of organisms'²⁰¹.

Sustainability

Sustainability refers to the ability for a system to endure into the future²⁰². It gained prominence in the 1980s, following the publication of 'Our Common Future' by the Brundtland Report (1997) and is an important concept in development, policy and planning discourses²⁰³. *Sustainability* is a complex process, balancing between social, environmental and economic factors²⁰⁴. Within *sustainability* thinking, building a just and sustainable society is an important focus. It would require a rethinking on the 'social needs and welfare and economic opportunity'

which are 'integrally related to environmental limits'²⁰⁵. Here sustainability is focused on providing a 'better quality of life for all, now and into the future', similar to the priorities of environmental justice²⁰⁶. It requires that individuals live within 'the limits of supporting ecosystems' in a 'just and equitable manner'²⁰⁷.

Sustainable Development

Sustainable development is frequently used interchangeably with *sustainability*. Like *sustainability*, *sustainable development* is the act of balancing environmental, economic and social factors that allow for humans to develop their daily and future needs²⁰⁸. It also draws from the 'Our Common Future' by the Brundtland Report (1997) and is specifically focused on 'development that meets the needs of the present without compromising on the ability of future generations to meet their own needs'²⁰⁹.



Zoology

The branch of biology that studies animals, including their classification, structure, physiology, behaviour, and ecology, as well as their interactions with ecosystems.



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