LIBRARY OF CONGRESS COLLECTIONS POLICY STATEMENTS

Environmental Sciences
(Subclass GE; portions of GF, QE, QH, QC, TD, and portions of Z)

Contents

I. Scope

Environmental sciences are interdisciplinary studies of how nature works and how things in nature are interconnected. The Library of Congress classification subclass GE for environmental sciences was not created until 1992. Prior to that, there was no separate collection of environmental materials, although environment- related materials existed in abundance throughout the general and special collections, and were classified with works in natural sciences as well as in social sciences. While it is not easy to set the boundaries of environmental sciences, this Collections Policy Statement covers works in natural sciences that address biological, physical, and chemical impacts on the earth as well as the effects of human beings and technology on the environment. These works are found in subclass GE (general and interdisciplinary literature on the environment, i.e., communication in environmental sciences, environmental ethics, environmental education, environmental quality, global environmental change, the environmental movement, environmental management, and ecological engineering) and related publications in portions of other subclasses: subclass GF (human ecology); subclass QC (atmospheric pollutants); subclass QE (environmental geology); subclass QH (interrelationships of organisms and their environment); subclass TD (industrial and factory environmental control); and corresponding sections of class Z where bibliographies, abstracts and indexes, and catalogs on environmental sciences are found.

II. Diverse and Inclusive Collecting Statement

As the nation's de facto national library, the Library of Congress strives to build an expansive, yet selective, collection that records the creativity of the United States and is reflective of the nation's diversity and complexity. The Library's mandate is to have collections that are inclusive and representative of a diversity of creators and ideas. A priority includes acquiring material of underrepresented perspectives and voices in the Library's collections to ensure diverse authorship, points of view, cultural identities, and other historical or cultural factors. The Library also seeks to build a research collection that comprises a globally representative sample of international materials that are diverse in voice and perspective, relative to their places of origin, further supporting the Library's

mission to sustain and preserve a universal collection of knowledge and creativity for Congress and future generations.

Diverse collecting is mentioned within many of the Library's Collections Policy Statements. In addition, the Library has adopted several specific collection policies in an effort to ensure it is building an inclusive and representative collection. For more information, see the Library's Collections Policy Statements on *Ethnic Materials*, *LGBTQIA+ Studies*, *Women's and Gender Studies*, *Independently Published and Self-Published Textual Materials*, *and Countries and Regions with Acquisitions Challenges*.

III. Research strengths

General

The Library's collection of environmental science materials is substantial. It dates back to the mid-19th century as the written record of the "conservation movement"; later the "environmental movement" took hold in America to protect America's natural heritage. Over the years, the Library's original collection of environmental literature was rich in materials related to saving animal species from extinction by hunters and in the protection of areas useful to humans from erosion and other forms of degradation. This collection has been augmented and expanded to reflect the increased human consciousness of the importance of our surroundings. The environmental collection which the Library has amassed now covers vast and diverse disciplines, with materials from all parts of the world and in many languages. It includes records of governmental environmental agencies from around the world, worldwide proceedings of conferences on environmental concerns, and transactions and publications of learned societies and professional associations of the United States and of other countries. The Library's environmental sciences collection is currently at least at the research level in most areas; in areas of works on harbors and coastal protection, water and wastewater treatment, air pollution, and environmental technology, it approaches the comprehensive level.

Complementing these collections are environmental sciences materials in electronic formats. These include subscription databases, publicly available resources, web sites, and electronic data in tangible formats. The Library's electronic reference materials, abstracts, and indexes are especially strong. A few of the frequently consulted electronic databases are *Environmental Impact Statements,* which extracts the key issues from government-released environmental information; *GreenFILE*, which indexes nearly 300,000 scholarly and general titles that address all aspects of human impact to the environment; *Environmental Sciences and Pollution Management*, which provides comprehensive coverage of the environmental sciences and draws abstracts and citations from over 6000 scholarly journals, conference proceedings, reports, monographs, and government publications; and *Wildlife and Ecology Studies Worldwide*, which offers over 400,000 citations to wildlife literature worldwide from 1935 to the present. Other databases such as *Environment Complete*, *Oxford Research Encyclopedia on Climate Science*, *Oxford Research Encyclopedia on Environmental Science*, and *GeoRef* are often recommended to researchers.

The Library makes available valuable digitized resources to researchers worldwide through the Internet. Some notable digitized collections of environment-related materials from the Library's collections include: *Mapping the National Parks; The Evolution of the Conservation Movement, 1850-1920;* and *Tending the Commons*: *Folk life and Landscape in Southern West Virginia.*

Areas of Distinction

The Library's primary-source historical materials in environmental sciences are exceptional, and their availability in a variety of formats is incomparable. Electronic environmental sciences resources in the Library's digital collections include books, journals, maps, photographs, prints, manuscripts, motion pictures, and other types of materials drawn from the general collections as well as from the special collections of the Library of Congress.

In the 1970s and 1980s, the Library vigorously pursued the personal and professional papers of eminent environmentalists and persons in related fields to augment already strong holdings. As a result, the Library holds papers of pioneer conservationists Gifford Pinchot (1865-1946), the first chief of the U.S. Forest Service; William Temple Hornaday (1854-1937), a pioneer in wildlife conservation; Barry Commoner (1917-2012), renowned cellular biologist who helped initiate the modern environmental movement; Joseph Wood Krutch (1893-1970), a writer and naturalist; Henry Fairfield Osborn (1887-1969), a zoologist who founded the Conservation Foundation which works for the conservation of endangered wildlife and natural areas; Edward Osborne Wilson (1929-), a biologist known for his work on ecology and sociobiology; and Mira Lloyd Dock (1853-1945), an environmentalist and botanist.

The Law Library contains the most complete body of records documenting the work of the U.S. Congress pertaining to environmental policy by maintaining a complete set of bills, resolutions, and laws as well as

hearings and committee prints. It has comprehensive law journal holdings which environmental policy analysts regularly turn to for in-depth analysis of laws and judicial rulings. The Library’s non-U.S. environmental law holdings are just as impressive. While an individual library might have a stronger collection for one particular country or specific issues, no library has a stronger worldwide collection of environmental law.

The Geography and Map Division maintains materials of extreme importance to environmental studies. It has an outstanding collection of geological maps, as well as cartographic records that offer evidence of the physical characteristics of a given place at a given time. Sometimes it is the only source of this information. Because of the division’s worldwide, temporal coverage, essentially from the 14th century to date, its collections provide the fullest range of materials concerning environmental changes of the earth over time. This collection is probably unsurpassed by any institution in the world.

The Library's unparalleled environmental journal collections (many date back to the 19th century) include industry-related journals whose distribution is usually limited to their own members. Scholars often visit the Science and Business Reading Room for issues of environmental science journals and association publications that are not available from other libraries. They also are attracted by the Science, Technology and Business Division's open-stack reference collection of over 10,000 titles, as well as one of the world's largest collections of technical reports, standards, and specifications that have proved to be very useful to researchers on environmental issues.

IV. Collecting Policy

The Library acquires materials on the environment and all the technologies, and life, physical, and earth sciences related to the environment primarily at the research level regardless of format in order to serve the needs of the Congress, federal agencies, and the American public, and to carry out the Library's archival responsibility to collect and preserve historical materials for tomorrow's researchers. Dictionaries, directories, and journals that are particularly important to the Congressional Research Service are collected at the comprehensive level, as are some specific subject areas in environmental sciences, such as environmental engineering, air pollution, and wastewater treatment.

The Library endeavors to acquire current reference works comprehensively. The Library acquires substantial bibliographies and other general works of collections at least at the research level. The Library acquires U.S.-published textbooks on environmental sciences written at the college level; non-U.S. textbooks in these fields and at this level are acquired selectively. Textbooks below college level are rarely acquired. Juvenile works, vocational guidance materials, and materials on the study and teaching of the environmental sciences are generally collected at the instructional support level while materials on museums and exhibitions are collected at the basic information level.

The Library acquires publications from environmental ministries around the world. Materials that contain local statistical information, government policy, and physical data of the region are especially important. When necessary, this may include theses from other countries at the Ph.D. level and items that are ephemeral in nature.

The Library does not acquire non-U.S. materials that are limited to information found in other published materials and which do not add to the body of knowledge in the existing collection. It collects materials that reflect the levels and distinct areas of scientific and technical specialization in the countries of origin, as well as those materials of historical, cultural, and social value that can provide a good picture of international environmental conditions.

Individuals recommending environmental sciences materials are responsible for selecting electronic resources as well as materials in traditional format for acquisition. Recommendations are made in coordination with the Electronic Resources Coordinator. An electronic resource is selected based on the availability of funding, the usefulness and uniqueness of the information in serving the current or future informational needs of the Congress and researchers, the reputation of the provider, frequency of updating, and ease of access. In addition, the resource's service requirements, cataloging, storage, and preservation should also be considered. For specific guidelines in recommending electronic resources, consult the Supplementary Guidelines on *Electronic Resources*.

V. Acquisition Sources

A. Publications in traditional print format

The Library acquires its materials in environmental sciences in print format from a variety of sources. The largest pool of such publications is received through the U.S. Copyright Office. They are monographs and serials issued by U.S. publishers, or by non-U.S. publishers with distribution offices in the United States. The other large sources of print publications are the Library's Cataloging in

Publication (CIP) and Preassigned Control Number (PCN) programs. These are monographs published by U.S. publishers. The Library acquires its non-US. publications mainly by purchase through the Library's Acquisitions and Bibliographic Access Directorate. The Library also acquires a small number of environmental sciences publications through gifts and by exchange with other institutions.

B. Electronic publications

Electronically published works without open access are acquired by paid subscriptions. The Library's web archiving program is also an important mechanism for collecting and preserving digital resources in the environmental sciences.

VI. Best Editions and Preferred Formats

For guidance regarding best editions for material acquired via the Copyright Office, see: http://copyright.gov/circs/circ07b.pdf.
For guidance regarding recommended formats for material acquired via all other means; e.g., purchase, exchange, gift and transfer, see: http://www.loc.gov/preservation/resources/rfs.

For information regarding electronic resources, open digital content, web archiving, and data sets, see the following Supplementary Guidelines: http://www.loc.gov/acq/devpol/electronicresources.pdf, https://www.loc.gov/acq/devpol/opencontent.pdf, http://www.loc.gov/acq/devpol/webarchive.pdf, and https://www.loc.gov/acq/devpol/datasets.pdf.

VII. Collection Levels

Meeting the Library's Diverse and Inclusive Collecting Statement (see Section II) and the collecting levels outlined below requires continual evaluation of the publishing landscape, sources of expression, current events, and socio-cultural trends to thus maintain effective collecting policies and acquisitions methods. Changes in publishing or in the creation of materials covered by this policy statement may necessitate collecting efforts not explicitly referenced here. Such efforts will be handled on a case-by-case basis while the Library evaluates the need for policy statement updates.

For explanation of the Collecting Levels used by the Library, see
https://www.loc.gov/acq/devpol/cpc.html

LC Classification	Subject	U.S. Levels	Non-U.S. Levels
GE10	Dictionaries and encyclopedias	5	4
GE20	Directories	5	4
GE25-GE35	Communication in environmental sciences	4	4
GE42	Environmental ethics	5	4

LC Classification	Subject	U.S. Levels	Non-U.S. Levels
GE50-GE56	History of environmental sciences	5	4
GE70-GE90	Environmental education, study and teaching	3	3
GE95-GE100	Museums and exhibitions	2	2
GE105	General works	4	3
GE123	Handbooks, manuals, etc.	4	4
GE140-GE146	Environmental quality and degradation	5	4
GE149-GE160	Global environmental change	5	4
GE170-GE199	Environmental policy	5	4
QC882-QC994.9	Atmospheric pollutants, atmospheric greenhouse effect, global warming	5	4
QE38	Environmental geology	5	4
QH72-QH77	Nature conservation, landscape protection	5	4
TD169-TD1066	Industrial environmental protection and control	5	4

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