

MEANING, AND SCOPE OF
ENVIRONMENTAL GEOGRAPHY

Meaning of Environment

- **The term environment has been derived from a French word “Environ” means to surround.**
- **It refers to both abiotic (physical or non-living) and biotic (living) environment.**

- **Environment regulates the life of the organisms including human beings. Human beings interact with the environment more vigorously than other living beings.**
- **Ordinarily environment refers to the materials and forces that surrounds the living organism.**

Definition of Environment

According to P. Gisbert “Environment is anything immediately surrounding an object and exerting a direct influence on it.”

According to E. J. Ross “Environment is an external force which influences us.”

Thus, environment refers to anything that is immediately surrounding an object and exerting a direct influence on it.

The environment by which man is surrounded and affected by factors - may be natural, artificial, social, biological and psychological.

Environmental Geography

- **Environmental geography is the study of systematic description of different components of environment and interactions of man with these components.**

Integrated **geography** (also referred to as **integrative geography**, **environmental geography** or **human–environment geography**) is the branch of **geography** that describes and explains the spatial aspects of interactions between human individuals or societies and their **natural environment**.

Definition of Environmental Geography

“Environmental geography is the study of characteristic features of various components of the Environment, the interactions between and among the components in a geo-ecosystem in terms of ecosystem of varying spatial and temporal scales.”

Savindra Singh defined Environmental Geography
in 1989 as follows :

“Thus broadly speaking, environmental geography may be defined as the study of spatial attributes of interrelationships between living organisms and natural environment in general and between technologically advanced ‘economic man’ and his natural environment in particular in temporal and spatial framework.”

The scope of environmental geography may be grouped into 9 major subfields.

- 1. Geo-ecosystem or simply ecosystem as study unit.**
- 2. The functioning of ecosystem including circulation of energy and matter and ecosystem productivity**
- 3. Temporal changes in ecosystem**
- 4. Spatial ecological changes**

- 5. Global environmental problems**
- 6. Environmental hazards disasters**
- 7. Man and environmental processes**
- 8. Environmental degradation and pollution**
- 9. Environmental management.**

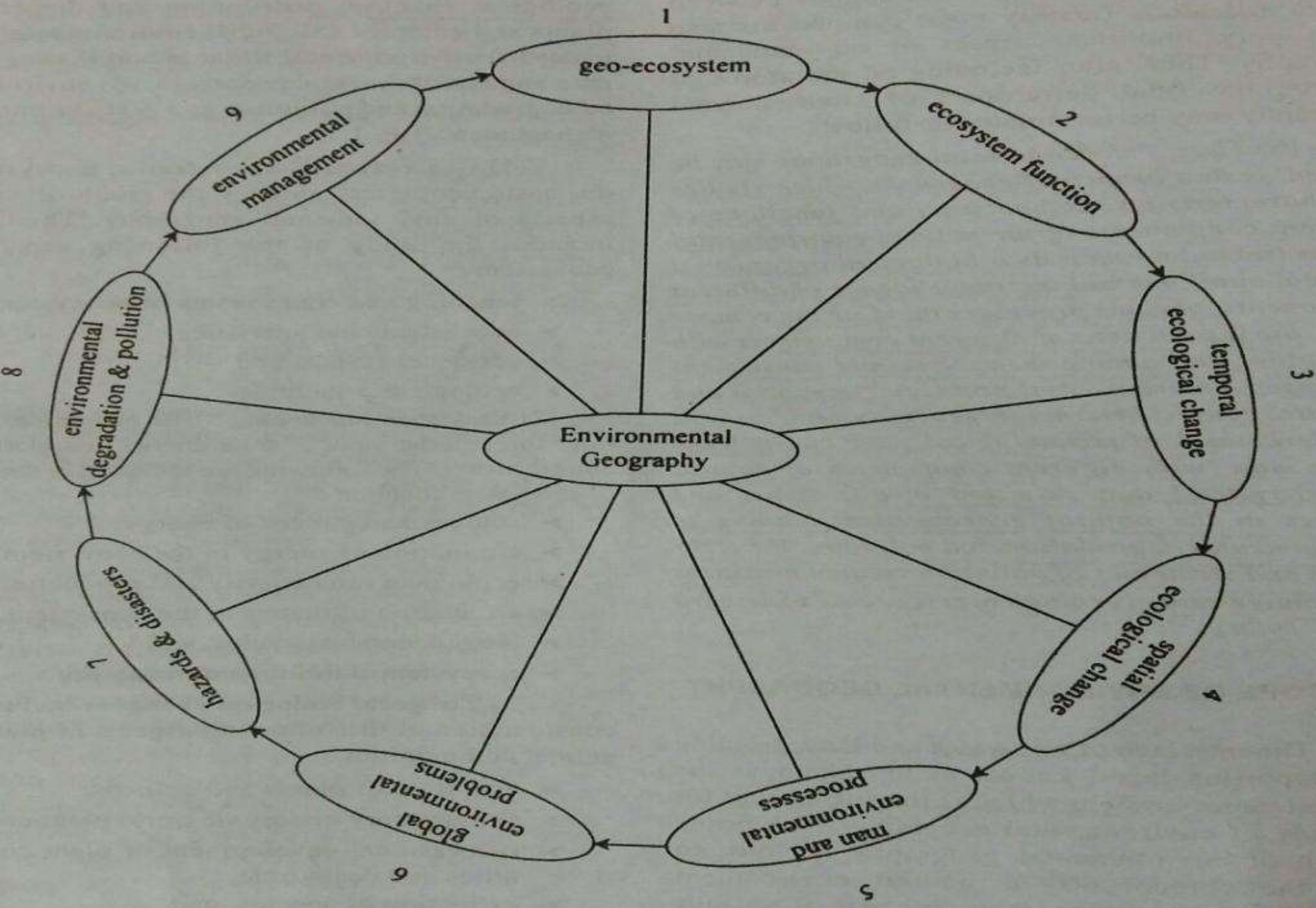


Fig. 1.1 : Scope of Environmental Geography.

SCOPE & IMPORTANCE

- **Environment geography is multi-disciplinary in nature.**
- **It is related to other disciplines like- life science, physical science, ecology, economics, biology, chemistry, public administration etc.**

- **It's concerned with the spatial attributes of all the phenomena related to the environment.**
- **Studies the various biomes and human influences.**
- **Deals with the pattern of biodiversity at the global, national and local level.**
- **Studies the spatial pattern of physical and anthropogenic degradation of environment.**

- **Studies cause- effect, severity, management and mitigation of various environment issues like Climate change, global warming, ozone depletion, habitat loss, bio-diversity loss, pollution etc.**
- **Includes the notion of sustainable development, environment education, planning, conservation and management.**