# Contents

### Preface to the Eighth Edition *xi* About the Companion Website *xiii*

#### 1 Introduction 1

- 1.1 The Development of Ideas 1
- 1.2 The Anthropocene 5
- 1.3 The Development of Human Population and Stages of Cultural Development 6

v

- 1.4 Hunting and Gathering 10
- 1.5 Humans as Cultivators and Keepers 12
- 1.6 Mining and Metals 18
- 1.7 Modern Industrial and Urban Civilizations 19
- 1.8 The Great Acceleration 21
- 1.9 Methods of Study 24
  - Guide to Reading 25

### 2 The Human Impact on Vegetation 27

- 2.1 Human Impacts on Nature 27
- 2.2 Vegetation Change: Introduction 28
- 2.3 The Use of Fire 32
- 2.4 Fires: Natural and Anthropogenic 34
- 2.5 Some Consequences of Fire Suppression 34
- 2.6 Some Effects of Fire on Vegetation 35
- 2.7 The Role of Grazing 37
- 2.8 Deforestation 39
- 2.9 Tropical Forests 40
- 2.10 The Forest Transition 45
- 2.11 Secondary Rain Forest 48
- 2.12 The Human Role in the Creation and Maintenance of Savanna 49
- 2.13 The Spread of Desert Vegetation on Desert Margins 52
- 2.14 The Maquis of the Mediterranean Lands 56
- 2.15 The Prairies and Other Mid-latitude and High-altitude Grasslands 56
- 2.16 Post-glacial Vegetational Change in Britain and Europe 59
- 2.17 Lowland Heaths 60
- 2.18 Introduction, Invasion, and Explosion 61
- 2.19 Air Pollution and Its Effects on Plants 65
- 2.20 Forest Decline 67
- 2.21 Miscellaneous Causes of Plant Decline 70
- 2.22 The Change in Genetic and Species Diversity 71
- 2.23 Conclusion: Threats to Plant Life 72
  - Guide to Reading 72

- 3 The Human Impact on Animals 75 3.1 Domestication of Animals 75 3.2 Dispersal and Invasions of Animals 76 3.3 Human Influence on the Expansion of Animal Populations 82 3.4 Causes of Animal Contractions and Decline: Pollution 86 3.5 Habitat Change and Animal Decline 89 3.6 Other Causes of Animal Decline 93 Animal Extinctions in Prehistoric Times 98 3.7 3.8 Modern-day Extinctions 102 Guide to Reading 108 4 The Human Impact on the Soil 111 4.1 Introduction 111 4.2 Salinity: Natural Sources 112 4.3 Human Agency and Increased Salinity 112 4.4 Irrigation Salinity 113 4.5 Dryland Salinity 114 4.6 Urban Salinity 116 4.7 Inter-basin Water Transfers 116 4.8 Coastal Zone Salinity 116 4.9 Consequences of Salinity 118 4.10 Reclamation of Salt-affected Lands 118 4.11 Lateritization 120 4.12 Accelerated Podzolization and Acidification 121 4.13 Soil Carbon 122 4.14 Soil Structure Alteration 123 4.15 Soil Drainage and its Impact 125 4.16 Soil Fertilization 126 4.17 Fires and Soil Quality 126 4.18 Some Anthrosols Resulting from Agriculture and Urbanization 127 4.19 Soil Erosion: General Considerations 127 4.20The Causes of Soil Erosion 128 4.21 Forest Removal 129 4.22 Soil Erosion Associated with Grazing 132 4.23 Irrigation and Erosion 132 4.24 Replacement of Grassland by Shrubland in Drylands 133 4.25 Soil Erosion Produced by Fire 133 4.26 Soil Erosion Associated with Construction and Urbanization 134 4.27 Long-term Studies of Rates of Erosion 134 4.28 Peat Bog Erosion 137 4.29 Accelerated Wind Erosion 138 4.30 Soil Conservation 140 4.31 Soils, Microbiology, and the Earth System 143 Guide to Reading 144 5 The Human Impact on the Waters 145 5.1 Introduction 145 5.2 Deliberate Modification of River Systems Connectivity 146 5.3 Changes in River Flow 154 The Effects of Dams 154 5.3.15.3.2 Vegetation Modification and its Effect on River Flow 154 5.3.3 The Role of Invasive Plants 158
- 5.3.4 Land Drainage 158

- 5.3.5 Groundwater Exploitation 160
- 5.3.6 Urbanization and its Effects on River Flow 160
- 5.4 The Human Impact on Lake Levels 162
- 5.5 Changes in Groundwater Conditions 168
- 5.6 Water Pollution 171
- 5.7 Eutrophication 177
- 5.8 Pollution by Acid Rain 178
- 5.9 Deforestation and its Effects on Water Quality 180
- 5.10 Thermal Pollution 181
- 5.11 Pollution with Suspended Sediments 182
- 5.12 Marine Pollution *182* Guide to Reading *185*

#### 6 Human Agency in Geomorphology 187

- 6.1 Introduction 187
- 6.2 Landforms Produced by Excavation 188
- 6.3 Landforms Produced by Construction and Dumping 192
- 6.4 Ground Subsidence 192
- 6.5 The Human Impact on Seismicity and Volcanoes 198
- 6.6 Accelerated Sedimentation 200
- 6.7 Sediment Transport by Rivers 203
- 6.8 Deliberate Modification of Channels 205
- 6.9 Non-deliberate River Channel Changes 208
- 6.10 Arroyo Trenching and Gullies 213
- 6.11 Accelerated Mass Movements 216
- 6.12 Accelerated Weathering and the Tufa Decline 219
- 6.13 Reactivation and Stabilization of Sand Dunes 220
- 6.14 Accelerated Coastal Erosion 223
- 6.15 Changing Rates of Salt Marsh Accretion 229 Guide to Reading 231

### 7 The Human Impact on Climate and the Atmosphere 233

- 7.1 World Climates 233
- 7.2 The Greenhouse Gases Carbon Dioxide 235
- 7.3 Other Gases 236
- 7.4 Ozone Depletion and Climate Change 239
- 7.5 Aerosols 239
- 7.6 Global Dimming and Global Brightening 241
- 7.7 Vegetation and Albedo Change 242
- 7.8 Forests, Irrigation, and Climate 244
- 7.9 The Possible Effects of Water Diversion Schemes 244
- 7.10 Lakes and Climate 245
- 7.11 Urban Climates 245
- 7.12 Deliberate Climatic Modification 250
- 7.13 Geoengineering 252
- 7.14 Urban Air Pollution 252
- 7.15 Air Pollution: Some Further Effects 256
- 7.16 Stratospheric Ozone Depletion 263
- 7.17 Conclusions 265
  - Guide to Reading 266

## 8 The Future: Introduction 267

- 8.1 Introduction 267
- 8.2 Changes in the Biosphere 271

8.3	Climate and Geomorphology 278 Guide to Reading 282
9	The Future: Coastal Environments 283
9.1	Introduction 283
9.2	The Steric Effect 284
9.3	Anthropogenic Contributions to Sea-Level Change 284
9.3.1	Reduction in Lake-Water Volumes 284
9.3.2	Water Impoundment in Reservoirs 285
9.3.3	Groundwater Mining 285
9.3.4	Urbanization and Runoff 285
9.3.5	Deforestation and Runoff 285
9.3.6	Wetland Losses 285
9.3.7	Irrigation 286
9.3.8	Synthesis 286
9.4	Permafrost Degradation, Melting of Glaciers, and Sea-Level Rise 286
9.5	Ice Sheets and Sea-Level Rise 286
9.6	How Fast are Sea Levels Rising? 287
9.7	The Amount of Sea-Level Rise By 2100 287
9.8	Land Subsidence 287
9.9	Coral Reefs 289
9.10	Salt Marshes and Mangrove Swamps 292
9.11	River Deltas 296
9.12	Estuaries 297
9.13	Cliffed Coasts 298
9.14	Sandy Beaches 298
9.15	Conclusions 300
	Guide to Reading 300
10	The Future: Hydrological and Geomorphological Impacts 301
10.1	Introduction 301
10.2	Rainfall Intensity 302
10.3	Changes in Tropical Cyclones 302
10.4	Runoff Response 304
10.5	Cold Regions 305
10.6	Changes in Runoff in the UK 307
10.7	Europe 307
10.8	Geomorphological Consequences of Hydrological and Other Changes 309

10.9 Weathering 310 Guide to Reading 311

### **11 The Future: The Cryosphere** *313*

- 11.1 The Nature of the Cryosphere *313*
- 11.2 The Polar Ice Sheets and Ice Caps 313
- 11.3 Valley Glaciers and Small Ice Caps 316
- 11.4 Predicted Rates of Glacier Retreat and Some Environmental Consequences 320
- 11.5 Sea Ice in the Arctic and Antarctic 322
- 11.6 Permafrost Regions 323 Guide to Reading 328

### **12** The Future: Drylands 329

- 12.1 Introduction 329
- 12.2 Climate Changes in the Past 330
- 12.3 Future Changes in Climate in Drylands 331

- 12.4 Wind Erosivity and Erodibility 332
- 12.5 Future Dust Storm Activity 333
- 12.6 Sand Dunes 334
- 12.7 Rainfall and Runoff 337
- 12.8 Lake Levels 338
- 12.9 Sea-level Rise and Arid-zone Coastlines 338
- 12.10 Salt Weathering and Salinization 339
- Guide to Reading 340

### **13 Conclusion** 341

- 13.1 The Power of Non-industrial and Pre-industrial Civilizations 341
- 13.2 The Proliferation of Impacts 342
- 13.3 The Inter-relationships of Changes in the Earth System 346
- 13.4 Human Impacts on the Environment in China 348
- 13.5 Are Changes Reversible? 349
- 13.6 The Susceptibility to Change 354
- 13.7 Human Influence or Nature? 356
- 13.8 Global Warming and Other Pressures 357
- 13.9 Into the Unknown 358
  - Guide to Reading 359

References 361

**Index** 451