Collection Development Policy for Geography and the Environment

1. Overview

1.1. General coverage
The development of Oxford’s collections for geography and the environment are driven by the research and teaching activities of the School of Geography and the Environment, the Transport Studies Unit, and the Environmental Change Institute. These activities include: an Undergraduate BA in Geography; a range of taught masters courses; and extensive doctoral and post-doctoral research programmes.

The collections can be searched using SOLO. Books cited on reading lists, recent research texts and key reference works (physical and human geography), are housed on open-shelf in the Radcliffe Science Library in Library of Congress classification order. Most journals are available online; those only available in print are on open-shelf, shelved alphabetically by title. Additional materials from the former Departmental Library for Geography and the Environment are currently stored offsite and can be requested via OLIS (deliveries are daily, Mon to Fri).

Related collections are held in a range of other Oxford University Libraries. The Social Science Library provides collections and services in support of a broad range of disciplines within the Social Sciences Division including Economics, International Development, Politics and Sociology. Cartography and spatially referenced data are covered by the Bodleian Library Map Room.

All members of the University are encouraged to recommend items for purchase. An online suggestions form is available.

1.2 Legal deposit
The Radcliffe Science Library is the primary holding library for post-2005 legal deposit books in geography and the environmental sciences. Previous works are held in Bodleian Library Bookstacks or in offsite depositories.

1.3 Electronic Resources
Where possible and if desirable, resources for geography and the environment are made available online in preference to, or as a supplement to, printed versions.

Almost 40,000 electronic journals are available, and can be accessed from any site in the University, or outside Oxford using Single-Sign-On. All major publishers are included in Oxford’s portfolio of e-journal packages (which often includes the complete backfiles), and additional e-journal titles are subscribed to on an individual basis. From 2008, geography and the environment journals for which Oxford has secure electronic access are no longer purchased in print.

There is also a growing collection of geography ebooks and online reference works (including the International Encyclopedia of Human Geography), particularly in support of teaching. Offering 24/7 access, ebooks can usually be accessed by 2 or 3 simultaneous users. (The academic e-book market is still relatively immature, and many titles are as yet unavailable).

There are also over 800 databases available online, including GeoBase (available via SCOPUS); GeoRef and EconLit (available via OvidSP); Ecology Abstracts, Sustainability Science
Abstracts & Water Resources Abstracts (available via Illumina: Cambridge Scientific Abstracts); International Bibliography of the Social Sciences and the Web of Knowledge.

1.4 Languages
Resources purchased for geography will primarily be English language material. Key research materials in European, and to a lesser extent, other languages, will however be considered.

1.5 Bodleian Libraries Collection Management
The Bodleian Libraries aim to support new research areas and taught courses as they arise, and collection policies will be subject to amendment and continuous development in the light of such changes in academic requirements, while having regard to national/international provision in subject areas where the Bodleian Libraries have leading collections.

The Bodleian Libraries have a range of Collection Management Policy Documents which refer to all subjects and collections, particularly as regards location, retention, disposal and transfer of library materials.

2. Teaching Collections for Geography and the Environment

2.1 Reading list material
The Bodleian Libraries make every effort to ensure that students have easy and timely access to all the references on the reading lists prepared by Geography and the Environment teaching staff. General items in support of teaching and learning are also provided, especially research methodology texts. Departments should be explicit in their recommendations to students concerning personal purchases of essential books, as the Bodleian Libraries can not ensure that every student can always access a copy of a textbook at the time they want it.

2.2 Levels of provision
Student numbers, the nature of the item (core reading or background text), price, and the availability of the text in Oxford, are all taken in to account when placing new book orders. In general, the Radcliffe Science Library aims to provide a minimum of two print copies (one reference and one lending), or one online copy, of every core text. Additional copies are purchased in the light of user’s needs, requests and usage patterns. In some limited cases, it may be more appropriate for resources to be housed in a different library (e.g. legal aspects covered by the Law Library).

The availability of reading list texts is maximised through the provision of confined copies, short loan periods and a reservations system. OLIS reports (e.g. reservation queues) are used to monitor and respond to use of the teaching collections, and new accessions and lists of heavily-used texts are emailed to College Librarians to encourage purchasing of additional copies.

2.3 Journal articles
The majority of journals are available online. Any journal articles required for teaching that are unavailable in Oxford (online or print) will be obtained through inter-library loan. Providing the terms of the University’s licence agreement with the Copyright Licensing Agency are adhered to, academics may scan journal articles (and book chapters) for use via WebLearn or make the relevant number of multiple copies.
2.4 Courses
The following courses are supported:

BA in Geography

MSc/MPhil Biodiversity, Conservation & Management

MSc/MPhil Nature, Society & Environmental Policy

MSc Environmental Change & Management

MSc Water Science, Policy & Management

DPhil

Note – it is the responsibility of lecturers to keep the library informed of teaching requirements. For major course revisions or new courses, the Social Sciences Division requires a supporting letter from the Library Service, and the Department may be required to pay start-up costs.

3. Research Collections for Geography and the Environment

3.1 Journals
All key journals (i.e. highly cited journals and those relating to the specific interests of the department) in general geography and environmental sciences will be provided. Where possible, journals will be made available online in preference to print. The Library Service welcomes requests for specific titles not currently subscribed to and is committed to expanding coverage of geography and environmental science journals as funds permit.

3.2 Discussion and working papers
Many individual papers for geography and environmental sciences are catalogued on OLIS and are held permanently.

3.3 Research books
The Bodleian Libraries welcome all suggestions for monograph purchases from members of the Department. In addition to this, and the legal deposit intake, the Library Service will pay special attention to the purchasing of non-deposited material in support of the subjects listed in section 4.

3.4 Data
Where appropriate and within budget constraints, the Bodleian Libraries will purchase datasets and data-based reports in support of research. (Data can only be purchased by the Library Service if the contract is acceptable to the University and the data can be made available to all University members).

3.5 Research hubs
Library support for geography covers a range of theses topics and research interests. Relevant hubs for research partnerships include:

African Environments Programme; Arid Environmental Systems (research cluster); Biodiversity (research cluster); Climate Systems and Policy (research cluster); Environmental
4. Core Research and Teaching Areas for Geography and the Environment

Topics include:

- Arid Environmental Systems
- Biodiversity, Biogeography and Conservation
- Climate Change
- Climatology
- Cultural and Social Geography
- Ecosystems and Ecology of the Biosphere
- Economic Geography
- Energy
- Environmental Change, Management, Governance and Policy
- Ethnicity / Ethnic Relations and Multiculturalism
- Forensic Geography
- Geomorphology
- Globalization and Transnationalism
- Natural Resources, Food Production and Sustainable Livelihoods
- Political Geography
- Remote Sensing and Geographical Information Systems
- Research Methodology
- Sediment Dating
- Transport
- Urban Geography / Cities, Societies and Migrants
- Quaternary Period
- Water Science and Policy

Regions include:

- Africa (human geography; environmental change)
- Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union (human geography; environmental change)
- European Integration (political geography)
- Latin America (biodiversity & climate change impacts)
Accessions lists of new items, both purchased and received through legal deposit, will be made available on a regular basis.

5. Special Collections – Cartography and spatially referenced data

5.1 Paper maps
The Bodleian Map Room will acquire via legal deposit, all maps and atlases printed and published in the British Isles, and will continue to receive by gift, maps from the national mapping agencies of Australia and the United States. The Map Room will purchase atlases, and topographic and thematic mapping from around the World to support teaching and research within the University. Over 1,250,000 maps and 20,000 atlases are currently available for consultation.

Accessions lists of new items will be made available on a monthly basis.

5.2 Digital mapping
The Bodleian Map Room will work closely with EDINA to supply both current and historical digital mapping for Great Britain to all current members of the University. Other datasets will be purchased in response to teaching and research needs.

6. Contacts

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