

Fact Sheet Assignment Guidelines

Introduction

You have studied physical, chemical and biological aspects of oceans, and explored examples of how ocean systems are vulnerable to climate change. You have also been introduced to approaches that humans are or can be making to mitigate or manage these changes. You should have developed some understanding of complex ocean systems, and how all of these different concepts link to one another as humans are influencing different aspects of systems (e.g., atmosphere, biosphere). In this assignment, your job will be to apply what you have learned and design a brochure or fact sheet that communicates how aspects of the ocean system are altered with climate change, and proposes a strategy for mitigating these potential effects. You will be tasked to act as the extension officer of a Marine Protected Reserve and communicate with the general public. You will incorporate what you have learned into a clear, concise document intended to communicate to an audience without a general science background.

Assignment overview

Your task is to create a **fact sheet** often used by scientists to disseminate results of their work to the general public. For example, a geologist at the USGS who studies volcanoes might produce a fact sheet explaining the volcanic hazards in a particular region. Fact sheets are also commonly used by researchers in science fields to share their findings with ocean consumers and citizens. For instance, a scientist who studies marine reserves might author a fact sheet about the benefits of marine reserves to commercial and recreational fishermen.

Your fact sheet should address this prompt:

"Describe the issue of ocean sustainability, including why oceans are vulnerable to climate change and how human interaction can help or hurt ocean systems".

Your fact sheet should describe the important characteristics of the ocean system you will focus on, discuss climate change effects on that system, and make recommendations for sustainable practices that can be used to mitigate negative effects from climate change.

General format and audience

Most fact sheets are about two pages long so that they can fit on a single piece of paper (front and back) and have a good balance of text (in a readable font), white space, and images. An effective fact sheet is informative and visually interesting; use your creativity! The layout of

your fact sheet is up to you, but here is an example describing Carbon Sequestration, published by the States Geological Survey (USGS):

<http://pubs.usgs.gov/fs/2008/3097/pdf/CarbonFS.pdf>

It is important to keep your audience in mind as you write the text for your fact sheet. You can assume that your reader has some basic knowledge of ocean systems and climate change, but will not be familiar with much of the terminology we have used in this class. It is important to define any terms you use. See the definition of “carbon sequestration” in the pdf shown above.

Informative subject headings within the document will also help your reader follow your narrative. Include photos, maps and diagrams that help convey your message, and include a brief description with each that you insert in your Fact Page.

Grading and Expectations

Your assignment will be graded based on the following criteria. Please see the ***Fact Sheet Grading Rubric*** for a breakdown of expectations for exemplary performance, good performance, basic performance, poor performance, and nonperformance. Please use the guidelines below and the rubric to ensure you cover all expected aspects of this assignment.

Content expectations

In your fact sheet, you should use evidence learned in this module to support your claims and recommendations. Make sure to refer to your notes and previous assignments from the module for guidance. In terms of content, your fact sheet should:

- Define ocean sustainability, including processes/activities that influence it, and describe why it is important
- Describe specific characteristics of the ocean system you choose to address
- Describe human interactions related to pressures and impacts on your ocean system
- Describe the predicted effects of climate change on the ocean at your chosen scale
- Identify links between climate change and ecological properties of your portion of an ocean system
- Make specific recommendations for mitigation strategies that can minimize effects of climate change
- Address the social and economic need for human action and, from the perspective of stakeholders, the feasibility of implementation

How you organize this information is ultimately up to you, but you should use these items as a guide. Questions related to this content are provided on a separate handout to help you organize your thoughts. It is important to consider your audience and use subject headings that are clear, interesting, and informative (i.e. do not simply title a section “links between climate

change and ocean management practices”). Make sure you engage the public’s interest and make content relatable without oversimplifying.

Format expectations

Your fact sheet must:

- Cite sources for all factual information, images, diagrams and maps
- Be no more than two pages in length
- Have a balance of readable text, images, and white space
- Use appropriate communication strategies for presenting technical material
- Be well-organized and free of spelling and grammatical errors