

**Table 15.2** Summary of sociological perspectives: The environment

	<b>Functional</b>	<b>Conflict/Feminist</b>	<b>Interactionist</b>
<b>Explanation of environmental problems</b>	Environmental problems are dysfunctions of modern living, the result of agricultural and industrial modes of production.	<p>Problems are created by humans competing for power, income, and their own interests.</p> <p>Our capitalist economic system has been identified as a primary source of the conflict over polluting (or conserving) our physical and natural worlds.</p> <p>According to the feminist perspective, a masculine worldview is responsible for the domination of nature, the domination of women, and the domination of other minorities.</p>	Theorists from this perspective address how environmental problems are created and defined.
<b>Questions asked about the environment and environmental problems</b>	<p>How are environmental problems related to our modes of production or to our patterns of consumption?</p> <p>Are environmental problems inevitable consequences of modern living?</p>	<p>How do environmental problems emerge from our capitalist economic system or from a patriarchal society?</p> <p>Which particular groups are at risk for experiencing environmental problems or their impacts?</p>	<p>How are environmental problems created?</p> <p>What factors are included in the process?</p> <p>How is a problem legitimized?</p> <p>What individuals or groups play a role in the process?</p>