

Environment refers to the abstract conditions in which a person lives. The word environment is derived from the French word "environ" which means "surrounding".

With respect to nature, it can be termed as a shelter or habitat for living and non-living organisms where they can be properly placed, can find food and breed freely. It is contributed by and is created amongst air, sky, trees, rivers, oceans, mountains etc., that surrounds our Earth.



Environment is the greatest creativity, as it is beautiful, mathematical, planned, healthy, positive & balanced. We often term them together as 'Nature'. Nature itself maintains balance in the environment by creating a chain where the autotrophs are hunted & eaten by heterotrophs, and thus termed as an 'Ecosystem'. (Autotrophs are the producers and heterotrophs are the consumers).

If we believe that there is some supreme eternal Power or God, we all would definitely agree that his plan, design and creation is the best. His calculation for placement and time bound application of resources would be the most logical. Any change in its natural phenomenon, design or creation will never give a positive outcome.

Factors Causing Imbalance

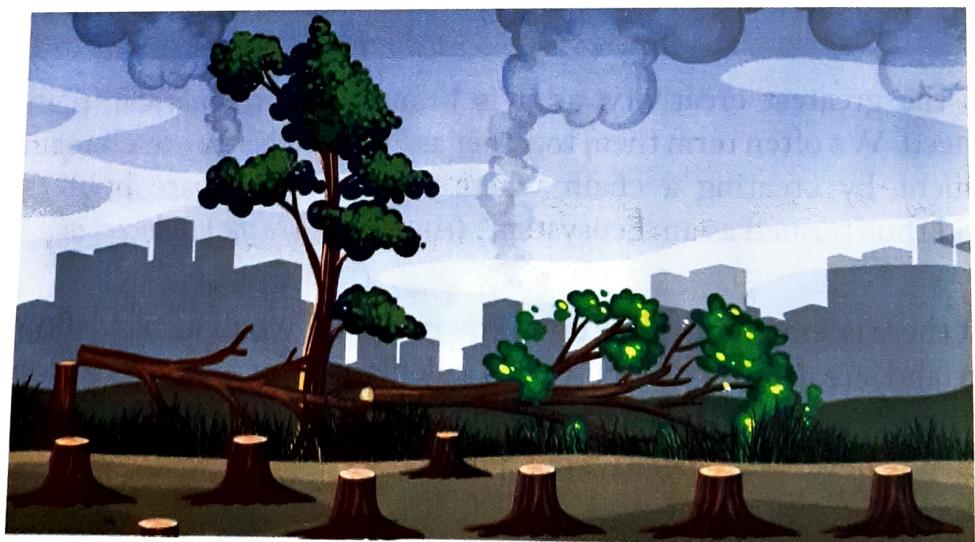
Our day to day activities for fulfilling our luxuries disrupts the natural phenomenon of our ecosystem & cause environmental imbalance. For instance excessive amount of CO₂ is produced by the factories and automobiles, excessive use of air conditioners, cement factories, coal mines, etc. increases

temperature of the earth, which results in global warming, famine, cyclone, flood, hurricane, etc. There are various factors which causes environmental imbalance with serious consequences and for this, humans are held responsible one way or the other.

Population: The increasing population results into increasing demands and services. Increasing population is affecting our natural ecosystem as our mother nature has got a certain capacity to fulfill every living being's requirement. Its resources are limited but we are overburdening it with our unlimited demands for more food, infrastructure (i.e. buildings, factories, transportation) & facilities.

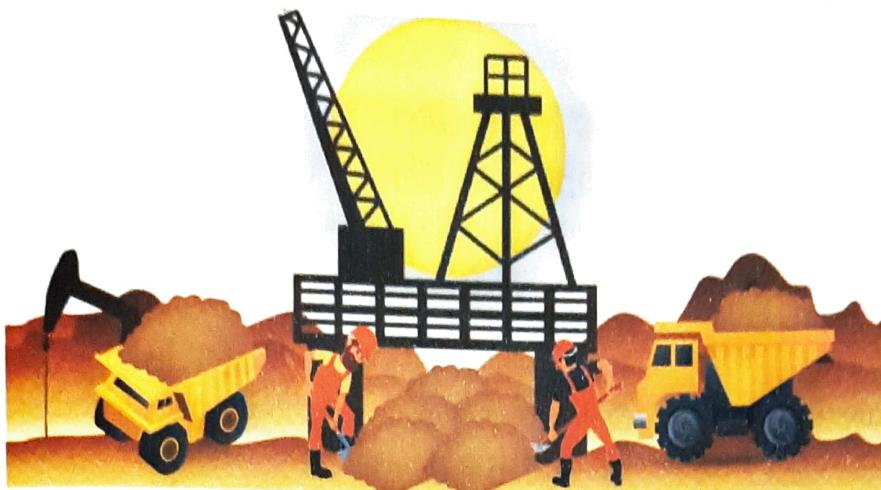


Deforestation: Cutting down of trees and elimination of forests leads to disturbance of natural habitat of living organisms. We all know that plants and trees are one of the major factor that causes rainfall and disturbing them leads to scanty rainfall which in turn causes water crisis. Percentage of fresh breathable natural air, quality of air is also decreasing at an alarming rate. It leads to various unusual climatic changes that is not in accordance to the natural cycle.



Mining: The process of digging the earth for the extraction of the ores results into erosion, formation of sinkholes, and contamination of soils that causes severe damage to the environment. It disturbs the natural living and breeding place of various living organisms and life of people.

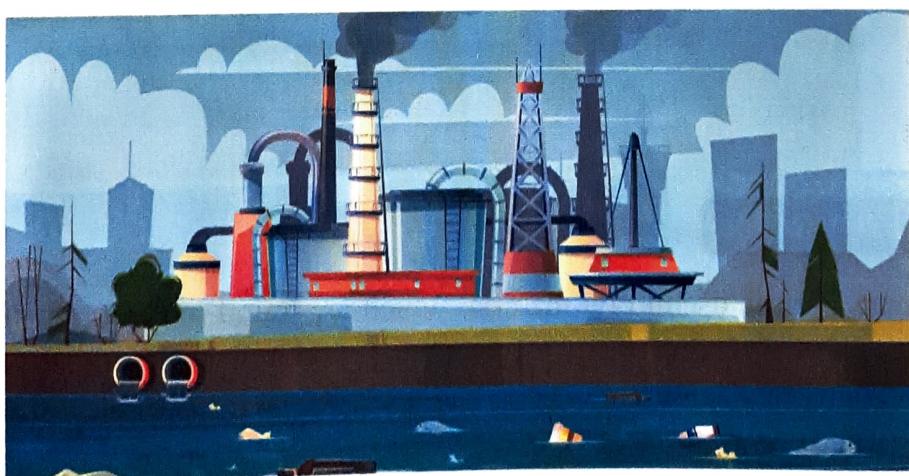
residing in nearby area. It leads to soil erosion, landslide, noise pollution and contamination of surface and groundwater due to the chemicals released during the extraction process.



Pollution: It is the contamination of the *environment (land, air and water)* due to the presence of some unnatural elements i.e., pollutants. Pollutants are harmful. It can be in solid, liquid or gaseous form. For example: Poisonous gases emitted from factories & vehicles, chemicals & garbage dumped in the waterbodies, excessive sound of vehicles, etc. Noise pollution is caused due to the sound generated by Industrial & Constructional activities, factory equipment, generators, electric saws, drills and other machineries.



Industrialization: In the process of setting up industries and manufacturing various products, we are destructing the natural components of our environment. While manufacturing, industrial waste, garbage is being dumped into soil or water, dumping of wastes especially, e-Waste, harmful chemicals, industrial effluents, packaging material, salts and other garbage makes the soil useless.



Pollution kills over 1 million seabirds and 100 million mammals annually.



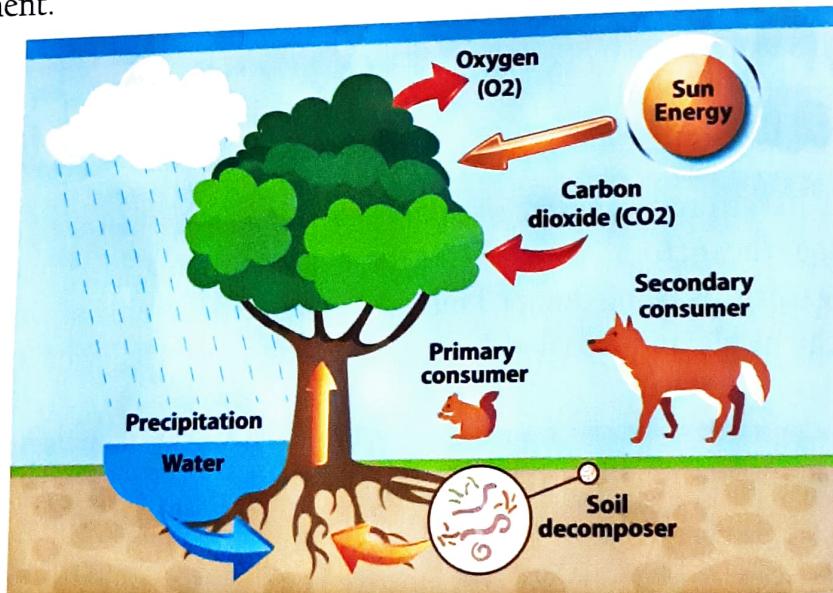
Relationship between Society and Environment

Man is a social animal. By being social, it is meant that he shares his resources and spends his life amongst other people together in groups. Society is a framework in which people live together by maintaining common implied rules and ethics for a peaceful and prosperous living. Thus, society is an important component of environment.

The relationship between society and environment has been prevalent for thousands of years. This long tenure has caused a fluctuating impact on the environmental stability. Human activities which are conducted as a part of development or social welfare or growth are affecting the ecological balance. With rising luxuries in the society, we tend to misuse the resources of environment, which is actually disrupting the natural chain/system of the environment.

Ecosystem

It can be defined as a component of the environment, where all kinds of living beings (plants, animals, microbes) live together and complete their requirements by their own demand supply chain mechanism. Ecosystem consists of producers, consumers and decomposers. It includes all the living things which are living together on the Earth & help each other to complete life cycle of the environment.

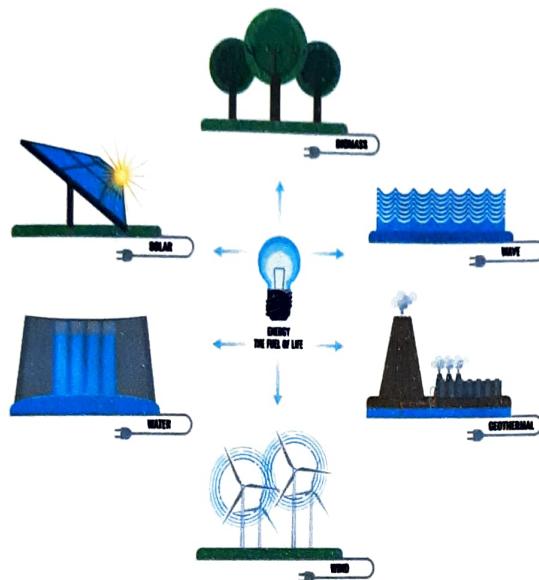


NATURAL RESOURCES

Natural resources are the useful raw material which are found in nature by itself. They are created & occur naturally, which means that humans cannot make natural resources. Instead, we use and modify natural resources in ways that are required by us. Such resources are of two kinds, renewable and non-renewable.

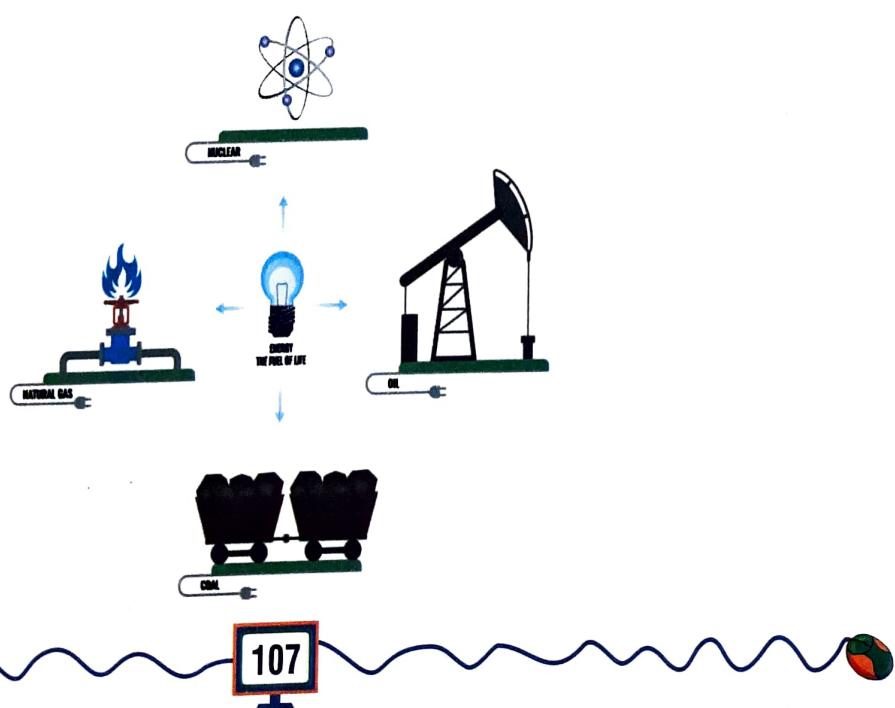
Renewable Resources: It includes the sources of energy which can be reused or regenerated. If renewable resources are obtained from living things, (such as trees and animals) they are called organic renewable resources. If renewable resources are obtained from non-living things, (such as water, sun and wind) they are called inorganic renewable resources.

Non-Renewable Energy



Non-Renewable Resources: It includes the resources which are limited and cannot be recycled or recreated easily, such as coal, oil and natural gas, fossil fuels etc. Non-renewable resources can be called inorganic resources if they come from non-living things. For example: minerals, land, soil and rocks. Some non-renewable resources come from living things such as fossil fuels. They can be called organic non-renewable resources.

Renewable Energy



Substances that we use in our daily life can be categorized into two types:

- Biodegradable substances
- Non-Biodegradable substances

Biodegradable substances are those substances that gets decomposed or decay on their own by using natural agents and gets mixed in the soil. For example: plants, animals & their waste paper, etc.



Non-Biodegradable substances are those substances that doesn't gets decomposed or decay on its own and doesn't mix with the soil. For example: plastic, chemicals, paint, etc. So non-biodegradable resources are hazardous. One of the most hazardous non-biodegradable resource, that is posing a threat to the environment is 'Plastic'.

Harmful effects of Plastic:

- Plastics are non-biodegradable polymer that doesn't gets decayed on its own and with the passage of time, various layers are formed which gets covered with eroded soil, mud, sand etc. Due to its deposition, natural rain-water doesn't percolate through the soil and water table underground is depleting. It is one of the major causes of Water crisis. Due to deposition of plastic under soil the land is becoming barren as plastic makes an opaque connection between soil and the germinating seed.
- On burning plastic it releases some harmful gases that contains some carcinogenic components (i.e. cancer causing chemicals). It can cause lung cancer, blood cancer etc. It is not only affecting our present generation but can have a bad impact on our future generation by becoming a reason of congenital disease in kids (kids with birth defects).
- Heating food in plastic containers emits plastic granules due to its low melting point & it causes some hazardous chemical change to the food which is risky for our health.



Precautionary measures against use of Plastic:

- We should avoid using plastic and limit its use as far as possible.
- We should use cloth bags as an alternative to easy carrying plastic bags.
- We should neither throw nor burn plastic to make our surroundings clean. It should be recycled or reused.

Natural Resource Conservation

Our existence on earth solely and primarily depends upon the environment and the natural resources that exists



for our use and purpose of living. Hence, it must be our prime objective to protect and conserve natural resources so that we all live comfortably & that it may last long for the future generations. In other words, we need to use these natural resources wisely to avail its benefits in the present and future. They are part and parcel of humans' developmental process.

Conservation of natural resources can also be interpreted as proper, efficient and effective utilization of these resources. It should be used only upto the need and can also be reused whenever possible. There should be minimal use of an input (resource) and maximal production of outcome (product). By such approach, we can use the resources effectively.

Steps For Conservation of Natural Resources:

- Use water scarcely & wisely.
- Abandon use of plastic and plastic products.
- Plant more & more trees.
- Use alternative sources of energy.
- Reutilize the available waste resources.
- Recycle & Reuse elements & products.
- Create awareness among the masses about the worth of natural resources.
- Use of natural resources should be limited to requirement.
- Implement government policies in order to safeguard our resources.

GREEN ECONOMY

Green Economy can be defined as an economy with a vision of growth and development for mankind while reducing environmental risks or ecological imbalance. It encourages for overall development of humans in compliance with laws of nature. It helps in economic growth while maintaining a balance in the environment in which the development takes place without being harmful for the environment or human health. To live a healthy life and to save Earth, there is a need to make people aware about the use of green products which does not bring or cause damages to the environment.





The UNEP (United Nations Environment Program) defines green economy as "one which is low carbon, resource efficient and socially inclusive."

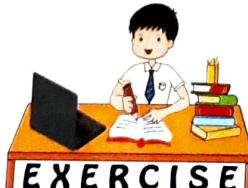
Green Consumer

A person who avoids Environment degradation or destruction for his comfort and choose to purchase only the environment friendly products is known as a **Green Consumer**.

Importance of Green Economy

We all can admit to one fact that "development can be categorized in two ways"-one in which there is self-growth i.e., restricted to a particular individual or organization and the other in which all the stakeholders get some kind of benefits in some way or the other. Encouraging and practicing green economy is the second category of development that helps a healthy life for all. Boosting green economy can have some additional benefits too, such as:

- Saving natural resources.
- Better health condition of human beings.
- Better Natural tourist destinations.
- Pollution free environment.
- Longevity in life.
- Peaceful coexistence of other animals.
- Abundance in natural healing and natural medicines.
- Less chaos and peaceful life style.



1. Fill in the Blanks:

- refers to abstract situations that prevails in the relevant surroundings.
- UNEP stands for

2. Write short notes on:

- | | |
|---|-----------------------|
| (a) Ecosystem | (b) Natural Resources |
| (c) Hazardous Effects of Use of Plastic | (d) Green Consumer |

3. Answer the following Questions:

- What is the difference between Biodegradable and Non Biodegradable substances?
- Explain the Factors causing Imbalance in environment.
- What is Green Economy? What is the importance of Green Economy?
- What is the difference between Renewable and Non-Renewable natural resources?
- Write the steps to conserve natural resources.