


What Is a Resource?

A resource is anything that can be used to satisfy human needs. This includes basic things like water, air, food grains, and electricity, as well as services, skills, and knowledge. For something to be called a resource, it must be useful to people.

 Definition: Resource – Anything that has utility and can satisfy a human need.


For example, water we drink, electricity used at home, a rickshaw ride, a textbook – all these are resources because we use them in daily life.

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What Makes Something a Resource?

For anything to become a resource, it should:

- Be useful (have utility)
- Have value (worth) – either economic, cultural, or functional

 Definition: Utility – The usefulness of an object

 Definition: Value – The worth of an object or substance

Some resources like metals have economic value. Others like beautiful scenery may not have monetary value but are still important.

Resources can also become valuable with time. For example, grandmother's home remedies may not be valuable today, but if turned into a patented medicine, they can become commercial resources.


 Definition: Patent – Legal right over an invention or idea

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Role of Time, Technology and People

Time and technology play a key role in turning substances into resources. An object becomes a resource only when humans find a use for it. For example:

- Fire was discovered → led to cooking and warmth
- Wheel was invented → led to transport
- Technology helped in generating electricity from fast-flowing water

 People are the most important resource because their knowledge and skills create new resources.

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Types of Resources

Resources are mainly classified into:

1. Natural Resources
2. Human-Made Resources
3. Human Resources

Let's look at each type:

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Natural Resources


These are resources that are drawn directly from nature and used without much modification. Examples: air, water, soil, sunlight, minerals.

Natural resources are further divided into:

◆ Renewable Resources – These are replenished quickly, like solar energy, wind, water. But some (like forests and water) can be overused and depleted.

◆ Non-Renewable Resources – These have a limited stock and take thousands of years to form. Examples: coal, petroleum, natural gas.

 Renewable Resource – Replenishes naturally (e.g., sunlight)

 Non-renewable Resource – Has limited availability (e.g., coal)


Distribution of natural resources is unequal because terrain, climate and altitude vary from place to place.

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Human-Made Resources

When natural substances are modified by human beings for use, they become human-made resources. For example:


- Iron ore → processed to make iron
- Buildings, bridges, roads, machines, and tools

 Technology is also a human-made resource — it is the use of knowledge and skills to create useful tools and systems.


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Human Resources

People with knowledge, skill, and technology are themselves a resource. Their abilities help convert natural substances into valuable resources.

 Definition: Human Resource – The number and abilities of people (mental and physical)


Improving people's skills through education and training is called human resource development.

 Human Resource Development – Improving human skill and capacity to create more resources

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Resource Conservation

Mona dreamt that all the trees were cut and water was gone. Amma explained that even renewable resources can disappear if overused.

 Resource Conservation – Using resources wisely so they last longer and can renew themselves

Everyone can help conserve resources by:

- Reducing unnecessary use
- Recycling items
- Reusing old materials

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Sustainable Development

Sustainable development means using resources in a way that meets our present needs without compromising the needs of future generations.

 Definition: Sustainable Development – Development that meets present needs without harming future needs

Principles of Sustainable Development include:

- Respect for all life
- Conserving natural resources
- Improving human well-being
- Minimising waste
- Empowering communities to care for their environment

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Important Definitions

Term	Meaning
Resource	Anything useful to satisfy needs
Utility	Usefulness of an item
Value	Worth or importance
Patent	Legal right over an invention
Renewable Resource	Can be naturally replenished
Non-renewable Resource	Limited and takes thousands of years to form
Technology	Application of knowledge to create tools
Human Resource	People and their skills
Human Resource Dev.	Improving human skills for creating resources
Resource Conservation	Saving and wisely using resources
Sustainable Dev.	Responsible use of resources for future safety