Science

Natural Resources & Pollution



Natural resources are materials found in the environment that are useful to humans.

Natural resources can be grouped as **renewable** or **nonrenewable**. Renewable resources can be replaced or used over and over again. Soil, air, water, and trees are renewable
resources.

A nonrenewable resource is a resource that cannot be replaced easily or reused. Fossil fuels, such as oil, coal and natural gas are examples of nonrenewable resources.

Pollution

When natural resources such as, air, soil and water become polluted, they are unsafe for use. **Pollution** occurs when harmful substances contaminate the air, land or water. The harmful substances are **pollutants**.

Air Pollution



Air can be polluted in several ways. The pumping of exhaust fumes from motor vehicles, smoke stacks from factories and ships as well as smoke from cigarettes are common causes of air pollution. When these pollutants mix with water vapour in the air, they produce acid rain. Acid rain can contain a combination of gases and solid particles that produce smog.

Air can also be polluted by the addition of chlorofluorocarbon (C.F.C.'s). These are gases used in refrigerators, air conditioners and fire extinguishers. They float to the top of the atmosphere and breakdown the ozone layer. This allows harmful radiation from space to enter the atmosphere. The radiation causes

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humans to develop cancer. Another harmful effect of air pollution is the: "greenhouse effect". This is the trapping of heat in the atmosphere.

Land Pollution



The land is also being polluted. Garbage from homes and businesses and chemical wastes from industry and farming are being dumped into and on the land. Land pollution can be reduced in a number of ways including the use of specially designed landfills and leak proof cans.

Water Pollution



Most of the water on earth is salt water. Both salt water and fresh water are being polluted by a variety of sources including sewage and garbage. Substances, like motor oil, bleach and other chemicals are used by fishermen to catch fish. These also pollute the water.

Pollution can make us sick or even kill us. Pollution also promotes the breeding of vectors and also provides vectors with homes. Vectors are animals that carry diseases. Some items that pollute resources are biodegradable (can decompose), but others are non biodegradable. Non-biodegradable items can remain on the earth forever.

Conservation is the wise use of natural resources. Resources can be conserved by the three Rs: **reducing** (use only what is needed), **reusing** (use things again) and **recycling** wherever possible.

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