

EDU SERUMX COLLEGE OF COMMERCE and MANAGMENT

SYLLABUS

Class: - I Year B.Com

Subject: - Environment Studies

Unit No.	Topic	Sub-Topics
UNIT – I	Environment and Natural Resources	- Multidisciplinary nature, Scope, and Importance of Environment
		- Components of Environment: Atmosphere, Hydrosphere, Lithosphere, and Biosphere
		- Natural Resources and associated problems: Land Resource, Water Resource, Energy Resource
		- Concept of Sustainability and Sustainable Development
UNIT – II	Biome, Ecosystem, and Biodiversity	- Major Biomes: Tropical, Temperate, Forest, Grassland, Desert, Tundra, Wetland, Estuarine, Marine
		- Ecosystem: Structure, function, types, and their Preservation & Restoration
		- Biodiversity and its conservation practices
		- Keywords: Biome, Ecosystem, Biodiversity
UNIT – III	Environmental Pollution, Management and Social Issues	- Pollution: Types, Control measures, Management, and associated problems
		- Environmental Law and Legislation: Protection and conservation Acts
		- International Agreement & Programme
		- Environmental Movements, Communication, and Public Awareness Programmes
		- National and International organizations related to environment monitoring
		- Role of Information Technology in environment and human health

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UNIT-1

INTRODUCTION

- The word "environment" comes from the French word "environner," meaning "to encircle or surround."
- Our environment includes social, cultural, and physical conditions that affect people, animals, and plants.
- It consists of everything that surrounds us and influences our survival and growth.

SEGMENTS OF THE ENVIRONMENT

1. **Atmosphere:** The layer of gases around Earth.
2. **Hydrosphere:** The water bodies on Earth.
3. **Lithosphere:** The soil and rocks on Earth.
4. **Biosphere:** All living organisms and their interactions with the environment.

MULTIDISCIPLINARY NATURE OF ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES

- Environmental studies involve multiple fields like chemistry, physics, biology, law, economics, and politics.
- This subject teaches us to understand complex environmental issues and think of solutions.
- By studying environmental science, we gain skills to help solve environmental problems.

SCOPE OF ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES Environmental studies cover areas like:

- Conservation and management of natural resources
- Ecology and biodiversity
- Pollution and its control
- Human population impact on the environment
- Social issues related to the environment

Careers in Environmental Studies

1. **Research and Development:** Developing sustainable technologies.
2. **Green Advocacy:** Environmental lawyers who work on issues like pollution and wildlife protection.
3. **Green Marketing:** Promoting eco-friendly products with certifications like Eco-Mark or ISO 14000.
4. **Green Media:** Spreading environmental awareness through TV, radio, and social media.
5. **Environmental Consultancy:** Advising organizations on environmental issues.

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IMPORTANCE OF ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES

- Educated communities can help reverse environmental damage through sustainable practices.
- Environmental issues like global warming and biodiversity loss affect everyone globally.
- Environmental studies help us understand the importance of conserving our resources and reducing pollution.

Reasons Why Environmental Studies Are Important:

1. **Global Importance:** Issues like global warming, acid rain, and marine pollution affect everyone, requiring international cooperation.
2. **Development Problems:** Growth in urbanization, industry, and agriculture has caused environmental damage that we must address.
3. **Rising Pollution:** Increasing population and limited land lead to resource pressure and pollution.
4. **Need for Sustainable Solutions:** Developing countries must find new ways to grow without harming the environment.
5. **Saving Humanity:** Our actions impact our survival, so we must protect the environment.
6. **Planning for the Future:** Our development should be eco-friendly and support long-term environmental health.

NEED FOR PUBLIC AWARENESS

1. **Growing Population:** India's population is growing by 2.11% per year, adding over 17 million people annually. This puts a lot of pressure on natural resources and limits development. Our biggest challenge is to slow down this growth.
2. **Poverty:** India is rich in natural resources, yet many people live in poverty. The poor depend heavily on nature for food, fuel, and shelter. About 40% of people live below the poverty line. Poverty and environmental damage are closely linked.
3. **Impact of Environmental Damage on the Poor:** Environmental damage affects the poor the most, as they rely on nearby natural resources for survival. Poverty and environmental damage are two sides of the same problem.
4. **Sustainable Agriculture:** People need to know ways to grow more crops without harming the environment. High-yield farming can lead to soil problems like salinity and poor soil health.
5. **Need to Protect Groundwater:** Proper use of groundwater is essential. Pollution from waste, chemicals, and pesticides has affected the quality of our surface and groundwater. We need to keep water clean and find ways to conserve it.
6. **Development and Forests:** Forests are crucial for rivers. Large dam projects may provide water, but they also damage forests, displace people, and harm wildlife. Forest lands are shrinking due to agriculture and other uses. It's important to involve local communities in forest conservation, combining modern methods with traditional knowledge.

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7. **Land Degradation:** Out of 329 million hectares of land, only 266 million hectares have any productive use. Soil erosion and overgrazing damage much of this land. About 66% of this productive land has some level of degradation, and we must work to restore it.
8. **Urbanization Issues:** About 27% of Indians live in cities, many of whom live in slums. Urbanization has brought many environmental challenges, as only 21 cities have adequate sewer systems. Rapid urban growth is a major challenge for the environment.
9. **Air and Water Pollution:** Many industries use outdated technology that pollutes the air and water. Some areas have extreme pollution levels. Environmental laws exist, but enforcing them requires resources, technical skills, and public support. People need to be aware of these issues and support efforts to enforce regulations.

INSTITUTIONS IN ENVIRONMENT

Managing natural resources requires strong institutions at local, national, regional, and global levels. Key organizations working on environmental protection include:

1. **Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS)**, Mumbai
2. **World Wide Fund for Nature-India (WWF-India)**, New Delhi
3. **Centre for Science and Environment (CSE)**, New Delhi
4. **C.P.R. Environmental Education Centre**, Chennai
5. **Centre for Environment Education (CEE)**
6. **Bharati Vidyapeeth University, Institute of Environment Education & Research**, Pune
7. **Salim Ali Center for Ornithology and Natural History (SACON)**
8. **Wildlife Institute of India (WII)**, Dehradun
9. **Zoological Survey of India (ZSI)**
10. **Madras Crocodile Bank Trust (MCBT)**
11. **Botanical Survey of India (BSI)**

NATURAL RESOURCES

Natural resources are goods and services provided by nature essential for our daily lives. They include:

- **Living (Biotic)** resources: Plants, animals, and microbes.
- **Non-living (Abiotic)** resources: Air, water, soil, minerals, climate, and solar energy.

They fulfill various human needs—physiological, social, economic, and cultural.

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TYPES OF NATURAL RESOURCES

1. **Renewable Resources:** Resources that can be replenished naturally, like plants (crops and forests), animals, water, soil, and solar energy.
 2. **Non-renewable Resources:** Resources that cannot be replenished. These include fossil fuels (petroleum, coal), metals (iron, copper, gold), and minerals. Once used, they are gone forever.
 - **Recyclable Non-renewable Resources:** These can be reused after use, like metals.
 - **Non-recyclable Non-renewable Resources:** These cannot be reused, like fossil fuels and uranium.
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PROBLEMS WITH NATURAL RESOURCES

The main problem is unequal consumption. Developed countries consume much more than developing ones, producing over 75% of global industrial waste and greenhouse gases.

FOREST RESOURCES

Forests are areas with trees and vegetation, covering 6,76,000 sq. km of India (about 20.55% of its area). Ideally, India should have 33% forest cover, but only about 12% exists. We need to protect and expand our forests.

FUNCTIONS OF FORESTS

Forests play many roles, including:

1. Providing habitats for animals and plants.
 2. Recycling rainwater.
 3. Reducing air pollution.
 4. Controlling water quality.
 5. Moderating temperature and weather.
 6. Preventing soil erosion.
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USES OF FORESTS

1. **Commercial Uses:** Wood for fuel, materials for industries (paper, furniture), forest products (gum, dyes), and medicines.
 2. **Ecological Uses:** Forests produce oxygen, reduce global warming by absorbing carbon dioxide, conserve soil, regulate the water cycle, and provide habitat for wildlife.
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REASONS FOR FOREST DEFICIENCY

India needs about 33% forest cover for a balanced ecosystem, but has only around 12%, causing forest overuse.

OVER-EXPLOITATION OF FORESTS

Due to high demand for medicine, shelter, and fuel, forests are being overused, leading to deforestation.

CAUSES OF DEFORESTATION

1. **Development Projects:** Large projects like dams and roads often destroy forests.
 2. **Mining:** Extracting resources like coal and limestone reduces forest areas.
 3. **Industry Raw Materials:** Wood is used in making boxes, furniture, etc.
 4. **Fuel Needs:** Many rural areas depend on wood for fuel.
 5. **Shifting Cultivation:** Natural forests are sometimes replaced with single-type plantations.
 6. **Forest Fires:** Fires destroy large forest areas.
 7. **Overgrazing:** Grazing animals can damage forests.
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IMPACTS OF DEFORESTATION

1. Economic loss
2. Loss of biodiversity
3. Habitat destruction
4. Increased global warming
5. Disrupted weather and climate
6. Soil degradation and erosion
7. Increased flooding

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PREVENTION METHODS FOR DEFORESTATION

1. Replanting trees to replace cut ones.
2. Discouraging the use of wood for fuel.
3. Using pesticides to control forest pests.
4. Controlling forest fires with modern techniques.
5. Reducing cattle overgrazing.
6. Government action to prevent migration into forested areas.
7. Educating people on forest conservation.
8. Enforcing forest protection laws.

TIMBER EXTRACTION

Timber is wood used for building and furniture, but extracting it leads to deforestation and affects forests and wildlife. Although timber is necessary, it should be done carefully to protect biodiversity.

EFFECTS OF TIMBER EXTRACTION

1. Degraded forests from poor logging practices.
2. Increased risk of floods.
3. Loss of biodiversity.
4. Climate changes like reduced rainfall.
5. Soil erosion and sedimentation, especially on slopes.
6. Exploitation of local communities by logging companies.

DAMS

Today, there are over 45,000 large dams worldwide. They play a big role in supplying water for communities and supporting economic growth. About 30-40% of the world's irrigated land depends on dams, and they generate around 19% of global electricity through hydropower. China and India together have built over half of the world's large dams.

ISSUES WITH DAMS

Dams are huge structures built across rivers to store water for various purposes. In India, dams are sometimes referred to as the "Temples of modern India." While they bring many benefits, they also cause major issues, especially in forested areas and for tribal communities. India has more than 1,600 large dams.

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Effects of Dams on Forests

1. Large areas of forest are cleared to make space for dams.
2. Wildlife is harmed, and aquatic life is disrupted.
3. Dams can increase waterborne diseases.
4. Waterlogging caused by dams raises soil salinity, making land less fertile.

Example: The Narmada Sagar project flooded 3.5 lakh hectares of forest.

Effects of Dams on Tribal Communities

1. Building large dams often forces tribal people to leave their land.
2. Displacement causes physical and mental stress for tribal communities, who are affected by cultural changes.
3. Tribal people struggle to adapt to new diets and lifestyles.
4. They are often mistreated and looked down upon by modern society.
5. Many displaced tribal people don't receive fair compensation or resettlement.
6. The new areas may affect their health, making them prone to diseases due to different climates and conditions.

MINING

Mining is the process of taking minerals and fossil fuels, like coal, from the earth.

Types of Mining

1. **Surface Mining:** Extracting minerals from shallow, surface-level areas.
2. **Underground Mining:** Extracting minerals from deep underground.

Steps in Mining

1. **Exploration:** Searching for minerals.
2. **Development:** Preparing the mining site.
3. **Exploitation:** Extracting the minerals.
4. **Ore Processing:** Breaking down the minerals for use.
5. **Extraction and Purification:** Cleaning and purifying the minerals.

Underground mining generally causes more damage than surface mining because it uses a lot of land for operations.

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Effects of Mining

1. Pollutes soil, water, and air.
2. Destroys natural habitats for animals and plants.
3. Creates trenches (big holes) that fill with water, contaminating groundwater.
4. Vibrations from mining can lead to earthquakes.
5. Creates noise pollution.
6. Shrinks forests and reduces their size.
7. Increases the chance of landslides.
8. Spoils the natural beauty of the land.

WATER RESOURCES

Water is a vital resource for life and is needed for many purposes like irrigation, industry, and household use.

Uses of Water

- Essential for all life forms.
- Used for farming, industry, household needs, recreation, and protecting the environment.
- Freshwater is required for most human uses, and no plant or animal can survive without it. Even a small drop in body water (1%) makes us thirsty, and a 10% drop can be deadly.

Hydrological Cycle (Water Cycle)

1. Water evaporates from oceans, rivers, and lakes due to sunlight.
2. Forms clouds in the sky.
3. Falls back to earth as rain or snow.
4. Returns to oceans, repeating the cycle.

Effects of Overuse of Water

1. **Decrease of Groundwater:** Excessive use reduces groundwater, especially with little rainfall and increased construction, which seals the ground and reduces water absorption.
2. **Ground Subsidence:** When groundwater is overused, the land can shrink or sink, causing damage to buildings, pipes, and water flows.
3. **Lowering of Water Table:** Excessive groundwater use for farming in dry areas disrupts the water cycle, lowering the water table and reducing water availability.
4. **Saltwater Intrusion:** Overusing groundwater in coastal areas can draw saltwater from the ocean into freshwater sources, making it undrinkable and unsuitable for agriculture.
5. **Earthquakes, Landslides, and Famines:** Overuse can trigger natural disasters.
6. **Drying up of Wells:** Overuse can cause water levels to drop, drying up wells and boreholes.

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7. **Water Pollution:** Near farms, groundwater may become polluted by fertilizers, making it unsafe to drink due to high nitrate levels.

Reasons for Decline in Groundwater

1. **Population Growth:** A rising population increases demand for limited freshwater, with current use double what it was 50 years ago.
2. **Overuse of Surface and Groundwater:** People, farms, and industries use more water than necessary, and some industries pollute rivers and seas by releasing waste.
3. **Deforestation:** Cutting down forests reduces water absorption by the soil, leading to more surface water runoff and less groundwater storage. This can cause floods and less water availability during droughts.
4. **Hydropower Generation:** Large amounts of water are used for electricity production, reducing the water available for people's needs.
5. **Dams for Agriculture and Power:** Large dams help with irrigation and electricity but also alter natural water flow.
6. **Rainfall Patterns:** Unpredictable and inadequate rainfall reduces groundwater storage, and construction seals the soil, reducing rainwater absorption and increasing runoff.

FLOODS

A flood is when water overflows onto land that is usually dry. This happens when the amount of water is more than rivers or channels can hold.

Causes of Floods

1. Heavy rain, melting snow, or sudden release of water from dams (like in flash floods).
2. Rivers or channels unable to carry more water.
3. Activities like deforestation, mining, and overgrazing increase water runoff, leading to higher flood levels.

Effects of Floods

1. Water spreads over nearby land and submerges it.
2. Farming lands get damaged.
3. Risk to human life and property.

Flood Management

1. Dams can help control floods by storing excess water.
2. Managing river channels can help control water flow.
3. Flood warnings can reduce flood damage by alerting people early.
4. Planting trees (afforestation) helps absorb water and reduce runoff, which lowers flood risk.

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DROUGHT

Drought means a severe lack of water, which can happen due to:

1. Not enough rainfall
2. Delayed rain
3. Excessive use of groundwater

When there's not enough water for farming, livestock, industries, or people, it's called a drought. Droughts can harm plants, animals, and humans.

Causes of Drought

1. Less rain and more evaporation.
2. High population using more water.
3. Overuse of water for certain crops (like sugarcane in Maharashtra, which has faced drought for 30 years).

Effects of Drought

1. Leads to hunger, lack of drinking water, and poor water quality.
2. Crop failures and food shortages affecting people and animals.
3. Severe drought can lead to desert-like conditions.
4. Slows down industry and reduces job opportunities.
5. Damages natural resources.
6. Causes people to migrate to cities.

Drought Management

1. Use local knowledge for water conservation.
2. Rainwater harvesting to save water.
3. Build reservoirs to store water and boost groundwater.
4. Use efficient irrigation methods like drip irrigation.
5. Plant trees (afforestation) to improve water availability.
6. Grow drought-resistant crops and use mixed farming to reduce crop failure risks.

DAMS

Dams have played a big role in supporting human progress, providing benefits like flood control and water supply in drought-prone areas. However, large dams can harm the environment, so smaller dams are now being built, as they have less impact.

Benefits of Dams:

- Provide a steady supply of water for households.
- Offer extra water for farming, industry, and hydropower.

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Problems with Large Dams:

- Change the natural flow of rivers.
- Affect natural flood control areas like wetlands and floodplains.
- Disrupt the lives of local communities and harm the habitats of wild plants and animals, especially with mega dams.

Sustainable Water Management

Large dams can cause issues like loss of farmland and forests, soil salinization, harm to ecosystems, and displacement of communities. To manage water sustainably, we should focus on:

- Building multiple small reservoirs instead of a few large dams.
- Developing small dams and protecting wetlands.
- Managing soil, micro-catchments, and afforestation to help recharge groundwater.
- Recycling wastewater for agriculture and reducing leaks in water systems.
- Harvesting rainwater, especially in urban areas.
- Using water-saving techniques in farming, like drip irrigation.
- Pricing water to encourage responsible use.
- Conserving degraded lands with soil management and bunds on hills.
- Using treated wastewater for non-drinking purposes.
- Promoting water-saving campaigns and community-led water projects.
- Government policies should protect water resources and invest in efficient water management technologies.

Water Conflicts

Water conflicts arise from unequal water distribution.

National Conflicts:

- Cauvery water dispute between Karnataka and Tamil Nadu.
- Krishna river dispute between Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh.
- Siruvani water dispute between Tamil Nadu and Kerala.

International Conflicts:

- Indus river dispute between India and Pakistan.
- Colorado river dispute between Mexico and the USA.

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Mineral Resources

Minerals are naturally occurring inorganic solids with a uniform chemical composition. They are used in various ways:

- Industrial machinery: iron (Fe), aluminum (Al), and copper (Cu).
- Construction: iron, aluminum, and nickel (Ni).
- Energy generation: coal, lignite, uranium.
- Defense equipment and ornaments.
- Agriculture: fertilizers and fungicides, like zinc (Zn) and manganese (Mn).
- Jewelry: gold (Au), silver (Ag), platinum (Pt).
- Alloys for different uses.
- Communication: wires, cables, electronic devices.
- Medicine, especially in ayurvedic treatments.

Environmental Damages Caused by Mining Activities

1. **Loss of Vegetation:**
 - Removal of topsoil and plants.
 - Deforestation leads to ecological harm.
 - Land appearance is negatively affected.
2. **Groundwater Contamination:**
 - Mining pollutes groundwater.
 - Sulfur turns into sulfuric acid and seeps into the soil.
3. **Surface Water Pollution:**
 - Radioactive and acidic waste harms rivers and lakes, killing aquatic life.
4. **Air Pollution:**
 - Purification of metals releases pollutants into the air, damaging plants and causing health problems.
5. **Land Subsidence:**
 - Underground mining can cause the ground to sink, leading to cracks in buildings and rail tracks.

Effects of Over-Exploitation of Minerals

1. Rapid depletion of mineral reserves.
2. Increased waste.
3. Environmental pollution.
4. High energy consumption.

Management of Mineral Resources

1. Use mineral resources efficiently and protect them.
2. Update mining methods.
3. Search for new mineral deposits.
4. Reuse and recycle metals.
5. Minimize environmental impact with eco-friendly mining techniques.

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Food Resources

Food is essential for survival, providing carbohydrates, fats, proteins, minerals, and vitamins.

Types of Food Supply

1. **Crop Plants:**
 - Grains like rice, wheat, and maize make up 76% of the world's food supply.
2. **Rangelands:**
 - Provides 17% of food, including fruits, milk, and meat.
3. **Oceans:**
 - Fisheries contribute 7% of the world's food.

World Food Problems

1. Only 21% of the Earth's surface is land, with limited cultivated land. Population growth leads to food shortages.
2. Environmental issues like soil erosion, pollution, and waterlogging harm agriculture.
3. Urbanization reduces agricultural land, making it harder to produce essential crops.

Types of Nutrition

1. **Nutritious Diet:**
 - We need carbohydrates, proteins, fats, vitamins, and minerals for health. The global average minimum calorie intake is 2500 calories per day.
2. **Under-Nutrition:**
 - When people can't afford enough food to meet basic energy needs, they suffer from under-nutrition, consuming less than 90% of the required calories. This can lead to mental and physical health issues.
3. **Malnutrition:**
 - Lack of necessary nutrients like protein, vitamins, and minerals leads to malnutrition, causing various health issues.

Effect of mal nutrition:

Nutrient Deficiency	Effect
Protein	Growth issues
Iron	Anemia
Iodine	Goiter
Vitamin A	Blindness

India is the third-largest crop producer, but nearly 300 million people are still undernourished. The 1996 World Food Summit aimed to reduce global hunger by half by 2015.

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Overgrazing

Overgrazing happens when animals eat too much of the vegetation, not letting it grow back.

- **Effects of Overgrazing:**
 - **Land degradation:** Soil becomes compacted, dry, and can turn into desert-like conditions, making it unusable for farming.
 - **Soil erosion:** With no plants to hold the soil, it can easily wash or blow away.
 - **Loss of valuable plants:** Nutritious plants are replaced by less useful ones due to constant grazing.

Agriculture Agriculture is the practice of growing plants and raising animals for food and other uses.

- **Types of Agriculture:**
 1. **Traditional:** Small-scale farming with simple tools and natural fertilizers.
 2. **Modern:** Uses advanced seeds, machines, and chemical fertilizers to produce a single type of crop on a large scale.
- **Effects of Modern Agriculture:**
 - **Fertilizer Problems:** Too much fertilizer can cause nutrient imbalances, water pollution, and health issues.
 - **Pesticide Problems:** Pesticides can harm non-target animals, create super pests, and may cause cancer.
 - **Waterlogging:** When too much water is supplied, it can make the land swampy and unusable.

Energy Resources Energy resources are used to power homes, industries, and transportation.

- **Types of Energy:**
 1. **Renewable Energy** (can be regenerated, like solar and wind energy).
 - Solar, wind, ocean, geothermal, and biomass energy are examples.
 - Benefits: They are unlimited and environmentally friendly.
 2. **Non-Renewable Energy** (cannot be regenerated, like coal and oil).
 - Examples include coal, petroleum, natural gas, and nuclear energy.
 - Disadvantages: They pollute the environment and can run out.

Renewable Energy Types

- **Solar Energy:** Energy from the sun, used in solar cells and water heaters.
- **Wind Energy:** Power from moving air, used in windmills and wind farms.
- **Ocean Energy:** Power from ocean tides and temperature differences.
- **Geothermal Energy:** Heat from within the earth, used in natural and artificial geysers.
- **Biomass Energy:** Energy from organic materials, like plant waste, used to make biofuels and biogas.

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Non-Renewable Energy Types

- **Coal:** Solid fossil fuel, but causes pollution.
- **Petroleum:** Liquid fossil fuel, but reserves are limited.
- **LPG:** Gas converted from petroleum, used in households.
- **Natural Gas:** A high-energy gas, found near oil reserves.
- **Nuclear Energy:** Power from splitting (fission) or merging (fusion) atoms, releasing huge energy.

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UNIT – 2

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

sustainable development is a way to meet our present needs without harming the ability of future generations to meet theirs. This approach combines caring for the environment, using resources wisely, and aiming for fair and inclusive economic growth.

For example, the “green movement” focuses on using resources like energy and water in a way that minimizes waste and pollution, ensuring these resources remain available for years to come.

Sustainable development has four main aspects:

1. **Environmental sustainability:** Protecting nature by using resources at a rate that doesn't deplete them. For example, using renewable energy like solar power, which doesn't run out or harm the environment.
2. **Economic sustainability:** Encouraging growth that benefits everyone, not just a few. This involves creating jobs, ensuring fair wages, and using resources wisely.
3. **Social sustainability:** Maintaining a fair society where everyone can access what they need to live well. This includes basic needs like food, water, and housing, along with access to education and healthcare.
4. **Institutional sustainability:** Creating rules and systems that support sustainable practices, such as laws that protect the environment and allow people to be part of decision-making.

Challenges to sustainable development include:

- **Resource depletion:** Using up resources faster than they can be replaced.
- **Pollution:** Air and water pollution that harms health and the environment.
- **Climate change:** The impact of greenhouse gases, which affect weather and temperatures globally.
- **Economic and social inequality:** Ensuring fair access to resources and opportunities, as well as creating jobs and fair wages.

Energy is a vital part of development, powering everything from household needs to transportation and industry. However, different types of energy have different impacts. Renewable energy sources, like solar and wind, are cleaner, while non-renewable sources, like coal and oil, can cause pollution and health issues.

In cities, energy use and pollution are often high due to concentrated populations and industries. Transitioning to cleaner energy sources can reduce air pollution and help sustain resources.

Water conservation is also crucial, as water is essential for life. Saving water helps fight global warming and reduces the risk of shortages. Simple actions like fixing leaks and using water-efficient appliances can make a big difference.

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Water is an essential resource for life, but it's becoming scarce due to growing populations, industrial activities, and agriculture. Poor rainfall is also a contributing factor. With rising demands, many methods have been used to secure water, like building dams, reservoirs, and wells. Some countries even recycle and desalinate sea water. Water conservation is now crucial to ensure future availability.

Here are some basic goals for water conservation:

1. **Sustainability:** Water use shouldn't exceed the natural replenishment rate to ensure future availability.
2. **Energy Conservation:** Managing water requires a lot of energy, so reducing water use saves energy.
3. **Habitat Protection:** Reducing water use helps preserve habitats, protecting wildlife and minimizing the need for infrastructure like dams.

Simple Water-Saving Tips:

- Fix leaks in taps and pipes.
- Use water-efficient fixtures and appliances.
- Turn off water when not in use, like while brushing teeth or shaving.
- Water lawns early in the morning to reduce evaporation.
- Collect rainwater to use for plants and gardens.

Technical Methods to Save Water:

- **Rainwater Harvesting:** Collecting rainwater from rooftops for reuse is a simple, effective way to save water.
- **Historical Water Bodies:** Many old water storage sites can be restored to hold rainwater.
- **Ponds:** Cleaning and deepening ponds can help store more water naturally.

Conserving Natural Resources:

Natural resources, such as water, air, and minerals, are essential for life. They can be renewable, like sunlight, or non-renewable, like fossil fuels. Conserving these resources ensures they are available for future generations. For example, using solar energy and recycling materials reduces the strain on non-renewable resources.

Classification

Natural resources are materials we get from nature that help us live and meet our needs. They can be classified based on their origin, meaning where they come from. Here's a more detailed look:

1. **Biotic Resources:**
 - Biotic resources come from the biosphere, which includes all living things. These are resources that come from living or once-living organisms.

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- Examples of biotic resources are forests (plants and trees), animals, and fish. They also include resources obtained from living things, like wood from trees or wool from sheep.
 - Even fossil fuels like coal, oil, and natural gas fall under biotic resources because they are formed over millions of years from the remains of dead plants and animals.
2. **Abiotic Resources:**
- Abiotic resources come from non-living things and do not have an organic origin.
 - Examples of abiotic resources are land, water, and air. They also include minerals and metals like gold, iron, and copper.
 - These resources are essential for various industries and activities, but they are not derived from living organisms. Instead, they come from the earth's natural physical elements.

Natural resources can also be classified based on how developed they are or how accessible they are for use.

Potential Resources:

- These resources are found in a region but are not yet used. They might be valuable in the future if they become needed or if we have the technology to access them.
 - For example, India may have oil in certain rock layers, but until it is actually extracted, it remains a potential resource.
2. **Actual Resources:**
- These resources are already being used today. We know their quantity and quality because they have been studied and are currently useful.
 - For example, wood used in making furniture is an actual resource.
3. **Reserve Resources:**
- These are parts of actual resources that we plan to use in the future when it becomes more profitable or necessary.
 - For instance, forests that could be used later for wood but are being preserved now are reserve resources.
4. **Stock Resources:**
- These are resources we know about, but we currently lack the technology to use them.
 - For example, hydrogen could be a powerful fuel source, but we don't yet have efficient ways to use it widely.

In terms of how resources renew, they can be split into two main types:

- **Renewable Resources:**
 - These resources can naturally replenish themselves, so they don't run out easily. Examples include sunlight, air, and wind.

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- Some renewable resources like forests or fish can be used up if we overuse them faster than they can renew.
- **Non-renewable Resources:**
 - These resources take millions of years to form, so they cannot be replaced quickly. Fossil fuels like coal, oil, and natural gas are non-renewable.
 - Some of these, like metals, can be recycled, but others, like coal and petroleum, cannot be reused once they are consumed.

Food Resources are all the products that can be consumed by humans or animals, such as simple foods like fruits and vegetables, or more complex foods like processed products. These resources come from plants, animals, and sometimes even fungi or bacteria.

Food Sources:

- Most food comes from plants, either directly (like fruits or vegetables) or indirectly (such as animals that eat plants).
- **Cereal grains**, such as maize (corn), wheat, and rice, are the most important food crops worldwide and provide the majority of the food energy consumed by people. In fact, about 87% of all grain produced is used for food, with most of it going to livestock.
- Some foods don't come directly from plants or animals. For example, **fungi** (like mushrooms) and bacteria are used in foods like bread, yogurt, cheese, and alcoholic beverages.
- Some **algae** (like Spirulina) and certain **inorganic substances** (like baking soda) are also used in food preparation.

Challenges:

With the world's population growing rapidly, it's difficult to expand the land used for farming. To meet the increasing food demand, efforts have been made to increase food production, particularly through two major "revolutions":

1. **Green Revolution** – A major effort to increase food grain production through better farming techniques and improved seeds.
2. **White Revolution** – Focused on increasing milk production through better dairy farming practices.

Environmental Impact:

These efforts have led to more food production but have also caused some environmental issues. For example, overuse of resources like water and soil can disturb the balance of ecosystems. The solution is to use **sustainable farming practices**, which aim to increase food production while protecting the environment and maintaining ecological balance.

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Land Environment:

Soil is an essential part of the Earth's land environment. It's a natural resource that provides the nutrients needed for life. Soil is made up of mineral particles, decayed organic matter, water, and air, and plays a vital role in supporting plants, animals, and the entire ecosystem. Soil also acts as a filter for water, helping to clean it before it enters groundwater sources.

Soil Formation:

Soil forms when the Earth's crust is weathered (broken down) over time, and it includes the decayed remains of plants and animals. It's a mixture of minerals, organic matter, air, and water. About 45% of the soil is made up of minerals, 5% is organic matter, 25% is water, and 25% is air.

Soil Erosion:

Soil erosion occurs when wind or water removes soil particles from the land. This can reduce the soil's fertility, damage plant life, and lead to siltation in rivers and lakes, affecting water quality. Soil erosion is often caused by rainfall, which loosens the soil and allows it to be carried away by runoff.

Land Management:

To protect soil and prevent erosion, land management is important. This includes:

1. **Crop Management** – Choosing the right crops, practicing crop rotation, and using techniques like intercropping to protect the soil.
2. **Mechanical Protection** – Using methods like contour farming and terracing on slopes to prevent soil from washing away.
3. **Conservation Devices** – Building structures like check dams, planting trees, and using other practices to stop soil erosion.

Land Use:

As the population grows, more land is being used for human activities such as farming, housing, and industry. However, this can harm the environment. For example, **mining** can lead to deforestation, loss of fertility, and water problems, all of which damage the land and its ability to support life.

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Soil's Role in the Biosphere:

Soil is crucial for the survival of plants and animals. It provides:

1. **Mechanical Support** – Soil supports plant roots, helping them grow.
2. **Water Storage** – Soil stores water and releases it to plants as needed.
3. **Nutrient Supply** – Soil contains essential nutrients that plants and animals need for growth.
4. **Decomposition** – Soil is home to microbes that break down organic matter, recycling nutrients back into the ecosystem.

Erosion by Water:

Soil erosion by water occurs when rain and runoff wash away the topsoil, which is essential for plant growth. The rate of erosion depends on several factors:

1. **Rainfall Intensity and Runoff:**
 - When rain falls, its impact can break down the soil, especially the smaller particles like silt, clay, and organic matter. These particles are easily washed away by the rain and runoff water.
 - Heavier rain or more runoff may be needed to move larger particles like sand or gravel.
2. **Soil Erodibility:**
 - This refers to how easily soil can be eroded. Soils that absorb water faster and have more organic matter are generally less prone to erosion. For example, sandy soils tend to erode less than clay soils.
 - If soil has already been eroded before, it becomes more susceptible to further erosion. This is because it may have lost its natural structure and organic matter, making it easier for water to wash it away.
3. **Slope Gradient and Length:**
 - The steeper the land, the more likely it is to experience erosion. Water moves faster on steeper slopes, carrying more soil with it.
 - The longer the slope, the more runoff accumulates, leading to higher erosion. Larger fields, especially when they are consolidated into longer slopes, can experience more erosion because water moves faster and carries more soil.

Vegetation and Soil Erosion:

When the soil is not covered by plants or crop residues, it becomes more prone to erosion. Vegetation and crop residues protect the soil by:

- Absorbing the impact of raindrops and preventing the soil from being washed away.
- Slowing down surface runoff, which helps water soak into the soil.
- Providing channels for water to enter the soil, reducing erosion.

The effectiveness of vegetation in controlling erosion depends on the type, amount, and coverage of the plants. For example, forests and permanent grass cover are very effective, while plants and roots left in the soil also help prevent erosion.

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Conservation Measures:

To reduce soil erosion, certain conservation methods can be used:

- **Contour plowing:** Plowing along the contours of the land helps reduce water runoff and prevent erosion.
- **Strip cropping:** Growing plants in alternating strips helps control soil erosion by allowing crops to protect each other.
- **Terracing:** In areas with slopes, building terraces helps slow down water and prevents erosion.
- **Cover crops and mulching:** These protect the soil and help retain moisture.

Types of Erosion:

1. **Sheet and Rill Erosion:** Sheet erosion happens when rainwater washes away the topsoil evenly over the land. Rill erosion forms small channels (rills) in the soil, which can turn into gullies over time.
2. **Gully Erosion:** Large channels or gullies form when water runoff is not managed properly. This type of erosion can lead to significant soil loss and damage to farmland.
3. **Stream and Ditch Bank Erosion:** Poor drainage systems and uncontrolled livestock access can erode the banks of streams and ditches, leading to loss of farmland and damage to infrastructure.

Soil Conservation:

Soil conservation involves managing the land to maintain its productivity and prevent erosion. This includes adopting practices like crop rotation, contour farming, and terracing.

Methods of Soil Conservation:

1. **Biological Methods:**
 - **Agronomic practices:** Using vegetation cover to protect the soil.
 - **Dry farming:** Growing crops in areas with low rainfall, while conserving moisture and soil fertility.
2. **Mechanical Methods:**
 - **Basin listing:** Creating small basins along contours to capture water.
 - **Sub-soiling:** Breaking up compacted soil to improve water absorption.
 - **Terracing:** Creating steps or ridges along slopes to slow down water and prevent erosion.
 - **Stream bank protection:** Building walls or planting trees to prevent erosion along riverbanks.

Environmental Conservation Laws

1. **The Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974**
This law was created because of concerns in the 1960s about water pollution from domestic and industrial waste. Passed in 1974, it aims to prevent and control water pollution. It led to the creation of Pollution Control Boards at the central and state levels. These boards oversee water pollution issues and provide advice to the government on protecting water sources.
2. **The Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981**
Inspired by a 1972 UN conference, this law aims to reduce and control air pollution. It established central and state boards to enforce air quality standards and advise governments on air pollution control. This act, similar to the Water Pollution Act, was put into force in 1981 and amended in 1987.
3. **The Environment Protection Act, 1986**
This comprehensive law, effective from 1986, gives the central government strong powers to tackle pollution and environmental harm. It allows the government to set rules to protect the environment and take necessary actions against those harming it.
4. **The Indian Forest Act, 1927**
Initially enacted during British rule, this law focused on regulating the extraction of forest products for economic gain.
5. **The Wildlife Protection Act, 1972**
Enacted in 1972, this act empowers the government to protect wildlife. It allows the government to establish wildlife sanctuaries, national parks, and zoos, and to ban the hunting and trade of certain animals and plants. It has been amended several times to improve wildlife protection.
6. **Environmental Health Issues**
Modern lifestyles and industrialization have led to severe environmental pollution, impacting human health. Key actions include:
 - **Energy Conservation:** Use alternative energy sources to reduce electricity waste.
 - **Environmental Education:** Teaching environmental awareness from a young age.
 - **Population Control:** Managing population growth reduces resource strain.
 - **Reducing Vehicle Use:** Excessive vehicles increase pollution.
 - **Deforestation Control:** Protecting trees helps absorb pollutants and maintain rainfall.
 - **Industrial Regulations:** Strict laws are needed to control industrial pollution.
 - **Global Cooperation:** Nations should work together to protect the environment.
7. **Role of Health Education in Environmental Issues**
Health education raises awareness about good hygiene, a healthy diet, and ways to avoid diseases caused by pollution. Organizations like WHO and UNICEF help fight diseases, while vaccination protects against serious illnesses.
8. **Stockholm Declaration on Human Environment, 1972**
Declared June 5th as World Environment Day and emphasized global cooperation to protect natural resources. It stated that sustainable social and economic development is necessary.

9. Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, 1992

This declaration promotes sustainable development without harming the environment. Its main concerns include global warming, deforestation, and ozone layer depletion.

Natural Disasters Explained

1. Landslides

Landslides are movements of rocks, soil, or debris down a slope. They can happen suddenly or gradually on any kind of terrain. Causes include heavy rain, floods, earthquakes, and human activities like construction. Landslides are powerful and can destroy everything in their path. For example, a major landslide in Colombia in 1985 wiped out entire towns. Landslides are common in areas with steep slopes, and melting snow can trigger them in colder regions. Earthquakes and even man-made explosions can also set off landslides.

2. Volcanoes

A volcano is an opening in the Earth's crust where magma, gases, and ash can escape. Volcanoes can be active (erupt frequently), dormant (haven't erupted recently), or extinct (not expected to erupt again). They mostly occur where tectonic plates meet, especially where plates are moving apart. They can also form where the Earth's crust is stretched or thinned. A typical image of a volcano is a cone-shaped mountain with lava and gas erupting from the top.

3. Earthquakes

Earthquakes are caused by sudden energy releases in the Earth's crust, creating seismic waves. These waves make the ground shake and can sometimes cause the ground to shift. Earthquakes are detected with seismometers. They're usually triggered by geological faults, landslides, or explosions. The initial point of rupture in an earthquake is called the "focus," and the spot directly above it on the surface is the "epicenter." Earthquakes often have a small initial shake followed by a stronger motion, depending on their size and how far away they are.

4. Floods

Floods occur when dry land becomes covered by water due to rapid accumulation, such as from heavy rain, overflowing rivers, or storm surges. They are among the deadliest natural disasters and can happen anywhere. Flash floods happen very quickly, especially after storms and hurricanes, and bring large amounts of water that can overwhelm drainage systems. Common causes include cyclones, melting ice, high tides, or tsunamis. Some floods can even be artificially triggered by dam breaks or other human-made changes.

5. Tsunamis

A tsunami is a series of large waves caused by the displacement of water, typically in an ocean. Earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, underwater explosions, and landslides can trigger tsunamis. Tsunamis are highly destructive and can affect coastlines far from where they originated. They move faster than humans can run and bring waves that last much longer than normal. A tsunami may be indicated by a sudden retreat of water from the shore, which can serve as a brief warning. While they're mostly found in the Pacific Ocean, they can occur anywhere. Tsunamis bring powerful waves, and multiple waves can hit over hours, causing severe coastal damage.

UNIT – 3

Environmental Pollution Explained

What is Pollution?

Pollution is when harmful substances or products are introduced into the environment. It can affect water, air, and land. The three main types of pollution are:

- **Water Pollution**
 - **Air Pollution**
 - **Land Pollution**
-

Water Pollution

Causes of Water Pollution

Water pollution happens when harmful substances contaminate water sources. There are two main types of sources for water pollution:

- **Point Sources:** These are easy to identify because they come from a specific place. For example:
 - Waste from factories
 - Sewage system waste
 - Waste from power plants
 - Waste from coal mines or oil wells
 - **Non-Point Sources:** These are harder to control because they come from many different places. Examples include:
 - Rain or snow that picks up pollutants as it moves to rivers or lakes
 - Runoff from farms, lawns, and streets
 - Pollutants washed into water by storms
-

Air Pollution

Causes of Air Pollution

Air pollution happens when harmful gases or particles are released into the air. Some main causes are:

- **Carbon Dioxide (CO₂):** Released by burning fossil fuels and cutting down trees (deforestation).
- **Sulfur Dioxide:** Comes from burning fuels that contain sulfur. It can cause acid rain and harm humans at high levels.
- **Chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs):** These chemicals harm the ozone layer and come from things like:

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- Plastic foam
- Refrigerators
- Spray cans

Natural Air Pollutants

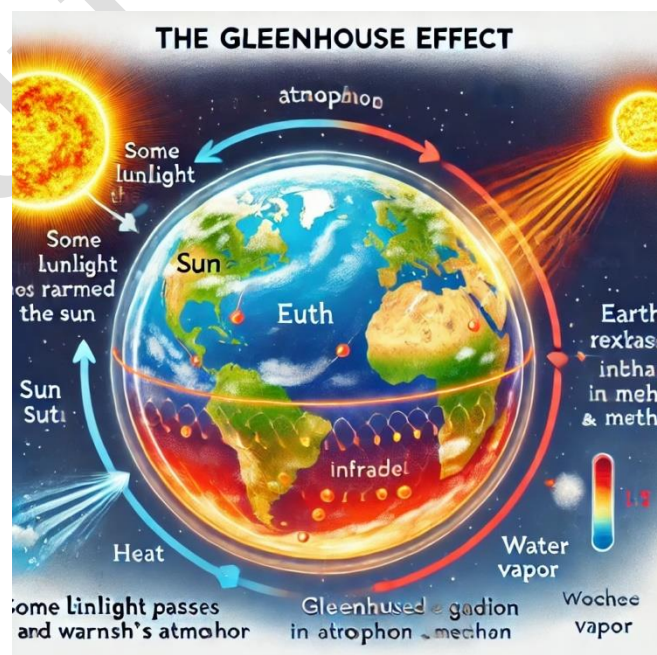
Some pollutants come from natural sources, like:

- Smoke from wildfires
- Methane from livestock
- Volcanic eruptions

Consequences of Pollution

- **CO2 and Global Warming:**
 - CO2 traps heat in the atmosphere, causing the Earth to warm up. This is known as the greenhouse effect.
 - More CO2 means more warming, which can change climates and weather patterns.
- **Damage to Plants:**
 - Air pollutants like sulfur dioxide and ozone can hurt crops and trees. They can damage leaves and make plants weak, making them more vulnerable to diseases and pests.
 - In places like the midwestern U.S., air pollution causes crop losses worth billions of dollars each year.

GREEN HOUSE EFFECT



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SMOG

- With the shift from coal to petroleum in many countries, photochemical smog has become more common, especially in cities with warm, sunny climates and lots of cars.
 - Photochemical smog is usually worse during the summer months.
-

LAND POLLUTION

Causes of Land Pollution

1. **Construction**
 - Buildings require land and resources. Often, trees are cut down to make room, which impacts habitats for animals and other organisms.
2. **Agriculture**
 - With a growing population, more land is needed for food production, leading to deforestation.
 - Chemicals like pesticides, herbicides, artificial fertilizers, and animal waste can pollute the soil.
3. **Domestic Waste**
 - Large amounts of household waste are generated daily. Some can be recycled or burned, but many items, such as old appliances, end up in landfills.
4. **Industrial Waste**
 - Industries like plastic manufacturing, chemical plants, oil refineries, and metal production release waste that pollutes the land.

Consequences of Land Pollution

- Wildlife habitats are destroyed.
 - Acid rain, a result of pollution, harms trees and plants.
 - Loss of vegetation impacts food and shelter for animals.
 - Severe land pollution disrupts ecosystems and can lead to human health issues or even fatalities.
 - Pesticides can damage plants, harm wildlife, and poison birds, fish, and other animals. They may also kill unintended organisms, and some pests may develop resistance.
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Ways to Reduce Pollution

- Drive fuel-efficient cars (at least 35 miles per gallon).
- Walk, bike, or use public transport.
- Use CFL or LED bulbs instead of incandescent bulbs.
- Choose energy-efficient appliances.
- Recycle materials like newspapers and aluminum.
- Plant trees to improve air quality.
- Avoid products with CFCs (chlorofluorocarbons).
- Support stronger clean air laws and global treaties aimed at reducing pollution and slowing climate change.

NOISE POLLUTION

The term *noise* comes from the Latin word "nausea," meaning seasickness, reflecting its negative impact on health and well-being. Noise pollution stems from sources like road traffic, airplanes, construction equipment, lawn mowers, and loud music. It disrupts sleep, concentration, communication, and relaxation, leading to health issues like hearing loss, stress, high blood pressure, sleep disturbances, and reduced quality of life. As cities grow, noise pollution is worsening, but it can be reduced through strategies such as noise control, controlling the path of sound, and shielding the listener.

Causes of Noise Pollution

Noise affects both rural and urban areas:

- **Rural areas:** Crop dusters and large farm machinery create noise.
- **Urban areas:** High levels of noise reflect off hard surfaces, adding to noise from theaters, concerts, and headphones.

Other noise sources include:

- **Airports:** People living near airports or under flight paths experience high noise levels.
- **Busy Roads and Railways:** Traffic and trains produce constant sound.
- **Hospitals:** Even intensive care units, where patients need quiet, can be noisy.

Noise pollution has become so pervasive that there are few quiet moments in a day.

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Decibel Levels and Their Effects

Decibel (dB) measures sound intensity, with higher dB levels causing more potential harm.

- **225 dB:** Deafening (e.g., aircraft taking off)
- **130 dB:** Pain threshold, also deafening (e.g., concrete drills)
- **110-120 dB:** Recognizably loud, can be deafening (e.g., fireworks, concerts, trains)
- **90-110 dB:** Very loud (e.g., sirens, car horns, lawn mowers)
- **70-90 dB:** Loud (e.g., noisy restaurants, vacuum cleaners, flushing toilets)

Noise Pollution

Definition and Impact

Noise pollution refers to harmful or annoying levels of noise in the environment. Derived from the Latin word "nausea," noise can indeed make people feel sick. Noise from traffic, airplanes, construction, lawn equipment, and other sources creates a constant background of sound that disrupts sleep, concentration, communication, and even recreation.

Health Effects

Noise pollution can lead to serious health issues, including hearing loss, high blood pressure, stress, reduced productivity, and disturbed sleep. It also negatively impacts animals, making it difficult for them to communicate or find mates.

Prevention Tips

To reduce noise pollution, people can take several steps:

- Keep volume low on speakers, TVs, and other devices.
- Avoid unnecessary honking or loud activities at night.
- Regularly maintain equipment like lawn mowers to minimize noise.
- Plant trees along roads as they absorb sound.

Thermal Pollution

Definition and Causes

Thermal pollution occurs when industries discharge heated or very cold water into natural water sources, altering the natural temperature balance. Power plants, factories, and urban runoff are primary contributors. Even natural events like volcanic activity can change water temperature and impact marine life.

Effects

Changes in water temperature can kill fish eggs and larvae, disrupt food chains, and reduce oxygen levels in the water. This can force animals to migrate, which disrupts ecosystems.

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Prevention Tips

To prevent thermal pollution:

- Use cooling ponds or towers to lower water temperature before releasing it.
- Increase efficiency in energy production to minimize heat loss.
- Plant more trees to help regulate environmental temperatures.

Nuclear Pollution

Definition and Impact

Nuclear pollution refers to radioactive contamination from the nuclear energy process, which can come from reactor operation, waste disposal, and accidents. The 1986 Chernobyl disaster and the 2011 Fukushima accident are key examples of nuclear pollution that had lasting impacts on human health and the environment.

Types of Waste and Their Impact

- **High-Level Waste:** This includes dangerous elements like plutonium and requires safe, long-term disposal.
- **Low-Level Waste:** Emitted as gas, liquid, or solids during routine plant operations.

Preventing Nuclear Pollution

Some preventative measures include better safety standards, controlled waste disposal, and recycling of waste for energy use when safe.

Disaster Management

Types of Disasters

1. **Natural Disasters:** Earthquakes, floods, hurricanes, etc.
2. **Environmental Emergencies:** Industrial accidents or forest fires caused by humans.
3. **Complex Emergencies:** Conflict situations, such as wars.
4. **Pandemics:** Outbreaks of contagious diseases.

Phases of Disaster Management

1. **Prevention:** Activities to permanently protect against disasters, like building flood defenses.
2. **Preparedness:** Plans to evacuate and protect people and property in the event of a disaster.
3. **Relief:** Immediate actions post-disaster, including food, water, shelter, and medical aid.
4. **Recovery:** Long-term rebuilding of infrastructure and support for affected communities.

Disaster management is crucial for sustainable development and helps protect vulnerable communities from future crises.

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Floods

A flood happens when too much water overflows onto land that is usually dry. According to the European Union's definition, a flood occurs when water covers areas that don't normally get wet. Floods can happen in several ways:

- **Heavy Rain:** When rainwater accumulates faster than it can flow away, it causes an area flood.
- **Rivers Overflowing:** Rivers can overflow after heavy rains or rapid snow melts, especially if the river channels can't handle the extra water.
- **Storm Surges:** Strong winds during storms can push seawater onto the land, especially along coasts.
- **Dam Breaks:** Sometimes, man-made or natural barriers (like dams) break, causing sudden, large floods.

People tend to live near water sources because it's useful for activities like fishing, farming, and transportation. However, this choice can lead to frequent flood risks.

Types of Floods

1. **Areal Flooding:** When water pools on flat land or ground that's already soaked with water, causing an overflow.
2. **River Flooding:** When rivers overflow their banks after heavy rain or snowmelt.
3. **Coastal Flooding:** Caused by sea storms or tsunamis, which push seawater onto the land.
4. **Catastrophic Flooding:** Caused by sudden events like dam breaks, earthquakes, or volcanic eruptions.

Effects of Flooding

1. **Primary Effects:** Physical damage to buildings, bridges, roads, and sewage systems.
 2. **Secondary Effects:** Polluted water sources, spread of diseases, food shortages, and transportation issues.
 3. **Long-term Effects:** Economic problems, such as repair costs and increased food prices, and emotional stress for those affected.
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Earthquakes

An earthquake happens when there's a sudden release of energy in the Earth's crust, creating seismic waves. These waves make the ground shake. Earthquakes are measured by their size or magnitude. The larger the earthquake, the more damage it can cause.

- **Magnitude Scale:** Earthquakes are measured in magnitude. A small quake, like a magnitude 3, is usually minor, while a larger one, over magnitude 7, can cause significant damage.
- **Causes of Earthquakes:** Most earthquakes happen when rocks underground break along fault lines, but they can also be caused by volcanic eruptions, landslides, or human activities like mining.

Types of Seismic Waves

1. **P-waves (Primary Waves):** These are the fastest and travel through rock by pushing and pulling.
2. **S-waves (Secondary Waves):** Slower than P-waves, these move rocks up and down or side-to-side.
3. **Surface Waves:** Travel along the Earth's surface and often cause the most damage.

Effects of Earthquakes

1. **Shaking and Ground Rupture:** Earthquakes cause the ground to shake and, in some cases, to crack, damaging buildings and roads.
2. **Landslides:** The shaking can make unstable land slip, causing landslides, especially on hills or mountains.
3. **Fires:** Broken gas lines or electrical wires can start fires.
4. **Soil Liquefaction:** In areas with sandy or loose soil, the ground can act like liquid, causing buildings to sink or tilt.

Tsunami

A tsunami is a series of huge sea waves caused by sudden underwater disturbances like earthquakes or landslides. In the open ocean, tsunamis can have wave crests over 100 kilometers apart and can travel at speeds of 600–800 km/h. They can hit coastal areas within minutes, causing major destruction. Generally, tsunamis are triggered by earthquakes over a magnitude of 7.5.

Floods

Flooding happens when an overflow of water covers normally dry land, often due to rivers or lakes overflowing, heavy rainfall, or broken dams. Earthquakes can indirectly cause floods by breaking dams or creating landslides that temporarily block rivers. An example of a flood risk is in Tajikistan, where the Usoi Dam, created by an earthquake, could flood if damaged.

Human Impact of Earthquakes

Earthquakes can injure people, destroy buildings and roads, and cause the spread of diseases due to the lack of resources afterward. Damage is not always covered by insurance, and repair costs can lead to increased premiums.

Cyclone

A cyclone is a large, rotating storm with low pressure at its center. In the Northern Hemisphere, it rotates counterclockwise, while in the Southern Hemisphere, it rotates clockwise. Cyclones vary in type: polar cyclones, tropical cyclones, and tornadoes. Cyclones typically last 2–6 days, following the path of jet streams, and are known for severe weather fronts with thunderstorms.

Cyclone Formation (Cyclogenesis)

Cyclones form due to temperature and pressure differences in the atmosphere. Warm ocean waters provide energy, fueling tropical cyclones. Cyclogenesis, or cyclone formation, requires warm ocean temperatures, moisture, air instability, and low wind shear. Annually, around 86 tropical storms form, with many reaching hurricane strength.

Landslides

A landslide is the downward movement of rocks, soil, or debris, usually down a slope. Gravity is the main cause, but heavy rains, earthquakes, and volcanic eruptions can also trigger landslides. Human activities like deforestation, construction, and blasting can make slopes unstable, increasing the risk.