

THE TERMS TO KNOW

- **Abiotic:**

The non-living components of the environment like water, sunlight, soil heat etc

- **Acid Rain:**

The rain containing sulphuric acid and nitric acid, with pH range of 3 to 6

- **Ammonification:**

The decomposition of protein of dead plants and animals, and nitrogenous wastes to ammonia by ammonifying bacteria

- **Atmospheric nitrogen fixation:**

The conversion of atmospheric gaseous nitrogen to nitrates by thunderstorms and lightning

- **Biogeochemical Cycle:**

The cyclic pathway through which chemical elements move from environment to organisms and back to the environment.

- **Biological nitrogen fixation:**

The conversion of gaseous nitrogen into nitrates by living organisms

- **Biosphere:**

The last level of ecological organization all the ecosystems of the world together form the biosphere

- **Biotic:**

The living components of the environment include producers, consumers and decomposers

- **Carbon cycle:**

The biogeochemical cycle in which carbon flows between organisms and the environment

- **Carnivore:**

The consumers which eat only animal flesh

- **Commensalism:**

A type of symbiosis in which one of the partners gets benefit while the other is neither benefited nor harmed

- **Competition:**

A symbiotic relationship between or among living things for resources, such as food space, shelter, mate, ecological status, etc.

- **Consumer:**

The part of the biotic components of the ecosystem that consists of animals

- **Decomposer:**

An organism which decomposes the dead bodies and dead matter

- **Deforestation:**

Cleaning of forests by natural causes or by humans

- **Denitrification:**

The conversion of nitrates into nitrogen gas which is then released into the atmosphere. This is caused by bacteria and how they obtain their energy. A small amount is converted to usable forms by lightning in a process called atmospheric nitrogen fixation

- **Ecological pyramid:**

A representation of the number of individuals or amount of biomass or energy presenting various trophic levels of a food chain

- **Environment:**

The sum total of physical (abiotic) and biotic conditions which influence organisms

- **Eutrophication:**

The enrichment of water with inorganic nutrients, the nutrients promote the growth of algae and it leads to increase in the number of the decomposers and depletion of oxygen

- **Food chain:**

The series of organisms in an ecosystem, in which an organism eats the preceding one and is eaten by the next one

- **Food web:**

A network of interconnected food chains has a number of feeding connections amongst different organisms of a community

- **Global Warming:**

Increase in the temperature of the Earth, due to the addition of greenhouse gases in atmosphere which do not allow solar radiations to reflect back into the space

- **Interspecific Interactions:**

Interactions between the members of the different species

- **Intraspecific interactions:**

Interactions between the members of the same species

- **Mutualism:**

The symbiotic association in which both the partners get benefit and neither is harmed

- **Natural resources:**

The resources on Earth, which provide everything that humans use or consume

- **Nitrification:**

The oxidation of ammonia to nitrites and nitrates by the nitrifying bacteria

- **Nitrogen cycle:**

The flow of nitrogen between environment and the organisms

- **Nitrogen fixation:**

Conversion of nitrogen into nitrates

- **Non-renewable resource:**

A resource that is formed over very long periods, the rate of formation is extremely slow so cannot be replaced, e.g. minerals and fossil fuels

- **Overpopulation:**

Increase in population beyond the carrying capacity of an area or environment

- **Ozone:**

The O₃ gas; also present in the upper layer of the atmosphere where it absorbs the ultraviolet rays present in the sun's radiation

- **Parasitism:**

A type of interspecific interaction in which smaller partner (parasite) derives food and shelter from the body of larger partner (host) and harms the host

- **Phytoplankton:**

Photosynthetic organisms that float on the surface of water

- **Pollutant:**

The substance that causes pollution

- **Pollution:**

Undesirable change in the physical chemical or biological characteristics of air, water and land that may harmfully affect living organisms and other resources

- **Predation:**

An interaction between animals of two species or a plant and an animal, in which the predator attacks, kills and feeds on the smaller animal called prey

- **Producer:**

An organism that produces organic compounds from inorganic compounds an autotroph

- **Pyramid of biomass:**

The graphic representation of biomass present per unit area at different trophic levels in an ecosystem

- **Pyramid of numbers:**

The graphic representation of the number of individuals per unit area at various trophic levels in an ecosystem

- **Renewable resources:**

The resources which are replenished or reproduced easily e.g. sunlight air, wind etc.

- **Symbiosis:**

A type of interspecific interaction in which smaller partner (parasite) derives food and shelter from the body of larger partner (host) and harms the host

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- **Symbiosis:**

Long- or short-term relationship between members of different species, three forms are parasitism, commensalism and mutualism

ClassNotes

