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Ch: NATURAL VEGETATION AND WILDLIFE

Ecosystem

Various species of plants occur in areas having similar climatic conditions. To a large extent its nature determines the animal life in that area. All the plants and animals in an area are interdependent on each other in their physical environment and form an ecosystem.

Thus, an ecosystem is a biological environment consisting of all the organisms living in a particular area, as well as all the non-living, physical components of the environment with which the organisms interact, such as air, soil, water and sunlight.

Biome

It is a major community of plants and animals having similar life forms existing under similar environmental conditions. A biome is identified on the basis of plant existing there. It is also termed as 'major life zone'.

Human Influence In an Ecosystem

Human beings influence ecosystem in the following manner

- They utilise the vegetation and wildlife.
- The greed of human beings leads to over utilisation of natural resources.
- Human beings cut the trees and kill the animals creating ecological imbalance.
- Due to the activities of human beings, some of the ' plants and animals have reached the verge of extinction.

Importance of Forests

Forests are advantageous for the environment. They influence climate, reduce soil erosion, regulate stream flow, provide raw material for industries and livelihood for many, etc. They control wind force and temperature and cause rainfall. They also provide shelter to various animal species.

Change in Nature of Vegetation in India

Factors like growing demand for cultivated land, development of industries and mining, urbanisation have changed natural vegetation. The vegetation cover of India in large parts is no more natural in the real sense, except in some inaccessible regions like the Himalayas, the hilly region of Central India and the Marusthali. In most of the places, it is either modified, replaced or degraded by human interference.

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