

3.2 How Humans Influence Ecosystems Notes

1. What is a wetland and how does it help the environment?

Wetlands are ecosystems where the soil is water logged for the year. It filters out waste and reduces the concentration of nitrates by 80%.

2. What impact are humans having on wetlands?

Bogs are converted into commercial cranberry and blueberry farms. In the Lower Fraser Valley and parts of Vancouver Island it is estimated that 50 to 70 percent of the original wetland habitat has disappeared.

3. What is sustainability?

The ability for an ecosystem to stay alive and function.

4. What is land use?

The way we use land, such as, cities and farms.

5. What is resource use?

Resource use is the ways we obtain and use materials; soil, wood, water and gas.

6. What is habitat loss?

The destruction of habitats, which usually result from human activities.

7. What is habitat fragmentation?

Division of habitats into smaller isolated fragments. Isolated pockets of ecosystem affect plant pollination, seed dispersal, wildlife movement and plant and animal reproduction.

8. What is deforestation?

The clearing or logging of a forest without replanting.

9. What impact does deforestation have?

It reduces the number of plants and animals in an ecosystem. Another result is soil degradation. This occurs when water and wind erosion removes topsoil from bare land; deforestation causes erosion.

10. What is soil degradation?

When water and wind erosion removes top soil from bare land and causes erosion.

11. What happens when soil becomes compacted?

Occurs when particles are squeezed together and the air spaces between the particles are reduced. Without air, nothing can live.

12. What can be done to allow compacted soil to be able to absorb nutrients?

One method to improve nutrient absorption and the movement of air and water is aeration. Aeration is a process in which small plugs of soil are removed from the ground.

13. What is resource exploitation?

Resource exploitation is harvesting fish and timber, mining coal and minerals, and extracting oil and gas. This helps to produce energy to run the cities and industries.

14. Why is resource exploitation problematic?

It's the over use of a resource which would lead to running out of the resources. It damages ecosystems by destroying habitats.

15. What is over exploitation?

Over exploitation is the use of a resource until it's gone.

16. What is traditional ecological knowledge (TEK)?

Ecological information, passed down from generation to generation that reflects human experience with nature, gained over centuries. Example: stories, songs.

17. Why is traditional ecological knowledge (TEK) so important in 2015?

It provides researchers with valuable data about soil types, plants and animal species, and practices that enhance the productivity and health of ecosystems.