

Pollution

Pollution occurs when humans put harmful chemicals or energy into the atmosphere. When fossil fuels are burned, they give off gas like sulphur dioxide. These gases dissolve in water to give acid rain. The effects of acid rain can be reduced by adding lime to lakes.

Pyramids of numbers can tell us about the number of living things at each feeding level.. Plants are always put in the first level because they make up food by photosynthesis, and so bring energy into the food chain. As you go up the pyramid, the animals get larger, and the number of animals decreases.

Chemicals that kill pests are called pesticides. Pests that can damage crops are insects, weeds, and moulds. Some pesticides do not break down easily. They can enter food chains and, as they are passed on, they become more concentrated. Animals at the end of the food chain are the first ones to die.

Decomposers are microbes that break down dead things. The most important decomposers are fungi and bacteria. The nutrients in the soil are replaced when animals and plants die and rot. Plants take these nutrients and use them during photosynthesis. Three important nutrients for plant growth are phosphorus, light, and carbon dioxide.

Algae are plants that live in water. To grow well they need light, warmth and nutrients. 2 of the nutrients which increase the growth of algae are nitrate and phosphorus. If too much algae grow, they die and microbes rot them down. The microbes use up a lot of oxygen, and this means that fish and other water animals will die.