

SCIENCE GLOSSARY

Abiotic:	A nonliving factor or element (e.g., light, water, heat, rock, energy, mineral).
Acid deposition:	Precipitation with a pH less than 5.6 that forms in the atmosphere when certain pollutants mix with water vapor.
Allele:	Any of a set of possible forms of a gene.
Biochemical conversion:	The changing of organic matter into other chemical forms.
Biological diversity:	The variety and complexity of species present and interacting in an ecosystem and the relative abundance of each.
Biomass conversion:	The changing of organic matter that has been produced by photosynthesis into useful liquid, gas or fuel.
Biomedical technology:	The application of health care theories to develop methods, products and tools to maintain or improve homeostasis.
Biomes:	A community of living organisms of a single major ecological region.
Biotechnology:	The ways that humans apply biological concepts to produce products and provide services.
Biotic:	An environmental factor related to or produced by living organisms.
Carbon chemistry:	The science of the composition, structure, properties and reactions of carbon based matter, especially of atomic and molecular systems; sometimes referred to as organic chemistry.
Closing the loop:	A link in the circular chain of recycling events that promotes the use of products made with recycled materials.
Commodities:	Economic goods or products before they are processed and/or given a brand name, such as a product of agriculture.

- Enzyme:** A protein that increases the rate of a chemical reaction without being changed by the reaction; an organic catalyst.
- Equilibrium:** The ability of an ecosystem to maintain stability among its biological resources (e.g., forest, fisheries, crops) so that there is a steady optimum yield.
- Ergonomical:** Of or relating to the design of equipment or devices to fit the human body's control, position, movement and environment.
- Evolution:** A process of change that explains w

Hydrology:	The scientific study of the properties, distribution and effects of water on the earth's surface, in the soil and underlying rocks and in the atmosphere.
Hypothesis:	An assertion subject to verification or proof as a premise from which a conclusion is drawn.
Incinerating:	Burning to ashes; reducing to ashes.
Information technology:	The technical means that humans create to store and transmit information.
Inquiry:	A systematic process for using knowledge and skills to acquire and apply new knowledge.
Instructional technology:	Any mechanical aid (including computer technology) used to assist in or enhance the process of teaching and learning.
Integrated pest management:	A variety of pest control methods that include repairs, traps, bait, poison, etc. to eliminate pests.
Law:	Summarizing statement of observed experimental facts that has been tested many times and is generally accepted as true.
Lentic:	Relating to or living in still water.
Lotic:	Relating to or living in actively moving water.
Manufacturing technology:	The ways that humans produce goods and products.
Mitigation:	The policy of constructing or creating man-made habitats, such as wetlands, to replace those lost to development.
Mitosis:	The sequential differentiation and segregation of replicated chromosomes in a cell's nucleus that precedes complete cell division.
Model:	A description, analogy or a representation of something that helps us understand it better (e.g., a physical model, a conceptual model, a mathematical model).

Niche (ecological):	The role played by an organism in an ecosystem; its food preferences, requirements for shelter, special behaviors and the timing of its activities (e.g., nocturnal, diurnal), interaction with other organisms and its habitat.
Nonpoint source pollution:	Contamination that originates from many locations that all discharge into a location (e.g., a lake, stream, land area).
Nonrenewable resources:	Substances (e.g., oil, gas, coal, copper, gold) that, once used, cannot be replaced in this geological age.
Nova:	A variable star that suddenly increases in brightness to several times its normal magnitude and returns to its original appearance in a few weeks to several months or years.
Patterns:	Repeated processes that are exhibited in a wide variety of ways; identifiable recurrences of the element and/or the form.
Pest:	A label applied to an organism when it is in competition with humans for some resource.
Physical technology:	The ways that humans construct, manufacture and transport products.
Point source pollution:	Pollutants discharged from a single identifiable location (e.g., pipes, ditches, channels, sewers, tunnels, containers of various types).
Radioactive isotope:	An atom that gives off nuclear radiation and has the same number of protons (atomic number) as another atom but a different number of neutrons.
Recycling:	Collecting and reprocessing a resource or product to make into new products.
Regulation:	A rule or order issued by an executive authority or regulatory agency of a government and having the force of law.
Renewable:	A naturally occurring raw material or form of energy that will be replenished through natural ecological cycles or sound management practices (e.g., the sun, wind, water, trees).
Risk management:	A strategy developed to reduce or control the chance of harm or loss to one's health or life; the process of identifying, evaluating, selecting and implementing actions to reduce risk to human health and to ecosystems.

Theory:	Systematically organized knowledge applicable in a relatively wide variety of circumstances; especially, a system of assumptions, accepted principles and rules of procedure devised to analyze, predict or otherwise explain the nature or behavior of a specified set of phenomena.
Tool:	Any device used to extend human capability including computer-based tools.
Topographic map:	A representation of a region on a sufficient scale to show detail, selected man-made and natural features of a portion of the land surface including its relief and certain physical and cultural features; the portrayal of the position, relation, size, shape and elevation of the area.
Transportation systems:	A group of related parts that function together to perform a major task in any form of transportation.
Transportation technology:	The physical ways humans move materials, goods and people.
Trophic levels:	The role of an organism in nutrient and energy flow within an ecosystem (e.g., herbivore, carnivore, decomposer).
Waste Stream:	The flow of (waste) materials from generation, collection and separation to disposal.
Watershed:	The land area from which surface runoff drains into a stream, channel, lake, reservoir or other body of water; also called a drainage basin.