

# Globalization and Environmental Issues



## **Globalization and the Environment**

**Enduring Understanding:** You will learn the dangers to the natural environment that are posed by population growth, urbanization, and industrialization, including global influences on the environment and the efforts by citizens and governments to protect the natural environment.

The environment has been harmed by **population growth, urbanization, and industrialization**. Population growth and urbanization have led to an increase in land development. Land development, in turn, has harmed or eliminated many animal and plant habitats.

The **Green Revolution** that began in the 1960s was an attempt to increase food production worldwide. There was an increase in the use of fertilizers, pesticides, and new strains of crops. The result was higher yields of crops and lower rates of famine which resulted in an increase in population. A downside to this Green Revolution, however, was that chemicals were released into the environment and increased soil erosion.

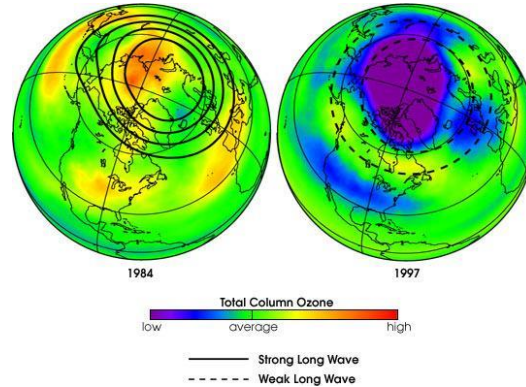


With the increase in population came increased urbanization and industrialization. According to the United Nations' World Urbanization Prospects, in 1950 it was estimated that approximately 732 million people in the world lived in urban areas. In 2005, this number was estimated to have quadrupled to 3.2 billion. The increase of urbanization leads to many problems such as increased waste. Localized pollution, and increased warming in the cities compared to rural areas. Land development and farming techniques have led to an increased release of chemicals and soil erosion. The development of land has also impacted wildlife habitats, which has endangered various species around the world.



Urbanization and industrialization have increased the demand for earth's natural resources and led to changes in how we use them. These changes often result in pollution and environmental issues.

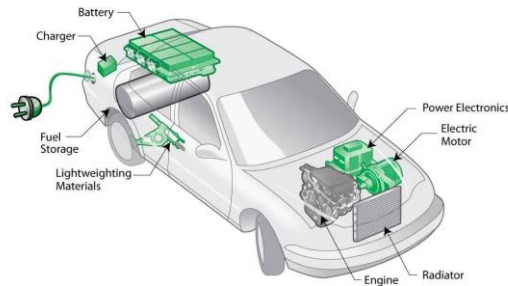
**Hydrocarbon emissions** from automobiles and **carbon dioxide** emissions from the burning of **fossil fuels**, such as coal and oil for energy, have caused problems. Some of these problems are air and water pollution, acid rain, and damage to the ozone layer. There has also been an increase in the **Greenhouse Effect**. The continued burning of coal and oil has released carbon dioxide into the atmosphere, leading to air pollution and acid rain. The earth's ozone layer, which protects its inhabitants against the sun's ultraviolet rays, has been damaged by the release of **chlorofluorocarbons** or CFCs.



Continued loss of the ozone could result in increased levels of skin cancer and damage to plant and animal species. Efforts have been made by groups worldwide to curb emissions of CFCs both by large manufacturers and by small producers. In 1992, many nations of the world signed the **Kyoto Protocol**, designed to reduce greenhouse gases emitted by each country. Additionally, with increased publicity in recent years, public knowledge about global warming is increasing.



Around the world, citizens and governments have been more involved in trying to protect the natural environment. On the local level, many communities and schools undertake recycling programs in an effort to reduce waste. Increasingly, some citizens are purchasing products made of recycled materials, opting for reusable bags at the grocery stores, or using more energy efficient light bulbs and unplugging electrical appliances in an effort to make a small impact. Other changes such as **hybrid** and **electric cars** that use less oil and energy efficient appliances that require less power are increasingly being developed and used.



The research and development of alternative sources of energy continues to increase worldwide as well. Many alternatives and renewable energy sources such as solar and wind are being increasingly used to provide power for homes and businesses. **Nuclear energy**, a nonrenewable energy source, is also widely used around the world as a power source.

### Section Review

1. What three things have caused harm to the environment in recent history?
2. What is the Green Revolution?
3. What are some disadvantages of the Green Revolution?
4. What is urbanization?
5. What kinds of problems occur when urbanization increases?
6. What has damaged Earth's ozone layer?
7. What are CFCs?
8. What was the purpose of the Kyoto Protocol?
9. What kinds of things are being done locally to improve the environment?
10. What alternative forms of energy sources are being used today?

## Sources

**Cover Image:** "Redirect Notice." *Redirect Notice*. N.p., n.d. Web. 19 June 2014.

**Image 1:** "O ECOTEXTILES." *O ECOTEXTILES*. N.p., n.d. Web. 19 June 2014.

**Image 2:** Americanhistory, Dannys. N.p., n.d. Web.

**Image 3:** "Main Page." *Wikipedia*. Wikimedia Foundation, 16 June 2014. Web. 16 June 2014.

**Image 4:** "Alcoa Recycling." '*Alcoa Recycling*' N.p., n.d. Web. 19 June 2014.

**Image 5:** "The Tomorrow Company." *The Tomorrow Company*. N.p., n.d. Web. 19 June 2014.