

Renewable natural energy resources

Water pollution is one of the main concerns regarding water resources. It is estimated that 22% of worldwide water is used in industry.⁶ Major industrial users include hydroelectric dams, thermoelectric power plants (which use water for cooling), ore and oil refineries (which use water in chemical processes) and manufacturing plants (which use water as a solvent), it is also used for dumping garbage.

Desalination of seawater is considered a renewable source of water, although reducing its dependence on fossil fuel energy is needed for it to be fully renewable.⁷

Food is any substance consumed to provide nutritional support for the body.⁸ Most food has its origin in renewable resources. Food is obtained directly from plants and animals.

Hunting may not be the first source of meat in the modernised world, but it is still an important and essential source for many rural and remote groups. It is also the sole source of feeding for wild carnivores.⁹

Although air and sunlight are available everywhere on Earth, crops also depend on soil nutrients and the availability of water. Monoculture is a method of growing only one crop at a time in a given field, which can damage land and cause it to become either unusable or suffer from reduced yields. Monoculture can also cause the build-up of pathogens and pests that target one specific species. The Great Irish Famine (1845-1849) is a well-known example of the dangers of monoculture.

Industrial processing and logistics also have an effect on agriculture's sustainability. The way and locations crops are sold requires energy for transportation, as well as the energy cost for materials, labour, and transport. Food sold at a local location, such a farmers' market, have reduced energy overheads.

Historically, renewable resources like firewood, latex, guano, charcoal, wood ash, plant colors as indigo, and whale products have been crucial for human needs but failed to supply demand in the beginning of the industrial era.²⁵ Early modern times faced large problems with overuse of renewable resources as in deforestation, overgrazing or overfishing.²⁵



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