

Homo sapiens first appeared on earth nearly 200 thousand years ago. And since, then, we have depended on Mother Nature for things needed by us to survive. Humans require air, water, food from plants and animals, sunlight, minerals, land, soil and fossil fuels to exist. All these useful raw materials are called natural resources.

The picture below gives us a few examples of the numerous things we obtain from natural resources.



Types of natural resources

Types of natural resources:

There are many ways of classifying these natural resources. They can be biotic or abiotic (that is derived from organic materials or inorganic materials). Another way of classification of resources is by the amount of resource available for human consumption. Through this, resources can be classified into exhaustible and inexhaustible natural resources.

Inexhaustible natural resources:

Nature has blessed us with an unlimited supply of resources such as air, water and sunlight. These resources are called inexhaustible resources. They are also called renewable resources.

Exhaustible natural resources:

As human population is increasing at an astounding rate, we have reached a number of 7.4 billion today! Naturally, this means that we are utilizing more and more natural resources. If we go at this rate, we will soon reach a day when nature will not be able to provide us with resources such as plants and trees, animals, mineral ores, fossil fuels such as coal, petroleum and natural gas. Thus, these resources are exhaustible. These resources are called exhaustible or non-renewable resources.

If the use of these resources is not monitored carefully, there will be no food for our predecessors to eat, no energy for them to power their machines and no material for them to build shelter with. This is why it is important to understand which resources are exhaustible and which are not, and to practice sustainable development. This is nothing but development that meets the needs of the present generations without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.