

Glossary

SCIENCE AND THE ENVIRONMENT

A

agriculture the raising of crops and livestock for food or for other products that are useful to humans

B

biodiversity the variety of organisms in a given area, the genetic variation within a population, the variety of species in a community, or the variety of communities in an ecosystem

E

ecological footprint a calculation that shows the productive area of Earth needed to support one person in a particular country

ecology the study of the interactions of living organisms with one another and with their environment

environmental science the study of the air, water, and land surrounding an organism or a community, which ranges from a small area to Earth's entire biosphere; it includes the study of the impact of humans on the environment

L

law of supply and demand a law of economics that states that as the demand for a good or service increases, the value of the good or service also increases

N

natural resource any natural material that is used by humans, such as water, petroleum, minerals, forests, and animals

P

pollution an undesirable change in the natural environment that is caused by the introduction of substances that are harmful to living organisms or by excessive wastes, heat, noise, or radiation

S

sustainability the condition in which human needs are met in such a way that a human population can survive indefinitely