

Ecological Terms

Ecology - The study of interactions between organisms and their environment.

Ecosystem - the total of interacting organisms and non-living things in a specific environment.



Environment- the complex of physical, chemical, and biotic factors (as climate, soil, and living things) that act upon an organism or an ecological community and ultimately determine its form and survival.

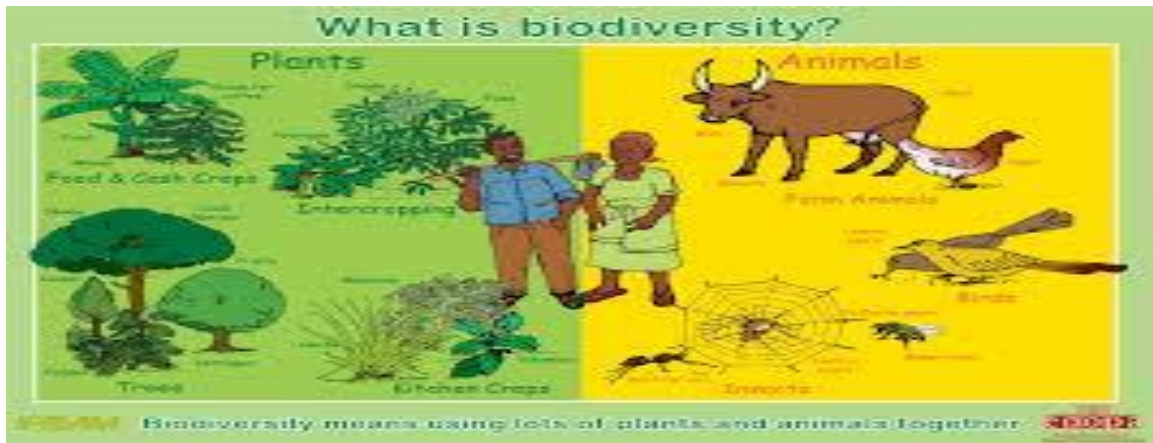
Autotroph - an organism that makes its own food from inorganic materials.

Heterotroph- is an organism that can't make its own food supply.

Atmosphere - earth's atmosphere is composed of gases and water that are retained by earth's gravity and help the earth retain heat and reflect UV radiation.

Biodegradable - capable of decaying through the action of living organisms.

Biodiversity - diversity among and within plant and animal species in an environment.



Biomass - the sum of all living organisms in an area.

Biosphere - the sphere of life; all living matter of the planet occupied by life.

Biotic factor: Living organisms (biotic components) in an ecosystem can be classified as either producers or consumers, depending on how they get their food

Abiotic factor: components of an ecosystem include all the physical and chemical factors that influence living organisms, like air, water, soil and rocks.

Weather is current state of the atmosphere in short time and is measurable in terms of temperature, atmospheric pressure, humidity, wind speed and direction, cloudiness and precipitation.

Climate is the state of the atmosphere over long time periods, such as over years, decades, centuries or greater.