

CHAPTER 14

Natural Resources

Soil:

Soil is the portion of the earth surface consisting of disintegrated rock and decaying organic material. It provides the support for many plants and animals.

Creation of Soil: Various Factors:

- **Sun:**

The sun heats up rocks during the day so that they expand. At night, these rocks cool down and contract.

Since all parts of the rocks do not expand and contract at the same rate, this results in the formation of cracks and ultimately the huge rocks break up into smaller pieces.

- **Water:**

Fast flowing water carries big and small particles of rock downstream.

These rocks rub against other rocks and the resultant abrasion causes the rocks to wear down into smaller particles.

- **Wind:**

Wind carries sand from one place to another.

Living Organisms Lichen (A slow growing plant):

Lichen, moss also grow on surface of rocks.

While growing, they release certain substances that cause the rock surface to powder down and form a thin layer of soil.

Components of Soil:

Soil contains small particles of rock of different sizes.

It contains bits of decayed living organisms called Humus.

It also contains various microorganisms. Humus makes the soil more porous.

It allows water and air to penetrate deep underground.

Usefulness of Soil:

The soil holds the roots of the plants. The soil contains certain microorganisms, which help in the growth of plants.

Different Types of Soil:

- Alluvial soil
- Black soil
- Sandy soil
- Laterite soil

Soil Erosion:

Carrying away of upper fertile layer of soil by rain, wind, human activities and wrong agricultural practice is called soil erosion

- Over grazing of land.
- Removal of top soil by wind and water.
- Due to lack of trees, the upper layer of soil is eroded by air and water.
- Leaving land uncultivated for long time.

