

ECOSYSTEM



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ECOSYSTEM

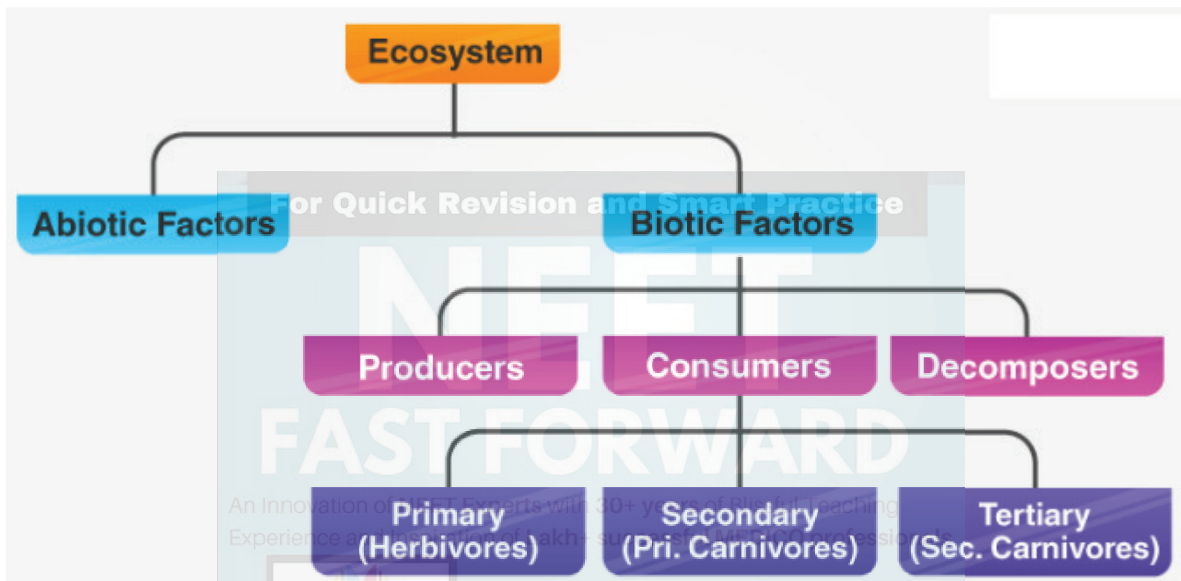
Ecosystem:

Ecosystem is a biological community where the living and non-living components interact with each other and their physical environment. It is the functional unit of nature and varies greatly in size. Let us have a look at the structure, function and components of ecosystem.

Structure of Ecosystem:

The structure of ecosystem comprises two different components:

1. Biotic
2. Abiotic



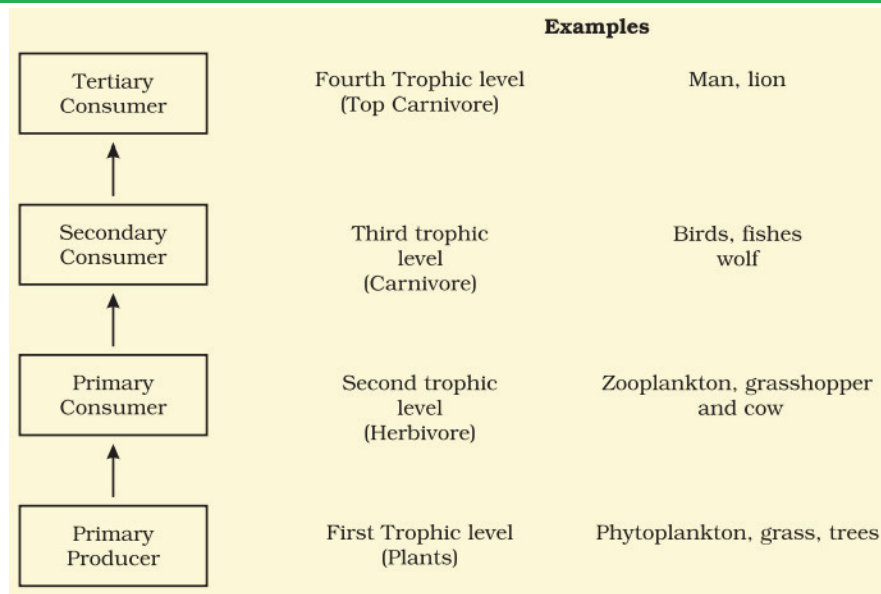
Biotic Components:

Biotic Components are the living components involved in shaping the ecosystem.

It includes biotic factors such as:

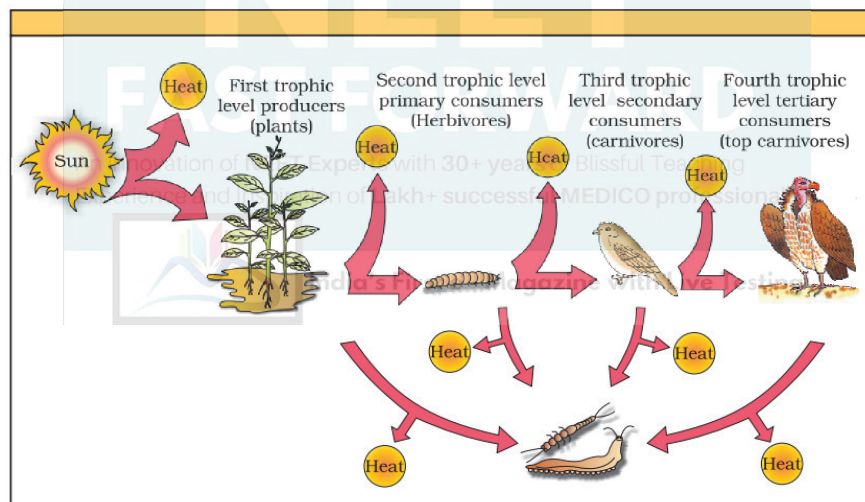
Producers: All green plant in the ecosystem are termed as the producers, as they produce their own food by making use of solar energy. All living organisms are dependent on plants for both oxygen and food.

Consumers: They include both primary consumers and secondary consumers. As animals depend on plants for their food, they are called consumers. Primary consumers feed directly of Producers for their food and the secondary consumers feed on the primary consumers for their food. All herbivores animals are an example of Primary consumers. Carnivores and apex predators make up the secondary and tertiary consumers.



Decomposers: They are the saprophytes which include fungi and bacteria. Decomposers convert the dead matter into nitrogen and carbon dioxide and the process is called decomposition.

Energy Flow: Energy flow is the flow of energy along the food chain, through different trophic levels. Energy is passed from the producers to the decomposers through various trophic levels.



Abiotic Components:

Abiotic components include inorganic materials like air, water, and soil.

Ecosystem Types:

There are three main types of ecosystem:

Terrestrial Ecosystem:

These are the ecosystem found only on land. The terrestrial ecosystems include:

1. Forest ecosystem
2. Grassland ecosystem
3. Desert ecosystem
4. Mountain ecosystem
5. Aquatic Ecosystem

The aquatic ecosystem is the ecosystem in the water body. It includes:

Freshwater Ecosystem:

The freshwater ecosystem can be divided into the following categories:

1. **Lentic:** This includes slow-moving or still water such as lakes, ponds, pools, etc.
2. **Lotic:** This includes fast-moving water bodies such as rivers and streams.
3. **Wetlands:** These include the environment where soil is saturated with water for a certain time period.

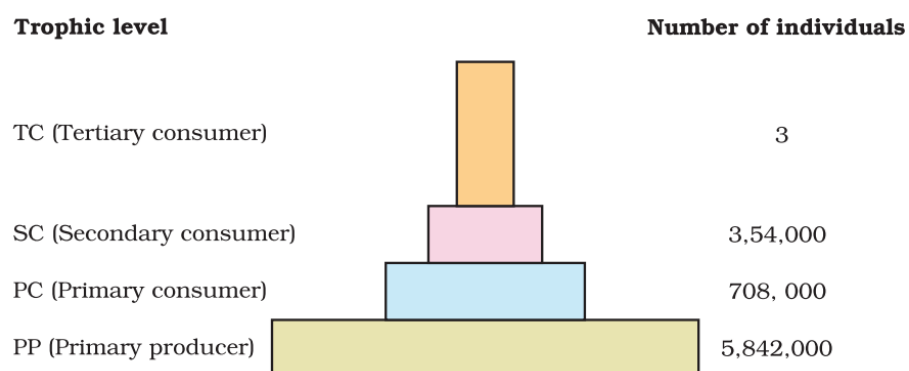
Oceanic Ecosystem: The ocean ecosystem is the largest ecosystem. It covers about 71% of the total earth's surface. This is also known as the marine ecosystem and is divided into deep water, shallow water and deep ocean surface. A large variety of corals, echinoderms, brown algae, cephalopods and dinoflagellates are found here.

Ecological Pyramids:

An ecological pyramid is the graphical representation of the relationship between different organisms. Each bar of the pyramid represents a different trophic level.

The different types of ecological pyramids include:

Pyramid of Numbers: This represents the number of organisms in each trophic level, irrespective of their size.



Pyramid of Biomass: This represents the total mass of organisms at each trophic level.



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