**ENVIRONMENT VOCABULARY Part 1**

As we become increasingly aware of the causes and the consequences of climate change for the environment and our lives, we also become familiar with certain words and terms.  
Below you will find a list of words relating to the environment, with their meaning, for learners of English.

| **Word** | **Meaning** |
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| **Acid rain** | Acid rain is rain mixed with sulphuric, nitric and other acids formed by gases released into the atmosphere when fossil fuels are burned (factory smoke, cars, etc.). Acid rain is considered responsible for damaging forests and crops, and is particularly harmful to fish and other aquatic life in rivers and lakes. |
| **Aquifer** | An aquifer is an underground layer of rock and sand that stores water and transmits it to wells and springs. The water, called 'ground water', can be used for drinking or other purposes. |
| **Arid** | Land or climate that is extremely dry due to very low rainfall. Agriculture in arid regions is impossible without irrigation. |
| **Asbestos** | A fire-resistant mineral once used in insulation and home products that can cause respiratory diseases. |
| **Asthma** | Asthma is a chronic respiratory disorder which is characterized by shortness of breath, wheezing, coughing and tightness of the chest. Asthma often arises from allergies or can be caused by exposure to polluted environments. |
| **Awareness** | Consciousness that a condition or event exists. |
| **Ban** | Forbid or prohibit something. |
| **Biodegradable** | Capable of being broken down or decomposed by natural biological processes. The term 'biodegradable' is used to refer to 'environmentally friendly' products. Many chemicals, food scraps, cotton, wool and paper are biodegradable;  plastics and polyester generally are not. |
| **Biotechnology** | The application of technology to the study or manipulation of living things in areas such as agricultural production, hybrid plant development, medicine, environmental research, etc. |
| **Carbon footprint** | A measure of the effect that human activities have on the climate (measured in units of carbon dioxide). |
| **Carcinogen (noun)** | A substance that may cause cancer in animals or humans. |
| **Carcinogenic (adj.)** | Capable of causing cancer. |
| **CO** | Carbon monoxide: one of the deadliest of poisons - a colourless, odourless, poisonous gas produced when carbon, especially in petrol, burns in an insufficient amount of air. |
| **CO2** | Carbon dioxide: a colourless, odourless, non-poisonous gas that is a normal part of the air. It is absorbed by plants and exhaled by humans and animals. It is produced by the complete combustion of fossil fuels (coal, oil, wood) and by the decaying of vegetable matter. Carbon dioxide is a greenhouse gas that contributes to global warming. It is less toxic than carbon monoxide, but equally polluting to the environment. |
| **Climate change** | Climate change, which is often called 'global warming' refers to changes in weather patterns including :   - a rise in global temperatures   - changes in rainfall patterns which result in flooding and droughts  - a rise in sea level. Climate changes can be caused both by natural forces and by human activities. |
| **Compost** | A mixture of decaying organic matter such as leaves, wood and manure. Compost is used in gardening and agriculture to fertilize and enrich the soil. |
| **Conservation** | Protecting, maintaining or improving natural resources to keep them safe from destruction or degradation and conserve them for future generations. Clean rivers and lakes, wilderness areas, wildlife, healthy soil and clean air are natural resources. |
| **CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility)** | The initiatives taken by corporations to assess and take responsibility for the company's effects on environmental and social well-being. |
| **Dead zone** | Area of water containing low levels of oxygen in which fish, plants and other aquatic life find it difficult to survive. |
| **Deforestation** | Destruction of forests to make land for agriculture. Cutting down trees which provide oxygen and absorb carbon dioxide is seen as a cause of increased greenhouse effect. Deforestation also entails the destruction of animal habitats. |