

Pollution is the degradation of natural environment by external substances introduced directly or indirectly. Human health, **ecosystem** quality and aquatic and terrestrial biodiversity may be affected and altered permanently by pollution.

Pollution occurs when ecosystems cannot get rid of substances introduced into the environment. The critical threshold of its ability to naturally eliminate substances is compromised and the balance of the ecosystem is broken.

The sources of pollution are numerous. The identification of these different pollutants and their effects on ecosystems is complex. They can come from natural disasters or the result of human activity, such as **oil spills**, chemical spills, **nuclear accidents**. These can have terrible consequences on people and the planet where they live: destruction of the biodiversity, increased mortality of the human and animal species, destruction of natural habitat, damage caused to the quality of soil, water and air.

Preventing pollution and protecting the environment necessitate the application of the principles of sustainable development. We have to consider to satisfy the needs of today without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs. This means that we should remedy existing pollution, but also anticipate and prevent future pollution sources in order to protect the environment and public health. **Any environmental damage must be punishable by law, and polluters should pay compensation for the damage caused to the environment.**

Probing Questions

1. Which word could replace “ecosystem” in sentence 02, §1?
2. Which rhetorical function is used in sentence 02, §1? Explain.
3. What break the balance of the ecosystem?
4. Is the rhetorical function in sentence 4, § 3 enumeration or cause and effect? Explain
5. Which of the sources of pollution § 3 is the most important? Explain
6. Consider the last sentence. Is it enough to punish people?
7. Give a title to the passage by picking up words from the text.

General information:

- Ecosystem: all the living and the non-living being. The entire planet
- Oil spills: is the release of a liquid petroleum into the sea, especially due to human activity, or by accident.
- Nuclear accidents: large radioactive release –lethal to individuals and to the environment- due to reactor core melt. A significant example is the Chernobyl (Ukraine^o) disaster in 21 April 1986.