GLOSSARY

**aquifer:** Pours, water-saturated layers of sand, gravel or bed rock that can yield an economically significant amount of water.

**biodegradable:** Substances that can be readily decomposed by living organisms.

**biodiversity:** Short for biological diversity, it is the totality of genes, species and ecosystems in a region or the world.

**biosphere:** That part of the earth and its atmosphere that is inhabited by living organisms. The earth's surface and the top layer of the hydrosphere (water layer) have the greatest density of living organisms.

**chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs):** Organic compounds made up of atoms of carbon, chlorine, and fluorine.

**climate change:** According to FCCC usage, a change of climate which is attributed directly or indirectly to human activity that alters the composition of the global atmosphere and which is in addition to natural climate variability observed over comparable time periods.

**compost:** Partially decomposed organic plant and animal matter that can be used as a soil conditioner or fertilizer.

**conservation:** The management of human use of the biosphere so that it may yield the greatest sustainable benefits to present generations, while maintaining its potential to meet the needs of future generations.

**covenant:** A formal agreement that is legally binding.

**consumerist:** Description of purchase behaviour.

**DDT:** Dichlorodiphenyltrichloroethane, a chlorinated hydrocarbon which has been widely used as a pesticide but is now banned in some countries.

**desertification:** The conversion of rain-fed cropland or irrigated cropland to desert-like land, with a drop in agricultural productivity of 10 per cent or more.

**eco-efficiency:** The production of goods in ways that damage the environment less and use less resources without increasing the cost of the goods.

**ecology:** The study of the interrelationships among micro-organism communities and their non-living environment interactions between living organisms and their physical environment.
**ecosystem:** A dynamic complex of plant, animal and micro-organism communities and their non-living environment interacting as a functional unit with the non-living components including sunlight, air, water, minerals and nutrients. The term implies a partly bounded system, with most interactions inside it. Ecosystems can be small and ephemeral; for example, water-filled holes in trees or rotting logs on a forest floor, or large and long-lived, like forests or lakes.

**envirocon:** description of conservation and preservation activities.

**extinction:** The death of a species, which occurs when the last individual of the species dies.

**fly ash:** fine particulate, essentially non-combustible material, carried out in a gas stream from a furnace, as opposed to the ash that remains at the bottom.

**global warming:** The warming of the earth’s atmosphere as a result of increases in the concentrations of one or more greenhouse gases.

**greenhouse gases:** A natural effect that traps heat in the atmosphere (troposphere) near the earth’s surface. Some of the heat flowing back towards space from the earth’s surface is absorbed by water vapor, carbon dioxide, ozone, and several other gases in the atmosphere, and is then radiated back towards the earth’s surface. If the atmospheric atmosphere will gradually increase leading to global warming.

**habitat:** A place or site where an organism or population naturally occurs.

**hazard:** something that can cause injury, disease, economic loss or environmental damage.

**learned helplessness:** inability to do constructively for the improvement of the environment and generations yet to come.

**monoculture:** The cultivation of a single crop.

**noise pollution:** Any unwanted, disturbing or harmful sound that impairs or interfered with hearing, causes stress, hampers concentration and work efficiency or causes accidents.

**non-degradable pollutant:** Material that is not broken down by natural processes.

**non-renewable pollution:** A resource that exists in a fixed amount in various places in the earth’s crust and has the potential for renewal only by geological.
physical and chemical processes taking place over hundreds of millions to billion of years. Examples include copper, aluminium, coal and oil.

**ozone depletion**: The decrease in the concentration of ozone in the stratosphere.

**permafrost**: A thick of soil beneath the surface that remains frozen throughout the year.

**pollution**: An undesirable change in the physical, chemical or biological characteristics of air, water, soil or food that can adversely affect the health, survival or activities of humans or other living organisms.

**recycling**: Collecting and reprocessing a resource so that it can be made into new products.

**run-off**: Fresh water from precipitation and melting ice that flows on the earth's surface into nearby streams, lakes, wetlands, and reservoirs.

**salinization**: The accumulations of salts in soil, which can eventually make the soil unable to support plant growth.

**solid waste**: Any unwanted or discarded materials that is not a liquid or a gas.

**sustainable development**: Development that 'meets the need of the present without compromising the ability of future generations of meet their own needs'.

**toxin**: A poisonous substance.