

Glossary

TERM	DEFINITION	LOOK FOR IT ON PAGE...
atmosphere	the layer of air that surrounds our planet; the gases in the atmosphere help maintain the earth's temperature	6 
biofuel (or bio-diesel)	fuel made from plants like corn or soy	44
carbon	an element found in <i>fossil fuels</i> which, when burned, produce <i>carbon dioxide</i> ; sometimes used as shorthand for <i>carbon dioxide</i>	4
carbon cycle	the process of <i>carbon</i> going from living systems (plants, animals, and soils) on earth and in the ocean, to the atmosphere, and back again	9, 10
carbon dioxide	a molecule made up of one <i>carbon</i> atom and two oxygen atoms; carbon dioxide is a <i>greenhouse gas</i>	7 
carbon footprint 	the impact you have when the things you do or the systems you participate in release <i>carbon dioxide</i> into the atmosphere	28-29
carbon sinks	the places where nature stores <i>carbon dioxide</i> —such as oceans, trees, oil, and coal	10
carbon sources	the places that <i>carbon dioxide</i> comes from—such as burning oil, coal, and natural gas; and animal and human exhalations	10 
compost	taking food and other wastes and letting it be broken down by microbes, which turn it into a rich fertilizer	38
emissions 	the gases that are emitted (put out) when we burn fuel, exhale, or feed livestock grains that give them gas	13, 29
fossil fuels	oil, coal, and natural gas—fuels made from billions of decomposed plants or animals that have been “cooked” in the earth for millions of years; when burned, they produce <i>carbon dioxide</i>	8 
green economy	buying, selling, and working in ways that are better for the environment	31-45
green energy 	ways of creating electricity and fuel that are better for the environment (see also <i>renewable energy</i>)	49
green jobs	jobs that are good for the environment and good for people	32
greenhouse gas	gases in our <i>atmosphere</i> that trap heat; eg. <i>carbon dioxide</i>	6
hybrid cars	cars that run on a mix of regular fuel and electricity	33, 42
petroleum-based	products (gas, motor oil, plastics, some fertilizers) that are made from petroleum, a <i>fossil fuel</i>	9, 26
renewable energy	power sources that will not run out—like solar and wind 	40-41
sustainable	a practice that renews itself rather than wears itself out, so it could potentially last a long time	27 
unsustainable	a practice or process that cannot last 	22, 27