

Figure 1: Components of global environmental change. Growth in the size of and resource use by the human population is expressed through growing industrial and agricultural (including forestry, grazing, etc) activity. These have caused a set of relatively well-documented global environmental changes (well-documented both in the sense that they are occurring, and in that they are human-caused), including increasing concentrations of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, the production and distribution of novel and persistent compounds such as chlorofluorocarbons (with their attendant effects on stratospheric ozone) and PCBs, globalscale alteration of the biogeochemical cycles of nitrogen, sulfur, and other elements, changes in land use and land cover, the removal of top predators from most terrestrial and many marine ecosystems, and biological invasions by exotic species. These components of change interact; they will also drive changes in global climate, and losses of biological diversity. After Vitousek (1994).

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Anthropogenic fixation of nitrogen in terrestrial ecosystems



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