

## **FAQ's**

### **What is wasteland?**

#### ***Definition:***

Wastelands include degraded forests, overgrazed pastures, drought-struck pastures, eroded valleys, hilly slopes, waterlogged marshy lands, barren land etc.

#### **Different authors have defined wastelands as:**

- (a) Land which is lying unproductive or which is not being utilized to its potential.
- (b) Land which is incapable of producing material or services of value (American Society of Soil Science).
- (c) Land which has been abandoned and for which there is no further use (e.g. abandoned quarries or mine spoils).
- (d) Land which produces less than 20% of economic potential.
- (e) Land where no greenery can be sustained.
- (f) Lands which are ecologically unstable, badly eroded and degraded,
- (g) Land which is neither under forest cover or agricultural cover, or assigned for specific purposes such as national parks or national hydel projects.

#### **The main causes of formation of wastelands are:**

- (a) Indiscriminate and over utilisation of forest produces
- (b) Over-grazing
- (c) Side effects of development projects
- (d) Mis-use and unscientific land management.

## **Discuss the process of wasteland reclamation.**

Reclamation of waste land means re-claiming it or to use it for productive purposes.

### ***1. Afforestation:***

It means growing the forest over culturable wasteland.

### ***2. Reforestation:***

Growing the forest again over the lands where they were existing and was destroyed due to fires, overgrazing, and excessive cutting. Reforestation checks water logging, floods, soil erosion and increase productivity of land.

### ***3. Providing surface cover:***

The easiest way to protect the land surface from soil erosion is of leave crop residue on the land after harvesting.

### ***4. Mulching:***

Here also protective cover of organic matter and plants like stalks, cotton stalks, tobacco stalks etc. are used which reduce evaporation, help in retaining soil moisture and reduce soil erosion.

### ***5. Changing Ground Topography on Downhill's:***

Running water erodes the hill soil and carries the soil along with it. This can be minimized by following alternation in ground topography:

#### **(a) Strip farming:**

Different kinds of crops are planted in alternate strip along the contour.

#### **(b) Terracing:**

In this arrangement, the earth is shaped in the form of levelled terraces to hold soil and water. The terrace edges are planted with such plant species which anchor the soil.

### **(c) Contour ploughing:**

In this arrangement, the ploughing of land is done across the hill and not in up and down style.

### **6. Leaching:**

In salt affected land, the salinity can be minimized by leaching them with more water.

### **7. Changing agricultural practices:**

Like mixed cropping, crop rotation and cropping of plants are adopted to improve soil fertility.

**8. Ecological Succession:** This refers to the natural development or redevelopment of an ecosystem which help in reclaiming the minerally deficient soil of wasteland.

### **Discuss the relationship between population and consumerism.**

Over" population is usually blamed as the major cause of environmental degradation, but the above statistics strongly suggests otherwise. As we will see, consumption patterns today are not to meet everyone's needs. The system that drives these consumption patterns also contribute to inequality of consumption patterns too.

This section of the [globalissues.org](http://globalissues.org) web site will attempt to provide an introductory look at various aspects of what we consume and how.

- We will see possible "hidden" costs of convenient items to society, the environment and individuals, as well as the relationship with various sociopolitical and economic effects on those who do consume, and

those who are unable to consume as much (due to poverty and so on).

- We will look at how some luxuries were turned into necessities in order to increase profits.
- This section goes beyond the “don’t buy this product” type of conclusion to the deeper issues and ramifications.
- We will see just a hint at how wasteful all this is on resources, society and capital. The roots of such disparities in consumption are inextricably linked to the roots of poverty. There is such enormous waste in the way we consume that an incredible amount of resources is wasted as well. Furthermore, the processes that lead to such disparities in unequal consumption are themselves wasteful and is structured deep into the system itself. Economic efficiency is for making profits, not necessarily for social good (which is treated as a side effect). The waste in the economic system is, as a result, deep. Eliminating the causes of this type of waste are related to the elimination of poverty and bringing rights to all. Eliminating the waste also allows for further equitable consumption for all, as well as a decent standard of consumption.
- So these issues go beyond just consumption, and this section only begins to highlight the enormous waste in our economy which is not measured as such.
- A further bold conclusion is also made that elimination of so much wasted capital would actually require a reduction of people’s workweek. This is because the elimination of such waste means entire industries are halved in size in some cases. So much labor redundancy cannot be tolerated, and hence the answer is therefore to share the remaining productive jobs, which means reducing the workweek!
- We will see therefore, that political causes of poverty are very much related to political issues and roots of consumerism. Hence solutions to things like hunger, environmental degradation, poverty and other

problems have many commonalities that would need to be addressed.

### **What are the ways to reduce wastage from consumerism?**

While creating a less materialistic world will require major changes to our economic systems and there will be fierce opposition from many vested interested, there are also things we can do as individuals. Here are 10 ways we can reduce our consumption.

*Earn less* – the more we earn the more we spend. As our income increases, so does our standard of living and consumption.

*Compare yourself to people worse off than you.* We can always find people who earn more, have a nicer house, or go on more frequent holidays. But we can also always find people who are struggling to feed their families, who have never been on a plane, who can't afford the necessities of life. We decide who we compare ourselves to.

*Shop less, and when you have to, try to shop second-hand.* It's simple: if we shop less, we are going to buy less.

*Talk about consumption with your kids.* We can help our kids to be aware of the way advertisers and marketers try to make us consume more and more. Instead of falling for the tricks of the trade (e.g., buying branded products) we can talk to our kids about how companies are trying to get us to buy things that we don't need. Our kids can be quite

*Find friends who help you reduce your consumption.* If you have friends who are not caught up in consumerism, it's much easier to reduce your consumption. Make sure you spend time with people who are into the simple things of life.

*Grow more and make more.* Try growing at least some of your own food, and making things, rather than having to buy everything.

*Donate more.* Donate your time and money to making the world a better place.

*Turn off the ads (or at least mute them).* Consciously resist the power of ads and think what they are saying to us. (We sometimes talk with our girls about what the ads are trying to sell us and whether or not we really need it. This is one way of combating the persuasive power of ads.)

*Buy quality that lasts.* When you do buy things, consider paying a bit more if it means that it will last longer and you won't need to replace it as quickly.

*Get involved.* Join with others in creating the changes we need to create a less materialist, consumption driven world.