

Geography ecology question assignment



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Whether we have influenced our habitat by tempting to control succession in areas; or by introducing new species of vegetation into our country; or even by our techniques of farming. The fragile and shallow soil depth left from the ice age, was easily impacted from our influence. The original Climax community of Britain was oak woodland, however 7000 years ago, humans began domesticating animals, and farming vegetation. TO do this areas Of forest had to be felled to make room for live- stock. Soon after the domestication of farmed animals, these pioneer farmers began to grow crops.

The untouched land of British Isles was almost perfect for arable farming. But the nutrient levels in the soil were low due to the last ice age washing away the majority of rich topsoil, also the invasive woodland had absorbed a large amount of nutrients. To fix the lack of nutrient problem the Neolithic farmers created the ' slash and burn' technique, where large areas of forest were first felled then burnt to create a nutrient rich charred topsoil. This technique is still in practice today in newly developing farming land like the Brazilian and Peruvian Amazon.

However it is only a temporary solution, as the nutrients from the charred remains of the trees are easily washed away, so if there is a storm or a flood, the land will be left without topsoil. Large areas of the British Isles were cleared in this way, and without this human activity Britain would likely still be covered much more fully in deciduous woodland. However now a woodland you are much more likely to see is a Coniferous woodland, a type of tree that is largely, with some exceptions being Yew and Cot's Pine, not native to the UK at all.

Human activities like the First World War meant that England's percentage cover of forest dropped to around 9% in 1919, the reason for this was due to the desperate need for timber for fuel and other essential uses. This activity also explains the reason why so many of our most common tree species are imported species. There was a high motivation to get the British Isles forested again, to do this quickly, fast growing imported species were planted in excesses, for example the 'Sitka Spruce', imported from Northern America, which is now our most common forest species.

This high level of De-forestation during the wars has also opened our eyes to how we manage other aspects of our vegetation in the British Isles, to make sure they last as long as possible. Seaside are the human controlled Climatic Climax community in a habitat. For example in Eastland bay the Climax community of vegetation is 'Ling heather' this has replaced oak or ash woodland due to human management. Every time an Ash sapling grows it's cut down.

The reason this happens in Eastland is because it is a unique biosphere, one of the few places in the British Isles that is home to such a large percentage of Ling heather, so to maintain this biosphere species, trees must not be allowed to grow freely, or else they would decrease the amount of space available for Ling heather to grow. Eastland Dunes is also a good example of how human activity affects our vegetation in a non-purposeful way. Eastland attracts around 200,000 thousand people to its dunes every summer, this has a great deal of impact on the natural processes that create succession.

Tourists trample the dunes, which invariably impacts the pioneer species of the dunes, like sea-couch grass and marry grass, this means that succession is deflected, meaning humus doesn't put nutrients into the soil, other, and larger species like ling heather find it hard to grow. In conclusion, human activities whether in management, necessity or by accident greatly affect the current vegetation of the British Isles. And also the current percentage of vegetation that should perhaps not be naturally so successful.