



Economic Activities
Geography – Junior Cert
Quick Notes

Economic Activities

Primary economic activities deal directly with nature. They are the activities that supply unprocessed raw materials from the earth's rocks, soils and waters. Everything provided by nature is a natural resource so they can be renewable, that is infinite e.g. fish, water or they can be non-renewable, that means they will be eventually used up e.g. oil and coal. The water cycle (AKA hydrological cycle) is the earth's method of recycling water. It describes the circulation of water from the oceans to the atmosphere, from the atmosphere to the landmasses and then back to the oceans. Clean water is important for a healthy lifestyle, irrigation, cooling purposes and for plants and animals to live. There are many threats to our water supply – fertiliser run-off, industrial waste and sewage. The fishing industry, if properly managed is a renewable resource, but it is being over-exploited because modern fishing vessels are very large, navigational aids have improved, purse seining, trawling and drift netting are the methods used to catch fish and fish handling has improved. There are three types of fish – Pelagic fish, Demersal fish and Crustaceans. Certain methods have been introduced to conserve the fish population – fishing limits have been introduced by the EU, a reduction in the size of the fishing fleet, quotas and embargoes have been introduced as well as minimum net mesh sizes. Oil is a non-renewable resource of energy. It is a clean fuel that produces a high degree of energy and is convenient to transport. An oil find off the coast off Ireland would be advantageous as it would bring employment, increased tax revenues and reduced imports of oil. However, it would also have some disadvantages causing pollution, an increase in the cost of living and oil refineries. Peat is another non-renewable resource. There are two types of peat bogs- raised bogs and blanket bogs. Peat can be used at ESB power stations, as briquettes or as fertiliser. Farming is a primary economic activity that may be viewed as a system of inputs (raw materials), processes (change) and outputs (finished product). The three main types of farming are arable AKA tillage (growing crops), pastoral (dairy farming, sheep farming, dry stock farming) and mixed (mixture of the other two types).