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‘Living in harmony with nature’ is not new to us. Sustainable living has always been an integral part of India’s tradition and culture. It has been integrated with our long-lasting traditions and practices, customs, art and crafts, festivals, food, beliefs, rituals and folklore. Ingrained within us is the philosophy that ‘entire natural world be in harmony’ which is reflected in the famous phrase in Sanskrit ‘Vasudhaiv kutumbakam’ that means “the entire earth is one family”. The phrase is mentioned in ‘Mahaupanishad’, that is probably a part of the ancient Indian text, Atharva Veda. In Class IX we have already learnt about some natural resources like soil, air and water and how various components are cycled over and over again in nature. Also, we learnt in the previous chapter about the pollution of these resources because of some of our activities. In this chapter, we shall look at some of our resources and how we are using them. Maybe we should also think about how we ought to be using our resources so as to sustain them and conserve our environment. We shall be looking at our natural resources like forests, wildlife, water, coal and petroleum and see what are the issues at stake in deciding how these resources are to be managed for sustainable development along with the input from our traditional practices. We often hear or read about environmental problems. These are often global-level problems and we feel helpless to bring any change. There are international laws and regulations, and then there are our own national laws and acts for environmental protection. There are also national and international organisations working towards protecting our environment.



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