

## ECOLOGICAL Energetic.

So far as the ecological energetic is concerned it will be better first to know the energy and then we will discuss the energetics what it is! As a matter of fact energy is the capacity to do work whether that work be on a grand scale as seeing mountains and moving air masses over continents or on a small scale such as transmitting a nerve sample from cell to cell. All living organisms must work and energy is the basic force responsible for running the mechanism of life. A virus a bacterium a tall tree or any other organism need energy for metabolic activities. In this world only the green plants have the monopoly to capture the solar radiation through the process of photosynthesis and convert it into chemical form. The potential energy is transferred from one organism to another as food. The source of solar energy is the sun where nuclear rearrangement like continuous transmutation of hydrogen atoms into helium is taking place there by releasing a fantastically enormous amount of energy which radiates in all the directions in the form of electromagnetic waves. Approximately 150 million of the sun's energy out put reaches the earth's atmosphere and a fraction of it is available to green plants. In ecological energetics we are mainly concerned with the 1. Quantity of energy reaching an ecosystem / unit area and / unit time.



⑩ Quantity of energy trapped by green plants converted into a chemical form.

⑪ Quantity & path of energy flow from green plants to the organism of different trophic level over a period of time in a local area.

As reported by Philipson 1966 approximately  $50 \times 10^8$  cal/m<sup>2</sup>/year of solar energy reaches the earth atmosphere which is 150 millionth fraction of total solar radiation. About 30% of the incoming solar radiation is reflected back by clouds and 9% by ozone layer water vapour & another atmospheric reaction gases. Thus living approximately 47% to reach the surface of earth, actually. There are many factors on which the quantity of solar radiation depends. Some of these are class of atmosphere and latitude. It is supposed to increase with the increase in latitude both in northern & southern hemisphere. Only a small fraction of the light energy that is 1-5% reaching the earth surface is trapped by green plants and converted into chemical form or potential energy by photosynthesis. The rest of the energy is either lost as heat or to evaporate water part of the potential energy of green plants is passed on from one organism to another as they are successively eaten. The second law of thermodynamics states that when ever there is transformation of energy there is increase in tropic and decrease in useful energy. As the energy is transformed from one organism to another in the form of food in a



ecosystem a large part of heat is degraded as heat & the remainder is stored in the living tissue. Ultimately the entire energy trapped by green plants at one time is lost from the ecosystem in several stages. This clearly depicts the unidirectional flow of energy in the ecosystem in contrast to the material like  $CO_2$ ,  $N_2$ ,  $P$  etc. are used again and over again in the ecosystem and this cycling occurs. It is well known that the energy never moves in free condition rather moves through organic material from one trophic level to another. The rate at which the solar energy is converted into chemical form by green plant per unit area per unit time is referred to as primary productivity. A fraction of this organic production is lost by way of respiration of primary producers and the net gain in weight is only the difference between gross production and the quantity of energy is lost due to respiration. Heterotrophic organisms derived their food from the wt. primary production. A very small fraction of the organic matter ingested by herbivores is in fact used in net increase in their wt and the rest is either lost as heat or remain unassimilated and excreted out as wical matter. The production of organic matter of heterotrophic organisms is called secondary production and ecosystem is supposed to be balanced so long as the output energy is equal to the input energy.



About 20% of potential energy resulting from primary production by green plant is lost as heat of respiration and the rest furnishes the energy required by other trophic level in an ecosystem. Some energy in the form of food is consumed by herbivorous or autotrophic who may be in turn eaten by carnivours & soon to top carnivours. However much of the ingested food energy is not assimilated herbivours may assimilate only 10% of the ingested food where as the assimilation coefficient of carnivours is typically higher.

Lindeman 1942 was first to give an energy flow diagram. Through different trophic level in sedasbylak of minnesota of the total  $118872 \text{ cal/cm}^2/\text{year}$  in coming solar radiation. The green plants would capture only  $111 \text{ cal/cm}^2/\text{year}$ . That is less than 1% in corresponding area and time energy passed on to herbivours was only the calories and to carnivours only 3 cal. Odum 1957 also gave figure and diagram from energy flow in silver spring florida U.S.A and reported that out of ~~total~~ total  $111 \times 10^{11} \text{ k-cal/m}^2/\text{year}$  is used up by green plants in photosynthesis and the rest 38919 k-cal of energy is lost as heat. Again out of this 11977 k-cal of energy is lost way of respiration and only 8833 k-energy remain in net production. At each trophic level further the energy is



have three roots - One to next trophic level of food - ~~the~~ Two through death to decomposition and three as heat of respiration in metabolism.

In fact ~~every~~ every citizen should be educated at least in known technical term about the constant cycling of material and flow of energy in any type of ecosystem of which he is a part or of those he is connected with for his usual requirement due to which his action will remain properly regulated.