

MULTIPLE USES FOR RESOURCES

Not All Cultures View Resources the Same Way

There is no specific definition for how resources are used. Over time people have found different uses for resources. The same resource can be used for something entirely different in various cultures. Think about animal poop (dung, feces, crud, etc.). Would you call that a resource? Read below to hear about just some of the ways people have turned it into a resource.

Poo as a Resource

Fertilizer



You might be familiar with this use. There are a lot of valuable nutrients that some animals don't use up. The nutrients get left in the poop and when the manure is spread on the ground, the nutrients go back into the soil and help plants grow.

Fuel

Dried animal dung "cakes" have been used as a fuel since pre-historic times. It burns pretty well. If you have animals, it is also very cheap. In fact, approximately 2 billion people (almost one-third of the world's population) use animal dung as a fuel.

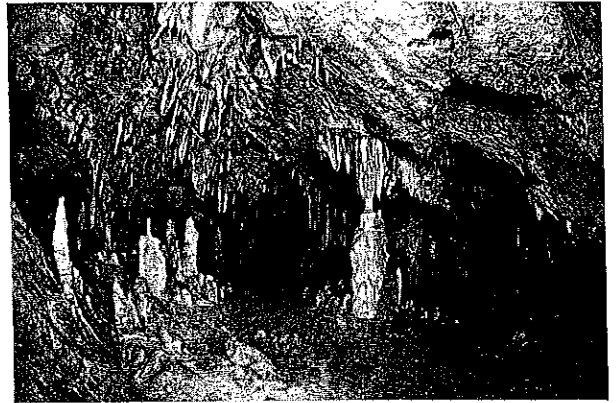


Paper

Elephants eat about 500 pounds of food a day. They produce over 100 pounds of dung a day. This dung is fibrous enough to be washed, dried, and turned into paper. One elephant produces enough waste to make about 115 pages of paper per day.

Gunpowder

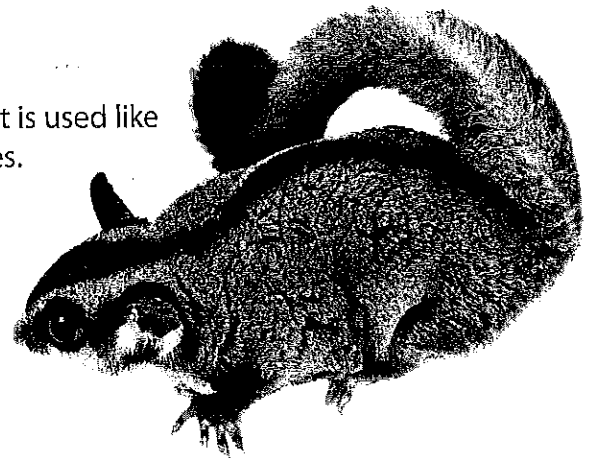
Dried bat guano contains saltpeter (potassium nitrate), an important ingredient in gunpowder. Soldiers during the Civil War got their bat guano from caves to create more ammunition.

**Getting Rid of Pollution**

Silver mines in Bolivia were leaking acid into the water. A professor used a filter that included llama droppings. The bacteria in the llama poop absorbed acid and turned acidic water into alkaline water.

Abdominal Pain

Flying squirrel dung is used in some Chinese medicine. It is used like tea to treat cramps, nutrition deficiencies, and snakebites. (It's banned in the United States).

**Jewelry**

In Alaska, tourists sometimes go out of their way to buy "moose nuggets." Really, it is moose poop dried, varnished, and hung as a decoration.