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| **Glossary** |  |
| **Chapter 24** |  |
| **civil suit** | Court case brought to settle disputes or damages between one party and another. |
| **defendant** | The party in a court case being charged with creating a harm. See plaintiff and civil suit. |
| **democracy** | Government by the people through their elected officials and appointed representatives. In a constitutional democracy, a constitution provides the basis of government authority and puts restraints on government power through free elections and freely expressed public opinion. |
| **environmental law** | A body of laws and treaties that broadly define what is acceptable environmental behavior for individuals, groups, businesses, and nations. |
| **environmental policy** | Laws, rules, and regulations related to an environmental problem that are developed, implemented, and enforced by a particular government body or agency. |
| **lobbying** | Process in which individuals or groups use public pressure, personal contacts, and political action to persuade legislators to vote or act in their favor. |
| **plaintiff** | Party in a court case bringing charges or seeking to collect damages for injuries to health or for economic loss; may also seek an injunction, by which the party being charged would be required to stop whatever action is causing harm. See defendant and civil suit. |
| **policies** | Programs, and the laws and regulations through which they are enacted, that a government enforces and funds. |
| **politics** | Process through which individuals and groups try to influence or control government policies and actions that affect the local, state, national, and international communities. |
| **statutory laws** | Laws developed and passed by legislative bodies such as federal and state governments. Compare common law. |
| **tragedy of the commons** | Depletion or degradation of a potentially renewable resource to which people have free and unmanaged access. An example is the depletion of commercially desirable fish species in the open ocean beyond areas controlled by coastal countries. See common-property resource, open-access renewable resource. |