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Objectives: Locate the flow of energy through living systems. Identify the three types of ecological pyramids. Key questions: How does the flow of energy through ecosystems? What do the three types of ecological pyramids depict? Vocabulary: food chain, phytoplankton, plankton, food web, zooplankton, trophic, pyramid, biomass, species, and food web. Energy flows through an ecosystem in one direction from primary producers to various consumers. A food chain is a series of steps in which organisms transfer energy by eating and being eaten. Producers, such as floating algae called phytoplankton, are at the base of every food chain. A food web is a network of all food chains in an ecosystem. Food tissues are very complex. Small disturbances in a population can affect all populations in a food web. Changes in the populations of zooplankton, small marine animals that feed on algae, can affect all animals in marine food web. Food levels and ecological pyramids: Every step in a food chain or food web is called the food level. Producers are the first food level. Consumers are higher food levels. Every consumer depends on the food level below that for energy. An ecological pyramid is a diagram showing the relative amounts of energy or matter contained at each food level in a food chain or food web. Eco-pyramid types are energy pyramids, biomass pyramids, and number pyramids: Energy pyramids show relative amounts of energy available at different food levels. Biomass pyramids show the total amount of living tissue at each food level. A pyramid of numbers shows the relative number of organisms at different food levels. Miller, K.R., & Levine, J.S. (2012). Biology. New Jersey: Pearson Education Inc. 3.3 Energy Flow in Ecosystem Assessment 3.3 Energy Flow at Ecosystems ... ems Questions discussion Review: Pyramid of Energy Pyramids of Energy show the relative amount of energy available at each food level that is about 1/10 (10%) of the previous level. What does a pyramid of energy show? Why are there usually only four food levels per food chain? i.e. from grass to rabbit to snake to eagle? The amount of energy available from one food level to the next is significantly reduced. Organisms use energy and heat is issued as a by-product of cellular respiration and other activities of the organism. Only about 10% is available from one level to another. Energy flow to ecosystems

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