

exploration operations and petroleum products
oil refineries.

Oil spills cause the death of plankton
fish and marine birds (Fig. 16.12)

They are extremely harmful to coral
reefs and drastically damage the
marine biodiversity.



Fig. 16.12 Oil spill damage
the biodiversity, birds smeared
with oil lose capability to fly

Groundwater pollution

- At many places the groundwater gets contaminated with industrial wastes, municipal wastes, sewerage channels and agricultural runoff. As a result it may get excess of nitrates, fluorides and other chemicals which are harmful to human health.
- Groundwater may also get contaminated with arsenic, mainly from naturally occurring arsenic in bedrocks. Actually overdrawn of groundwater leads to leaching of arsenic from the soil and rock below, causing contamination of groundwater.

Refer Table 16.3 for effects of groundwater pollution on human health.

Control of water pollution

A number of methods can be adopted to control water pollution.

1. **Sewage disposal:** Sewage facilities to be made available in the houses. Sewage should be treated before it is discharged into the river or ocean. It can be done by making use of modern techniques.
2. **Recycling of pollutants:** Various pollutant wastes can be recycled instead of dumping into water. For example, waste food material, paper, decaying vegetables and plastic, etc. should be collected in separate bins for recycling and not thrown into open drains.

Treatment of industrial effluents: The effluents from distilleries, solid factory wastes containing organic matter should be sent to biogas plants for generation of energy. The sewage and other factory waste should be treated before discharging into waterways.

Oil slicks in oceans should be skimmed off from the surface of water with suction devices. Saw dust may be spread over oil slick to absorb oil.