

Bamboo shortage a risk to pandas

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Shelia Lau via www.fws.gov

The giant panda is already on the endangered list. The number of pandas in the world has been falling for decades. There are several reasons for this. One is that many of the panda's forests have gone. They have been cut down to make towns and cities. Another is the fact that the animal breeds very slowly and has few cubs (baby pandas). The panda is now facing another big threat to its survival – a shortage of food. A new report shows that bamboo, the panda's main food, is disappearing because of climate change. Bamboo is pretty much the only food the panda eats. Ninety-nine per cent of its diet is bamboo. An adult panda needs around 38 kilograms of bamboo every day.

The study predicts that nearly all the bamboo in China's Qinling Mountains could disappear by the end of this century because of global warming. That means pandas would have nothing to eat. The study said: "Results suggest that almost the entire panda habitat in the [Qinling] region may disappear by the end of the 21st century." The researchers said the only chance of survival the panda has is if they move higher up the mountains. Scientist Jianguo Liu warned that we must start helping pandas now, saying: "It is tough, but I think there's still hope, if we take action now." Panda lovers are shocked at this latest bad news. Panda expert Chang Leng said it was time for the world to wake up and help the panda.

Sources: AFP / LiveScience

Writing

We must wake up and help the giant panda. Unfortunately, the world is too lazy, stupid and greedy. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

giant panda / endangered list / decades / forests / big threat / survival / bamboo / predicts / global warming / habitat / 21st century / mountains / tough / bad news / help

True / False

- The giant panda will soon be put on the endangered list. T / F
- The article gives seven reasons for the fall in panda numbers. T / F
- Bamboo is disappearing because of a bug that is eating it. T / F
- Around 99% of a panda's diet is bamboo. T / F
- A report said the bamboo in a Chinese mountain range may disappear. T / F
- The report says the bamboo could disappear in the next two decades. T / F
- Pandas may survive if there is bamboo higher up the mountains. T / F
- A panda expert said the world should wake up and help the panda. T / F

Synonym Match

- | | |
|---------------|----------------|
| 1. endangered | a. danger |
| 2. several | b. difficult |
| 3. gone | c. a number of |
| 4. threat | d. food |
| 5. diet | e. threatened |
| 6. predicts | f. likelihood |
| 7. entire | g. specialist |
| 8. chance | h. whole |
| 9. tough | i. disappeared |
| 10. expert | j. forecasts |

Discussion – Student A

- What do you think of pandas?
- How can we protect pandas and their food and habitat?
- Do you think we will stop cutting down the forests where pandas live?
- If you were a panda, what would you say to humans?
- Have you ever seen a panda? Tell me about it.
- What would it be like to eat just one thing all day, every day?
- How can we slow down climate change?
- What do you know about pandas?

Phrase Match

- | | |
|--|------------------------------|
| 1. The giant panda is already on | a. because of global warming |
| 2. The number of pandas in the world has | b. 38 kg of bamboo |
| 3. The panda is now facing another big | c. lovers |
| 4. Bamboo is pretty much the only | d. the world to wake up |
| 5. An adult panda needs around | e. been falling for decades. |
| 6. disappear by the end of this century | f. end of the 21st century |
| 7. disappear by the | g. the panda has |
| 8. the only chance of survival | h. food the panda eats |
| 9. Panda | i. the endangered list |
| 10. Chang Leng said it was time for | j. threat to its survival |

Discussion – Student B

- Do you think we can save the bamboo in the Qinling Mountains?
- How sad would you be if all the pandas disappeared?
- Why isn't this story big news on the television, Internet, radio, etc.?
- We must start taking action now, but what can we do to help pandas?
- Are you a panda lover? Why (not)?
- Will the world wake up? Why (not)?
- What questions would you like to ask a panda?
- What do you think his/her answer might be?

Spelling

- already on the endangered list
- falling for decades
- the panda's lovers have gone
- facing another big threat to its survival
- disappearing because of climate change
- An adult panda
- ... because of global warming
- the entire panda habitat
- disappear by the end of the 21st century
- move higher up the endangered list
- there's still hope, if we take action now
- Panda lovers are shocked at this bad news

Answers – Synonym Match

1. e	2. c	3. i	4. a	5. d
6. j	7. h	8. f	9. b	10. g

Role Play

A giant panda - Your ancestors have lived in the mountains for tens of thousands of years. It is your home. You hate humans. Think of three reasons why. You want them to knock down their cities. Tell them to stop making pollution that warms the Earth. If the pandas die, humans will also die.

A zoo keeper - You want to take more pandas from the mountains and put them in zoos. Pandas will survive forever in zoos. People also want to see cute baby pandas. Looking at baby pandas is a great education for children. You will get a lot of money for every panda that is in your zoo.

A scientist - You have just finished research that is bad news for pandas. All the bamboo will disappear in 20 years. People want more cities in the mountains. Global warming means more insects will move north and eat all the bamboo. The only chance pandas have is if humans all live next to the sea. You hate zoos.

A bamboo farmer - You can grow enough bamboo for pandas to eat 50 kg a day. You cannot take the bamboo to the mountains, but you can take it to the zoos in the city. You also want to sell pandas as pets. You make lots of money and pandas have a nice life in people's gardens eating bamboo all day.

Speaking – Bad News

What global warming news is worst? Rank these and share your rankings with your partner. Put the best at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- no bamboo
- air-conditioning ban
- Arctic ice melting
- droughts & desertification
- more hurricanes
- increase in health problems
- malaria to spread
- loss of biodiversity

Answers – True False

a	F	b	F	c	F	d	T	e	T	f	F	g	T	h	T
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.