

Sixty per cent of wildlife gone since 1970

1st November, 2018



Earth is losing wildlife at a faster rate than at any time in history. This is according to the new "Living Planet Report" from the World Wildlife Fund. The report says the global wildlife population shrank by 60 per cent between 1970 and

2014. The WWF warned that: "Earth is losing biodiversity at a rate seen only during mass extinctions." Researchers state that most of the decline in our animal population is because of "exploding human consumption". There are more and more humans on this planet. We are eating more, overfishing, cutting down trees for beef production, consuming more, and using more energy and natural resources. This has resulted in a massive loss of habitat for animals.

The report estimates that only a quarter of the world's land has been untouched by humans. This means human activity has greatly affected animals on three-quarters of Earth's surface. Researchers tracked more than 4,000 species of mammals, birds, reptiles, fish and amphibians. They say the loss of animal life is worst in South and Central America. These regions saw an 89 per cent loss in the population of vertebrates in the past four decades. The WWF wrote: "The astonishing decline in wildlife population...is a [depressing] reminder, and perhaps the ultimate indicator, of the pressure we [put] on the planet." It warned: "We can be the generation that had its chance and failed to act; that let Earth slip away."

Sources: usatoday.com / bbc.com / vox.com

Writing

It is too late to save our planet's wildlife. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

wildlife / history / population / biodiversity / extinction / consumption / planet / loss / quarter / humans / animals / mammals / astonishing / ultimate / pressure / chance

True / False

- Earth has never lost so many species so fast as the past 40 years. T / F
- The WWF said all species will become extinct in 60 years. T / F
- Researchers said human consumption was behind the loss of wildlife. T / F
- Researchers said the production of beef led to wildlife loss. T / F
- Only a tenth of the world has been untouched by humans. T / F
- Researchers said they found 4,000 dead mammals. T / F
- In South America, 89% of animals have been lost. T / F
- The WWF said this generation had a chance to act and save Earth. T / F

Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- | | |
|-----------------------|------------------------|
| 1. rate | a. natural environment |
| 2. shrank | b. monitored |
| 3. during | c. upsetting |
| 4. massive | d. throughout |
| 5. habitat | e. amazing |
| 6. estimates | f. huge |
| 7. tracked | g. roughly calculates |
| 8. astonishing | h. speed |
| 9. depressing | i. take action |
| 10. act | j. got smaller |

Discussion – Student A

- How important is our wildlife?
- Why are governments letting this wildlife loss happen?
- What can you do to help wildlife?
- What wildlife is disappearing in your country?
- What damage does the loss of a species do?
- What do humans need to do to help animals?
- Should we all become vegetarians to help save wildlife?
- What will wildlife be like in another 40 years?

Phrase Match

- | | |
|--|-----------------------|
| 1. at a faster rate than at any | a. of Earth's surface |
| 2. the global wildlife population shrank | b. consumption |
| 3. exploding human | c. loss of habitat |
| 4. using more energy and | d. and failed to act |
| 5. This has resulted in a massive | e. by humans |
| 6. untouched | f. natural resources |
| 7. on three-quarters | g. decades |
| 8. birds, reptiles, fish and | h. time in history |
| 9. in the past four | i. amphibians |
| 10. the generation that had its chance | j. by 60 per cent |

Discussion – Student B

- What do you think about what you read?
- Should governments work to protect the land untouched by humans?
- What animal would you like to save?
- What would happen if all the bees disappeared?
- Should governments breed animals and release them in the wild?
- What other problems is overpopulation causing?
- Do you think we will "let the Earth slip away"?
- What questions would you like to ask the researchers?

Spelling

- aocncrigd to the new "Living Planet Report"
- the aloblg wildlife population shrank
- mass cstintxioen
- most of the icednl
- exploding human ocpsminntou
- natural uersroesc
- The report ieemastts that only a quarter...
- human activity has greatly feedaftc animals
- three-quarters of Earth's sefurac
- These eisorng saw an 89 per cent loss
- a gdiseesnpr reminder
- We can be the aonitenreg

Answers – Synonym Match

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

Role Play

Role A – Overfishing

You think overfishing causes most damage to the world. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which is the least harmful of these (and why): eating meat, driving cars or war.

Role B – Eating Meat

You think eating meat causes most damage to the world. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which is the least harmful of these (and why): overfishing, driving cars or war.

Role C – Driving Cars

You think driving cars causes most damage to the world. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which is the least harmful of these (and why): eating meat, overfishing or war.

Role D – War

You think war causes most damage to the world. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which is the least harmful of these (and why): eating meat, driving cars or overfishing.

Speaking – Human activity

Rank these with your partner. Put the types of human activity that are worst for the Earth at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- | | |
|-----------------|-------------------|
| • deforestation | • overfishing |
| • nuclear power | • eating meat |
| • GM food | • overconsumption |
| • war | • driving cars |

Answers – True False

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