

SAVE THE EARTH



WORLD ANIMAL FOUNDATION®

Our planet has a natural environment, known as ‘**ecosystem**’, which includes all humans, animals, plants, land and water. Human activities have caused much depletion and destruction of this ecosystem.

Environmentalism advocates the preservation, restoration and/or improvement of this natural environment by controlling pollution and protecting plant and animal diversity.

Environmentalists attempt to balance relations between humans and the various natural systems on which they depend to achieve sustainability.

Earth advocates work to protect natural resources and ecosystems through education, activism and the political process. They seek to give the natural world a stronger voice in human affairs. The environmental issues of today know no borders. We can't just put up fences around natural places to keep hu-



mans out. We must protect the entire planet for the survival of all species — plants, animals and people. Governments, businesses, communities and individuals must make better decisions to live in bal-

ance with nature. Through science, responsible planning, legislation and daily choices, we can ensure the survival of the ecosystem.

There are many ways you can help to save wild places and wild animals. Volunteer. Recycle. Install solar panels on your roof. Organize an event where you live. Change a habit. Help launch a community garden. Communicate your priorities to your elected representatives. The possibilities are endless! Do something nice for the earth, have fun, meet new people, and make a difference.

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

LAND

The world population is expected to reach 9 billion by 2050. As our population increases, there is



even more pressure on forests, grasslands, deserts and other natural areas to provide food, housing and energy for humans. These demands increase the stress of already fragmented natural areas suffering from pollution, deforestation, disrupted migratory routes and changing environmental conditions.

Already, large numbers of people have been declared food-insecure; resulting in a land rush with nations hurrying to secure properties for agriculture and fuel crops. Forests are being cleared at alarming rates, an estimated 18 million acres each year. At the same time, poor agriculture practices lead to millions of acres of land lost annually through soil erosion and land degradation.

Trillions of tons of garbage is produced every year, while more and more goods are produced...resulting in the creation of more waste. Most garbage is buried underground in landfill sites, causing environmental and health concerns.

If we don't make changes now, future generations will not experience the same plentiful, diverse planet that we know today.



AIR

Air pollution is a mixture of solid particles and gases in the air. Car emissions, chemicals from factories, dust, pollen and mold spores may be suspended as particles. Ozone, a gas, is a major part of air pollution in cities. When ozone forms air pollution, it's also called smog.

Air pollution is caused by polluters who refuse to clean up toxic air emissions, despite proven pollution control technologies. Most air toxics originate from human-made sources, including automobiles, factories, refineries and power plants. Indoor sources include building materials and cleaning solvents.

As the environment suffers, humans suffer from asthma, lung disease, heart ailments, cancer and shortened lives. Acid rain, often caused by pollutants in the atmosphere from automobile or industrial processes, falls from the sky in the form of rain, snow, fog or dry material. Devastating effects to forests, aquatic systems, buildings and human health can result. Air toxics then contaminate our food products, drinking water and soil.

WATER

Pollution, habitat fragmentation and destruction, and overfishing are having devastating effects on our oceans, rivers and lakes. Acidification, caused by increased carbon emissions, degrade coral reefs and corrode the shells of sea creatures. Freshwater ecosystems provide us with drinking water, food, energy and recreation. These ecosystems are also critical to plants and animals. Increased demands for food, energy and material goods have placed unprecedented pressure on these fragile environments. Within the next 20 years, half of the world's population may face water shortages.

Oceans are a critical part of the earth's support system. Acid rain pollutes our seas. Oceans are degraded by spills and chemical runoffs. The largest living structures on earth, coral reefs, are among the greatest storehouses of biodiversity on the planet. Up to 70 percent of coral reefs are expected to be lost by 2050 due to human activities.

Water is under threat from fertilizers and chemical runoff, dumped chemical and industrial wastes, untreated sewage and medicinal residues.



Uncollected litter can flow into streams, storm water drainage systems, local bays and estuaries. About 18% of litter, usually traveling through storm water systems, ends up in local streams, rivers, and waterways. About 80% of marine debris comes from land-based sources.

Animals may get trapped or poisoned with litter in their habitats. Cigarette butts and filters are a threat to wildlife and have been found in the stomachs of fish, birds and whales who have mis-

taken them for food.

Debris falling from vehicles is an increasing cause of automobile accidents.

Cleaning up litter in the U.S. costs hundreds of dollars per ton, about ten times more than the cost of trash disposal, for a cost totaling about \$11 billion per year. It often takes a long time before litter from the environment disappears.



LITTER

Litter consists of waste products such as containers, papers, and wrappers which have been disposed of without consent. In addition to intentional littering, almost half of litter on U.S. roadways is now a result of accidental or unintentional litter, debris that falls off of improperly secured trash and recycling collection vehicles and pickup trucks. Heavy traffic and proximity to waste disposal sites are known to correlate with higher litter rates.

Litter can harm the environment in a number of different ways. It is a breeding ground for disease-causing insects and rodents. Its "ugliness" damages the appearance of scenic environments. Open containers such as paper cups or beverage cans can hold rainwater, providing breeding locations for mosquitoes which have been known to spread diseases such as West Nile Virus and Malaria.



GENETIC POLLUTION

Genetic modification of plants and animals is a controversial subject, with many experts believing the ill impacts far outweigh the benefits to mankind. Manipulating plant DNA to produce super crops is a dangerous global experiment. When released into the environment, they cannot be recalled.

Genetically modified organisms (GMOs) can spread through nature and interbreed with natural organisms. They can contaminate natural environments in an unforeseeable and uncontrollable way. This is referred to as 'genetic pollution', a major threat to the environment.

Due to commercial interests, the public has been denied the facts about GMO ingredients in the food chain. The absence of labeling laws in many countries denies individuals the power to avoid them.

Biological diversity must be protected and respected. It is fundamental to our planet's survival.

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THE THREE R's

REDUCE

Reducing waste does not mean you have to reduce what you buy, it means shopping with the environment in mind. Consider the environmental impact of each product before you buy it. Make a list of what you need before you go shopping; this will reduce impulse buying. Buy in bulk. It is cheaper and eliminates small containers and excess packaging, which accounts for 50 percent of our domestic trash. You have bought your laundry soap like this for years. Think about what else you can buy in bulk!

Avoid buying throwaways that can't be recycled. For instance carry a camera but if you need to use a disposable camera, make sure that it can be recycled when you get the film developed. Some companies that make one-time use cameras, reuse and recycle up to 90 percent of the parts of their cameras when consumers send them in for developing. Installing low-flow shower heads and faucets can save a family of four 280 gallons of water per month. Seldom used items, such as appliances and party supplies, often collect dust, rust and take up valuable storage space. Consider renting or borrowing them the next time they're needed. Remember, every time you make a purchase, you cast your vote to protect the environment.

REUSE

Learning to reuse is easy, and after a little practice, it will become second nature. Reuse shopping bags or buy canvas bags and use them when you shop. Buy durable high quality goods for a longer life outside the landfill. Although durable goods may cost a little more at first, they will save you money and help save the environment in the long run.

Before throwing anything away, think about how each item can be reused. Be sure to use both sides of a piece of paper before recycling it. Donate clothing, furniture and appliances to charity. Hospitals and nursing homes often accept old magazines and schools reuse many items in their art and theater classes. Almost all glass, plastic, and metal containers can be reused for storage in the kitchen or the garage. Think before you toss.

If you want to reduce and reuse at the same time, take a two liter pop bottle and fill it with water. Add a few stones to weigh it down, place it in the tank of your toilet, and you will have reused a pop bottle and reduced two liters of water every time you flush.



RECYCLE

Reducing is the best way to protect the environment. However, if you can't reduce something, reuse it, and if you can't reuse it, recycle it. Recycling means collecting, processing, marketing, and ultimately using materials that were once discarded. For example, this morning's newspaper can be recycled into insulation, packing material, wrapping paper and more newspaper. Plastic pop and milk jugs are recycled into lumber that is used for making durable playground equipment and park benches.



Many different materials can be recycled. Among these are aluminum cans, glass bottles and jars, plastics, tin cans, steel cans, brass, copper, car batteries, computer paper, office paper, corrugated cardboard, motor oil, scrap iron and steel, and tires.



Separate aluminum, steel and tin cans from other metals. If you aren't sure whether a can is aluminum or steel, check with a magnet. A magnet will stick to steel and tin but will not stick to aluminum. Wipe or lightly rinse all cans and make sure they are dry before recycling them. Prepare newspapers by folding them into brown paper bags or bundle with string into one foot stacks. Prepare glass by rinsing and removing metal or plastic rims and lids. Sort by color: brown, green and clear. Prepare plastics by rinsing and separating by numbers. If plastic is recyclable, it will have a number on the bottom of the container. Break down corrugated cardboard boxes. Separate office paper into white, colored and glossy stacks. Remove sticky tabs and paper clips. Motor oil should be collected in no larger than five gallon containers and be free of contaminants. Tires are accepted from individuals no more than five per year.