



TOP TEN GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS



1 Here is a list of top ten global environmental problems. Which of them are on your list? Which of them have you not thought about?

- | | |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. Human greed | 6. Unsustainable agriculture |
| 2. Poverty in the developing world | 7. Desertification |
| 3. Growing human population | 8. Industrial pollution |
| 4. Global warming | 9. Nuclear waste |
| 5. Lack of fresh water | 10. Biodiversity loss |

2 Do you know the meaning of the following words? Which of them can be related to the problems stated above?

- | | | |
|------------------|-----------------|----------------------------|
| Bad sanitation | Overfishing | Animal and plant species |
| Melting glaciers | Contamination | Exploitation |
| Floods | Disposal site | Deforestation |
| Droughts | Irrigation | Greenhouse gas |
| Fertilisers | Overcultivation | Genetically modified crops |
| Pesticides | Carbon dioxide | Overgrazing |



1 Here is a list of top ten global environmental problems. Which of them are on your list? Which of them have you not thought about?

- | | |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. Human greed | 6. Unsustainable agriculture |
| 2. Poverty in the developing world | 7. Desertification |
| 3. Growing human population | 8. Industrial pollution |
| 4. Global warming | 9. Nuclear waste |
| 5. Lack of fresh water | 10. Biodiversity loss |

2 Do you know the meaning of the following words? Which of them can be related to the problems stated above?

- | | | |
|------------------|-----------------|----------------------------|
| Bad sanitation | Overfishing | Animal and plant species |
| Melting glaciers | Contamination | Exploitation |
| Floods | Disposal site | Deforestation |
| Droughts | Irrigation | Greenhouse gas |
| Fertilisers | Overcultivation | Genetically modified crops |
| Pesticides | Carbon dioxide | Overgrazing |



3 Read the following texts. Complete them with the words in brackets.
Does the text mention any more problems which are on your list of global environmental problems?

1. Human greed

It is us, people, who are the _____ of most environmental problems below. Human _____ and disrespect for the rest of the world combined with uncontrolled resource and energy _____ and armed conflicts and wars are the most serious _____ to nature locally, regionally and globally.

(threats, cause, greed, consumption)

2. Poverty in the developing world

More than one billion people, i.e. one-sixth of the world's _____, live in extreme poverty in slums or in rural areas of _____ countries. Bad sanitation and lack of _____ water, food and wood for cooking lead to _____ environmental destruction.

(developing, serious, drinking, population)

3. Growing human population

Today over 6 billion people live on the Earth and the _____ is huge pressure on the world's _____. Over the next 25 years, the global population will _____ by another 2 billion.

(resources, grow, result)

4. Global warming

Global warming is becoming a critical _____ with wild weather occurring all over the world. The _____ are drastic: melting glaciers, frequent hurricanes, floods and _____ are only some of them.

(issue, consequences, droughts)

5. Lack of fresh water

Lack of fresh water could become one of the biggest _____ in the 21st century. There is already not _____ clean fresh water in the Middle East and in many _____ of Africa.

(parts, issues, enough)

6. Unsustainable agriculture

We all need to eat, but the way we _____ our food today raises a number of questions about the environment. Water is _____ by fertilisers and pesticides; agriculture _____ about 25 % of carbon dioxide, the main greenhouse gas. Genetically modified crops are also highly _____.

(polluted, produce, controversial, produces)

7. Desertification

Currently many deserts are _____ much faster than they have in the past. The main reasons for desertification are overgrazing, over-cultivation, _____ irrigation methods, deforestation and _____ climate change.

(incorrect, expanding, global)

8. Industrial pollution

Air, water and _____ contamination are the major forms of pollution _____ by industry and _____.

(caused, transportation, soil)

9. Nuclear waste

The disposal of nuclear waste is one of the most problematic issues related to nuclear power. Governments _____ are spending large amounts of money on finding a long-term _____, but so far no _____ disposal site has been created.

(worldwide, safe, solution)

10. Biodiversity loss

The _____ of _____ for wood, _____ and agricultural land has led to massive deforestation. Deforestation is a major contributor to the fast loss of plant and animal species.

Similarly life in oceans which _____ the greatest variety of life on earth is _____ by overfishing, petrochemicals, coastal development, the effects of climate change and many other factors.

(supports, forests, fuel, exploitation, threatened)

4 Match two halves of each sentence.

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. A great number of environmental problems | A. live in rural areas. |
| 2. More than 1 billion people in the world | B. threatened by overfishing. |
| 3. Soon there will be lack of | C. pressure on resources. |
| 4. Life in oceans is | D. live in extreme poverty. |
| 5. Lack of fresh water is | E. caused by deforestation. |
| 6. The fast loss of species is | F. waste must be solved. |
| 7. The major contributor to air | G. are caused by people. |
| 8. The growing human population puts | H. clean fresh water in some regions of the world. |
| 9. A lot of poor people | I. pollution is industry. |
| 10. The problem with nuclear | J. one of the biggest issues of the 21st century. |

Sources:

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/sn>, <http://www.canadianwild.ca>

TOP TEN GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS

<p>Statement A</p> <p>Deforestation is the major contributor to the loss of endangered species across the planet. For example, the rate of destruction of the Amazonian rainforest increased by 40 % between 2001 and 2002. More than 25,000 sq km were cleared in a year, mainly for farming. That represents an area of land larger than Russia.</p> <p>True: Go to H False: Go to I</p>	<p>Statement I</p> <p>Meat production continues to increase. As a country, China now consumes more meat than the USA (although its consumption per person is much lower). One of the arguments for eating less or no meat is the inefficient use of resources. It takes 1,000 litres of water to produce 1kg of beef but only 500 litres for 1kg of potatoes.</p> <p>True: Go to F False: Go to E</p>
<p>Statement H</p> <p>"There is enough for everyone's need but not enough for everyone's greed." George W. Bush.</p> <p>True: Go to E False: Go to K</p>	<p>Statement G</p> <p>Irrigation allows wastage on a huge scale, with around 10 % of the water getting away or evaporating before it can do any good.</p> <p>True: Go to L False: Go to H</p>
<p>Statement L</p> <p>In the last 50 years we have lost 300,000 species. Species are disappearing between 100 and 1,000 times as fast as they were before humans arrived.</p> <p>True: Go to B False: Go to K</p>	<p>Statement D</p> <p>Fossil fuels still provide almost 80% of the world's total energy needs and more than six billion tonnes of carbon emissions are produced annually from burning fossil fuel.</p> <p>True: Go to F False: Go to B</p>
<p>Statement F</p> <p>By the year 2032, more than 70 % of the Earth's land surface is likely to be destroyed, fragmented or disturbed by cities, roads, mines and other infrastructure of human civilisation. The present level is about 50 %.</p> <p>True: Go to J False: Go to C</p>	<p>Statement K</p> <p>The Green revolution of the 1860s combined better varieties of wheat and rice with pesticides and chemical fertilisers. This brought great benefits to production in countries such as India but at extreme environmental costs.</p> <p>True: Go to G False: Go to A</p>
<p>Statement C</p> <p>The amount of pesticide sprayed on crops around the world has increased 26 times in the last 50 years.</p> <p>True: Go to D False: Go to I</p>	<p>Statement E</p> <p>By 2025, the number of people who do not have enough water is expected to reach 2.5 billion.</p> <p>True: Go to C False: Go to A</p>
<p>Statement J</p> <p>Some 50 billion people a year already have to deal with flooding caused by storm surges. If the sea rises by one metre, it will flood 1 % of Egypt's land, 6 % of the Netherlands and 17.5% of Bangladesh.</p> <p>True: Go to D False: Go to L</p>	<p>Statement B</p> <p>The main greenhouse gas is carbon dioxide, which is produced by burning of fossil fuels. Levels in the atmosphere have increased by a third since the industrial revolution started in the 1760s.</p> <p>True: Go to G False: Go to J</p>

