

Humans and the Environment

Human beings have a profound impact on their environment. Because they are constantly building and developing, this impact is not always good. As humans claim land for their own purposes, animals sometimes lose their habitats and, with nowhere to live, they can become extinct. This can happen to bacteria, plants, insects, animals, and even indigenous peoples. A habitat may not be entirely destroyed but may still be fragmented, or broken into pieces. This can force creatures to move to habitats that are already occupied, which can put a stress on the availability of food and water, as well as cause territorial conflicts. When trees are torn from the ground, erosion becomes a problem as rain water washes away the rich top soil. The area can become hot and dry, and the change in microclimate can be another reason why the species that live there become extinct. Human development, especially for purposes of mining and oil extraction can also cause pollution.



1. Characterize the relationship between human beings and their environment.
