

## THE ENVIRONMENT

### 1. to discharge chemical waste

Meaning: to dispose of wasteproducts from chemical processes.

Example: Nowadays, more and more company and industrial zones have been **discharging chemical waste** into rivers, causing death to many fish and other aquatic animals.

### 2. environmental degradation

Meaning: the process or fact of the environment becoming worse

Example: Africa is a continent in which **environmental degradation** is evident in the spread of deserts and the extinction of animal species.

### 3. to take action on global warming

Meaning: to do what has to be done on problems related to global warming

Example: There have been numerous international conferences to warn of the dangers, but many governments have refused **to take action on global warming**.

### 4. to be bio-degradable

Meaning: a substance or chemical that can be changed to a natural harmless state by the action of bacteria

Example: Most plastics **are not biodegradable**, and remain as waste products in the environment for thousands of years.

### 5. to deplete natural resources

Meaning: To reduce the amount of natural resources.

Example: Timber companies must not be allowed **to deplete naturalresources** by cutting down trees without planting new trees to replace them.

### 6. ozone layer depletion

Meaning: refers to a steady decline in the total amount of ozone in the Earth's atmosphere

Example: **Ozone layer depletion** has the effect of allowing harmful radiation from the sun to penetrate the atmosphere and this increases the risk to humans of skin cancer.

### 7. an ecological crisis

Meaning: a serious situation that occurs when the environment of a species or a population changes in a way that destabilizes its continued survival

Example: Environmental degradation caused by human activity is provoking **an ecological crisis** which threatens our existence.

### 8. carbon footprint

Meaning: a measure of the amount of carbon dioxide that is produced by the daily activities of a company or person

Example: By providing subsidies, governments should encourage companies to reduce their **carbon footprint** through energy efficiency or other 'green measures'.

### 9. to cut down on emissions

Meaning: to reduce the amount of gases sent out into the air

Example: People must be made aware of the need **to cut down on emissions** from their cars if we are to reduce air pollution.

### 10. to fight climate change

Meaning: To try to prevent changes in climate patterns, such as rainfall, temperature and winds.

Example: Unless we consume less of the Earth's natural resources, it will be impossible **to fight climate change** and safeguard our future.

### 11. to reduce the dependence/reliance on fossil fuels

Meaning: to decrease people's consumption of fossil fuels, like oil, coal or gas.

Example: Governments must invest heavily in solar and wind energy projects in order **to reduce our dependence/reliance on fossil fuels**.

### 12. to alleviate environmental problems

Meaning: to make bad environmental problems less severe

Example: Everyone can assist in the effort **to alleviate environmental problems** in the local community through simple actions such as recycling waste or planting a tree in their garden.

### 13. to throw one's weight behind sth

Meaning: To use one's influence to help support

Example: The council is **to throw its weight behind** a campaign to save one of the borough's best-loved beauty spots.

### 14. to hold sbdy accountable for + noun/gerund

Meaning: to consider someone responsible for something; to blame something on someone

Example: Companies which discharge chemical waste from their factories into the sea or into rivers must **be held accountable for** their actions and be fined heavily.

### 15. to achieve sustainable development

Meaning: economic development that is achieved without depleting natural resources

Example: Organic methods must be introduced everywhere in order **to achieve sustainable development in agriculture.**

### 16. alternative energy sources

Meaning: refers to any energy source that is an alternative to fossil fuel

Example: Clean energy which does not pollute the Earth can only come from greater reliance on **alternative energy sources.**

### 17. food miles

Meaning: Distance food has to travel between where it is grown or made and where it is consumed

Example: We can all reduce our carbon footprint by flying less, and reduce our **food miles** by buying local produce.

### 18. captive breeding

Meaning: the reproduction of animals in confinement, not in their natural habitats.

Example: A successful **captive breeding** program in zoos has resulted in an increase in the world's panda population.

### 19. to stem from

Meaning: to be caused by

Example: Scientists say that global warming partly **stems from** the increase in car exhaust emissions.

### 20. environmental impact assessment

Meaning: a study into how a development, like a new road, a new dam or other construction activity will affect the plants, animals and local communities living in an area.

Example: The government must commission an independent **environmental impact assessment** whenever a new development is proposed.

### 21. the greenhouse effect

Meaning: the natural process by which the sun warms the surface of the Earth.

Example: Our burning of fossil fuels is increasing **the greenhouse effect** and making the Earth hotter, endangering all life on the planet.

### 22. global warming

Meaning: the process by which the Earth is getting hotter, as a result of the greenhouse effect – in particular the increase in carbon dioxide in the air.

Example: Perhaps the major environmental challenge which faces humanity today is **global warming**, because it threatens our survival.

### 23. **habitat destruction**

Meaning: the process that occurs when a natural habitat, like a forest or wetland, is changed so dramatically by humans that plants and animals which live there.

Example: The elephant population in the world is declining because of **habitat destruction** caused by human exploitation of the environment.

### 24. **endangered species**

Meaning: plants or animals that only exist in very small numbers, so that in future they may disappear forever

Example: One example of an **endangered species** is the lowland gorilla, which has almost disappeared as a result of the destruction of its forest habitat.

### 25. **on the brink of extinction**

Meaning: an animal or plant which has almost disappeared from the planet

Example: Before the captive breeding program in zoos, the giant panda was **on the brink of extinction**

### 26. **renewable energy**

Meaning: energy is renewable when its source, like the sun or wind, cannot be exhausted or can easily be replaced (like wood, as we can plant trees for energy)

Example: More funding is required from government funds to help companies to develop **renewable energy**, such as companies which produce solar panels for buildings.

### 27. **wind farms**

Meaning: an area of land on which there are a lot of windmills or wind turbines for producing electricity

Example: **Wind farms** should be constructed in mountainous areas or in the sea, close to land.

### 28. **environmentally friendly**

Meaning: behavior or products that do not harm the environment

Example: We can help to protect the environment by using detergents and cosmetics that are **environmentally friendly**.

### 29. **toxic waste**

Meaning: poisonous, unwanted waste produced by factories

Example: Many species of fish are endangered as a result of the **toxic waste** dumped by industries into the rivers and the sea.

### **30. the green movement**

Meaning: all the organisations concerned with the protection of the environment

Example: Individuals should join one of the organisations which form part of **the green movement**, in order to campaign for changes in official policy on the environment.

