

**New
Internationalist**

Nature

New Internationalist Easier English Ready
Lesson: Intermediate + level

This lesson:

- **Quiz**
- **Reading**
- **Speaking**
- **Ordering sentences and words**
- **Making posters / banners / leaflets**



What problems can you see here? What can we do about these problems?



Quiz 1

- 1. There were 2000 Indian tigers in 1970 – how many are there now?**
a) 3000 b) 2000 c) 1000
- 2. How long have humans lived on Earth?**
a) 3,000,000 years
b) 300,000 years c) 30,000 years
- 3. How long ago did dinosaurs go extinct?** a) 650 million years ago
b) 65 million years ago c) 6.5 million years ago
- 4. When did the 7-metre long Chinese paddlefish go extinct?** a) 1500 – 2000 years ago b) 150 – 200 years ago c) 15 – 20 years ago
- 5. Between 1970 and 2016, the global population of wild mammals, birds, fish, amphibians and reptiles fell by** a) 68% b) 48% c) 28%

Now find the correct answers here:

India's tiger numbers were fewer than 2,000 in 1970 and now up to about 3,000 as a result of a big conservation effort.

At the start of 2020 a strange, beautiful creature, the Chinese paddlefish, was gone for ever. It lived on the planet for at least 200 million years. We homo sapiens have lived only 300,000 years on the planet. And the dinosaurs were gone 65 million years ago. The Chinese paddlefish could grow seven metres long. The last time someone saw a Chinese paddlefish was in 2003, and it probably went extinct years before.

Extinction is the beginning of a bigger global problem. There are many more of the animals that humans eat. But wildlife is undergoing, what conservationists are calling, a biological collapse. In the short time between 1970 and 2016 the global population of wild mammals, birds, fish, amphibians, and reptiles fell by an amazing 68 per cent.

Quiz 2:



- 1. About how many species are now facing extinction?**
a) 1,000,000 b) 100,000 c) 10,000
- 2. A long time ago, vertebrate species survived for 1 – 3 million years. Now, they survive for about:**
a) 5 million years b) 50,000 years c) 5,000 years
- 3. Plant extinction is now a) 500 b) 50 c) 5 times faster than we expect naturally.**

Read this to find the answers:

We think the number of all species facing extinction is one million. Scientists say the extinction threat is as urgent as climate change and in a way worse because we cannot change extinction. When a species is gone, it's gone for ever. With it goes all its evolutionary adaptation to its living conditions, over millions of years, and all its interactions with its ecosystem. Species are closely connected to their ecosystem and so the extinction of one species can start more extinctions, making nature poorer and poorer.

Extinction, by itself, is not new – it has happened since life began on Earth. But now it is faster. The fossil record suggests that maybe a vertebrate species goes extinct in one to three million years. Today the average expected lifespan is only 5,000 years. Plant extinction is 500 times faster than we expect naturally.

Put these sentences in order to make sense:

- a) The numbers are falling because the heat is killing the insects they need to eat.
 - b) But this is difficult with a changing climate.
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- c) You could feed hungry elephants in the rainforest of the Congo Basin because the fruit they need is getting more difficult to find because of drier conditions.
 - d) But what can we do about the falling numbers of insect-eating birds in the Amazon?
 - e) And what can we do about plant species that need to move to higher ground at an impossible speed to survive global warming?
 - f) The first answer to nature's destruction is conservation, saving habitats and species.
 - g) Or what can we do about animals needing to move to higher ground but they cannot because there are no migration corridors or new habitats to move to?

**Now check: - this was the order in the article,
but other orders (that make sense) are
possible: f, b, c, d, a, e, g**

The first answer to nature's destruction is conservation, saving habitats and species. But this is difficult with a changing climate. You could feed hungry elephants in the rainforest of the Congo Basin because the fruit they need is getting more difficult to find because of drier conditions. But what can we do about the falling numbers of insect-eating birds in the Amazon? The numbers are falling because the heat is killing the insects they need to eat. And what can we do about plant species that need to move to higher ground at an impossible speed to survive global warming? Or what can we do about animals needing to move to higher ground but they cannot because there are no migration corridors or new habitats to move to?

This is what Robert Watson, chair of IPBES (Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services) said. Create 2 sentences by putting these phrases in the right order:

a) in isolation

b) human-made

c) we must

d) or we

e) and loss

f) climate change

g) solve both

h) solve neither

i) we cannot solve

j) the dangers of

k) of biodiversity

Did you get this correct word order?:

“We cannot solve the dangers of human-made climate change and loss of biodiversity in isolation. We must solve both or we solve neither.”



**You've looked at several parts of the article,
now read the whole article and make a note
of 2 interesting facts:**

[https://eewiki.newint.org/index.php?title=The case for nature](https://eewiki.newint.org/index.php?title=The_case_for_nature)



Groupwork:

a) Compare and discuss the interesting facts you chose from the article

b) Make posters, banners and/or leaflets with the most important information on. Where can you put these posters? Can you organise a march with the banners to share the information? Can you leave the leaflets somewhere others can find them?

Homework:

Try reading the original (more difficult) article – there is a lot more information there, but you will find it easier to read after reading the Easier English version:

<https://newint.org/features/2020/12/07/big-story-biodiversity-case-nature>

