



Humans and Habitats

How do humans affect natural habitats?

More People

The population of Earth is growing. More space is needed for things such as homes, hospitals, schools, stores, and factories. Natural habitats are destroyed by building on them.

Think of the plants and animals that might live in a habitat. They might disappear from the area forever.

More Pollution

Humans create pollution. When there are more people, there is more pollution. Here are some examples:

- Factories put smoke into the air. Chemicals in the smoke are harmful to plants and animals.
- Factories dump liquid waste into lakes and rivers. Chemicals in the waste poison life in lakes and rivers. Dangerous chemicals build up inside a fish's body. If you eat the fish, those chemicals go into *your* body.
- People pour dangerous chemicals down drains. These chemicals might end up in lakes and rivers. They might end up in our drinking water. Many people do not realize that things such as paint, old medicines, and cleaning products contain harmful chemicals.



More Hope for the Future

Today, more and more people realize that it is important to protect habitats. More people are trying to save natural habitats. Here are some of the things people are doing:

- Recycling wood and paper products. This means fewer trees need to be cut down.
- Finding ways for factories to produce less pollution.
- Taking dangerous liquids to hazardous waste facilities.