

WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY



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World Environment Day takes place annually on 5th June. It was set up in 1974, by the United Nations.

It is now celebrated in over 143 countries around the world.



World Environment Day was set up to raise awareness of the planet earth and the issues around its well being and to encourage worldwide awareness and action to protect the environment.



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Each year World Environment Day has a host country, where the official celebrations take place. The host country for 2020 is Colombia.

Since World Environment Day began in 1972, thousands of events have been organised to improve the environment.



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On World Environment Day people take part in projects to improve the environment. Here a garden is being planted in Tel Aviv, Israel.

Schools and organisations carry out litter picks to clean up their local community.



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Here volunteers are moving a large tyre that was washed up on the beach in New York.



Projects have ranged from community clean-ups, action against illegal trade in wildlife, replanting forests and reducing plastic pollution.



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In many countries, World Environment Day is used to draw political attention and action to improving the environment.

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Many campaigns and rallies take place highlighting the environmental issues that require government intervention and action.

Issues like climate change and calls for cleaner and greener renewable energy sources.



The theme for 2020 is biodiversity.



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Biodiversity is the variety of life on Earth - the number of different species of plants, animals and micro organisms.



Biodiversity is very important. Each species, no matter how small, has an important role to play in the ecosystem.



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Ecosystems clean our water, purify our air, maintain our soil, regulate the climate, recycle nutrients and provide us with food.

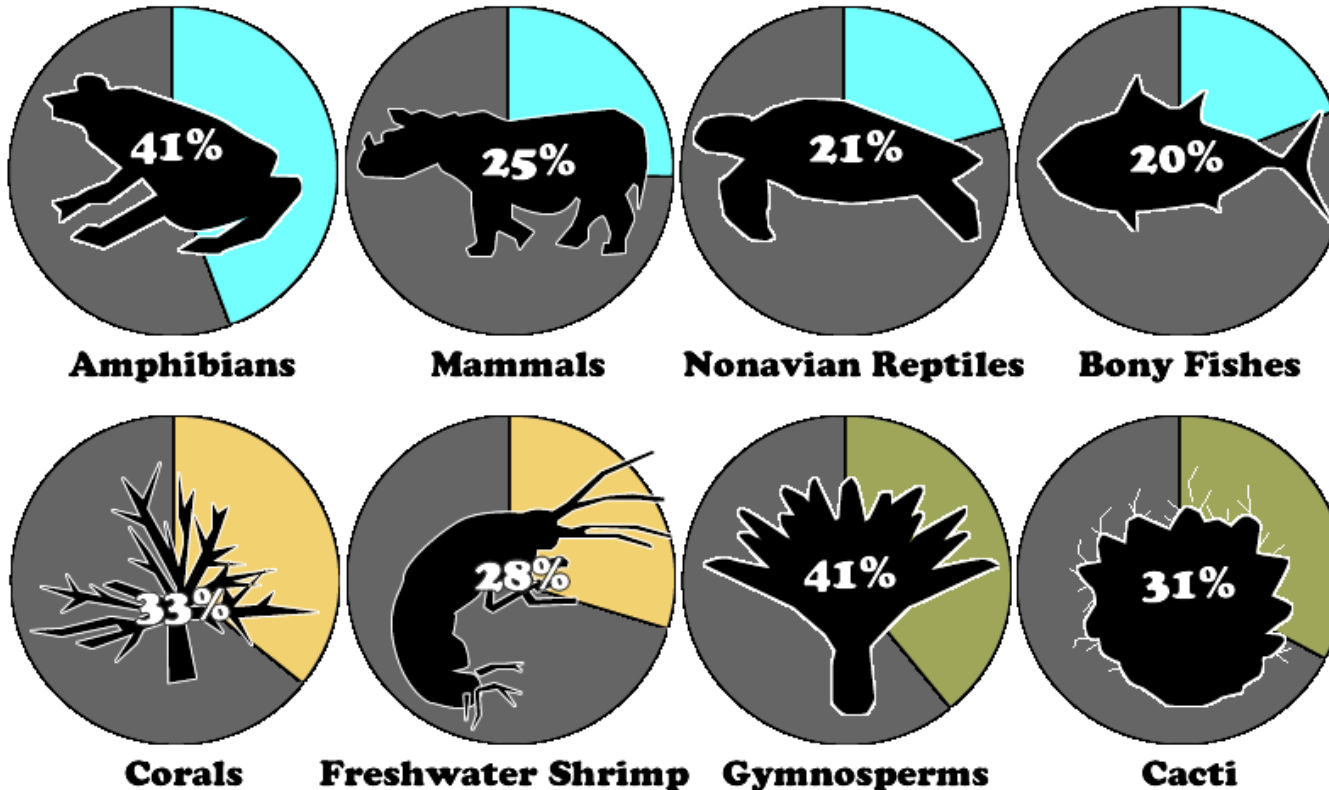


Biodiversity Is Threatened

Vertebrates, invertebrates, and many plants are among the most threatened groups of organisms.

The charts below show the percent of threatened species in eight taxa.

Current
extinction rate is
1000x
the background
rate



Biodiversity is under threat. Protecting biodiversity is very important as one million plant and animal species are facing extinction.

The aim of World Environment Day is to encourage people to do something to take care of the environment and become an agent of change.



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World Environment Day
2020 will challenge
governments, industry,
communities and
individuals to join
together to protect
biodiversity and
ecosystems across the
world.

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So, what are the main issues affecting biodiversity and the environment?

Air pollution is a major issue which has damaging effects on living things and the environment.



In China people have to wear masks to avoid breathing in the fumes because of the massive problem of air pollution in their cities.



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Air pollution from traffic contributes to global warming. Air pollution kills around seven million people each year - one in eight deaths globally.

Another major issue is water pollution.



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Every square mile of the oceans contains more than 46,000 pieces of floating plastic.

About 8 million metric tons of plastic goes into the ocean each year.



It takes about 450 years for plastic bottles to break down.



A glass bottle takes approximately 1 million years to break down!



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Due to human actions, plastic debris and ocean pollution are affecting ocean life. Worldwide, six of the seven sea turtle species are threatened or endangered .

The world's ocean, which covers more than 70% of the planet's surface, is also being affected by climate change and global warming.





Warming waters are bleaching coral reefs. An estimated 36% of the world's coral reefs have been affected by major bleaching.

Fracking is another major issue. It involves injecting large volumes of water, containing additives, into shale rock to extract gas or oil. This method pollutes our natural resources such as our water supply.



The destruction of forests is a major environmental issue.



When natural habitats are destroyed it impacts on the plants, animals and other organisms that live there.



It endangers wildlife and can lead to extinction.



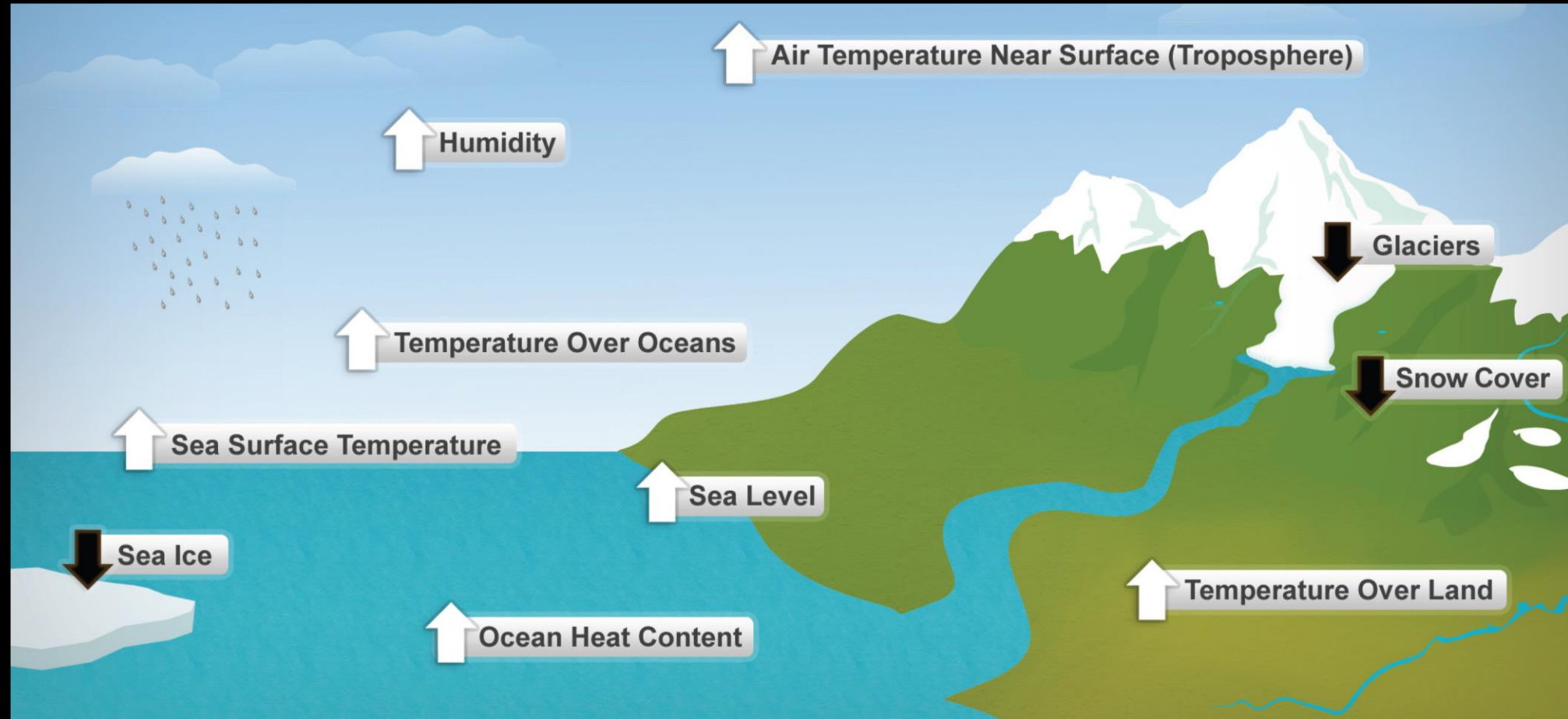
Four subspecies of tiger, the Caspian, Javan, Balinese, and South China tigers, have already become extinct due to habitat loss and hunting by humans.





Although pandas are no longer an endangered species due to conservation projects, it is predicted that climate change will destroy over 35% of the panda's bamboo habitat in the next 80 years.

The depletion of forests contributes to global warming. These are the ten signs of a warming world.



Trees help to combat climate change.





They help to clean the air by absorbing odours and harmful gases like carbon monoxide, nitrogen oxides, ammonia, sulphur dioxide and ozone.

Trees filter harmful particles out of the air by trapping them on their leaves and bark.



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In a single year,
an acre of
mature trees
absorb the same
amount of CO₂
produced by
driving the
average car for
26,000 miles.

Trees also help
communities.
They provide
food and energy.





They are a source of income from the sale of fruits and nuts.

Trees provide homes for animals and creatures.



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They
provide
food for
animals.

Trees provide an environmentally friendly means of transport. They are used to make boats and canoes.



Trees prevent fertile land changing into desert.



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Food wastage is also a serious environmental issue. Waste food is usually put in landfills where it generates methane, a harmful gas.

Methane is twenty three times more potent than CO₂. These landfills create 34% of all methane emissions.



June 5 World Environment Day



So, what can we do
to protect and
improve our
environment?

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We can all use World Environment Day as a time to think about our own impact on the environment.



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We can do many things to help improve our environment. We can help by recycling.



Recycling one ton of paper saves between 15 and 17 mature trees.



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Recycling one ton of paper can save enough energy to heat a home for six months.

We can help by
putting rubbish in
a bin.



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We can also help by reducing our usage of energy. We can switch off lights when we leave a room.



We can turn off computers and TVs when we are not using them.



We can switch
off the tap
when brushing
our teeth.



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We can cut
down on food
waste.

We can walk or cycle to places instead of travelling by car.



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We can use World Environment Day as a starting point for change and make every day an Environment Day.



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Click on the image to watch a breath-taking short three minute video of our wonderful planet earth.



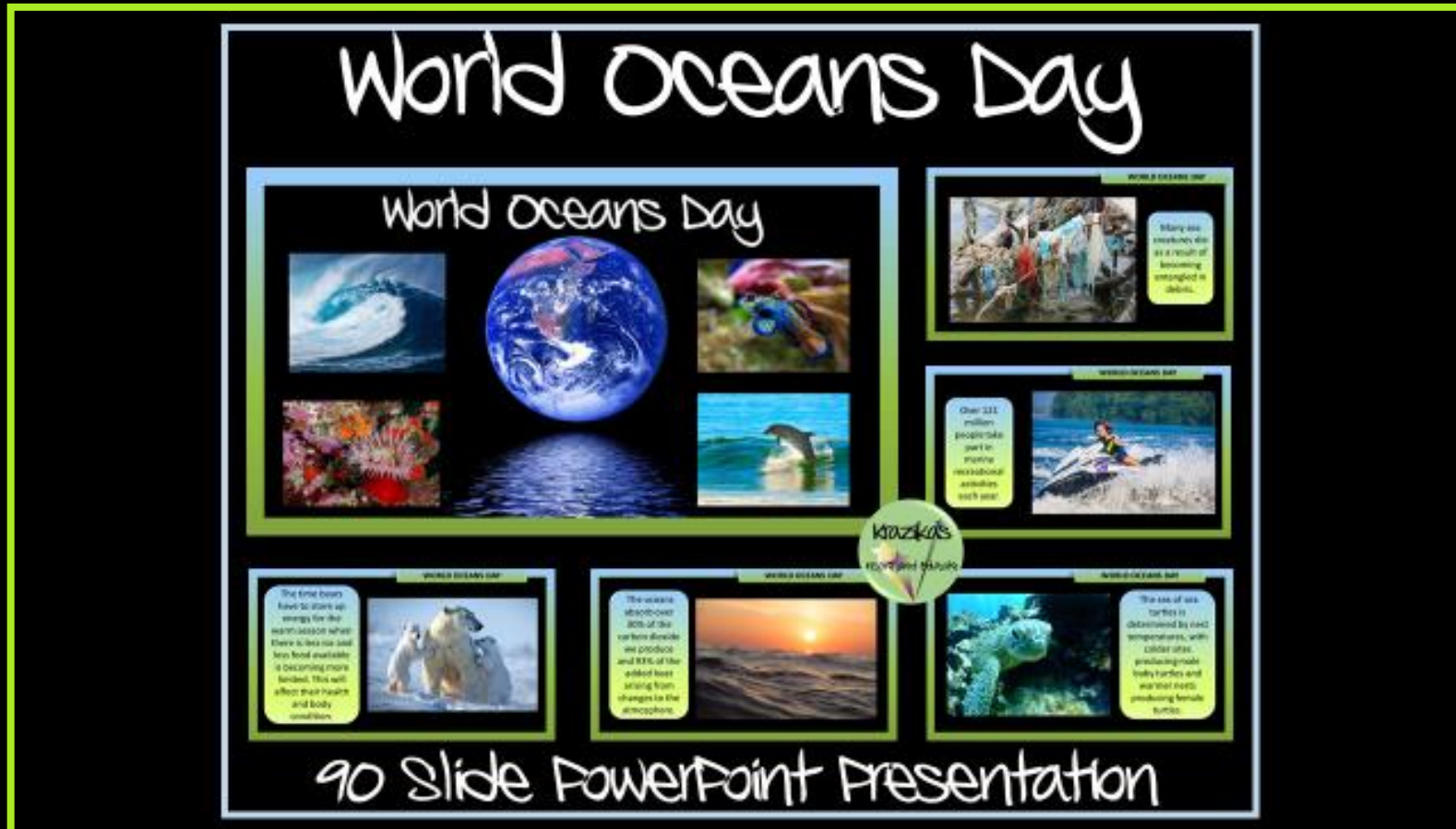
Listen to this song. Click on the image to hear it.



The earth's future is in our hands.



Click on the image to find out more about the World Oceans Day Presentation.



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