

## Australia's "shocking" decline in environment

21st July, 2022



Australia is home to some of the most amazing creatures and plant life in the world. It is famous for its diversity of species. However, scientists have just reported a "shocking" loss of biodiversity. The government has released its State of the

Environment Report. It is depressing reading. The report reveals a serious decline in biodiversity, an increase in habitat loss, and increasing levels of pollution. It concludes that the condition of Australia's environment is "poor and deteriorating". Australia has been hit by drought, fires and floods in the past five years. These have killed many animals and caused the loss of natural habitat. Climate change is also harming Australia's ecosystems.

Australia publishes its State of the Environment Report every five years. Each report has painted a sadder picture. The Australian Conservation Foundation said Australia's natural environment is suffering because the government is not taking action. It said: "There's nothing in this report we don't know. This is the fourth...report and every time it has told us that the environment is getting worse and worse and worse because we're not taking the type of action we need." Australia has lost more mammal species than any other continent. More than 100 Australian species are now extinct. An environmentalist said the report was, "a wake-up call to the damage humans are doing to the world around us".

Sources: [abcnews.go.com](http://abcnews.go.com) / [aljazeera.com](http://aljazeera.com) / [smh.co.au](http://smh.co.au)

### Writing

We need to change everything about where we live to help the earth. Discuss.

### Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

Australia / creatures / plant life / diversity / depressing / habitat / drought / animals / picture / environment / action / report / worse and worse / mammal / extinct / world

### True / False

- 1) All of the world's most amazing creatures live in Australia. T / F
- 2) Scientists are shocked by the loss of biodiversity in Australia. T / F
- 3) Scientists say there is an increase in pollution in Australia. T / F
- 4) Australia's ecosystems are damaging climate change. T / F
- 5) Australia's environment report comes out every ten years. T / F
- 6) A conservation group said the government isn't doing enough. T / F
- 7) Australia is the continent with the most extinct mammal species. T / F
- 8) An environmentalist said climate change is waking up animals. T / F

### Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- |                            |                  |
|----------------------------|------------------|
| 1. <b>amazing</b>          | a. died out      |
| 2. <b>loss</b>             | b. described     |
| 3. <b>depressing</b>       | c. disappearance |
| 4. <b>deteriorating</b>    | d. people        |
| 5. <b>harming</b>          | e. worsening     |
| 6. <b>painted</b>          | f. nature-lover  |
| 7. <b>conservation</b>     | g. extraordinary |
| 8. <b>extinct</b>          | h. protection    |
| 9. <b>environmentalist</b> | i. damaging      |
| 10. <b>humans</b>          | j. upsetting     |

### Discussion – Student A

- a) What do you know about Australia?
- b) How is your country doing with biodiversity?
- c) How would you feel if koalas became extinct?
- d) How depressing is the state of the environment?
- e) What's pollution like in your country?
- f) What do you think of habitat loss?
- g) Is your country experiencing more natural disasters?
- h) What do you think of climate change?

## Phrase Match

- |  |                              |
|--|------------------------------|
| 1. Australia is home to some of the most | a. up call                   |
| 2. a "shocking" loss                     | b. loss                      |
| 3. It is depressing                      | c. species                   |
| 4. an increase in habitat                | d. of biodiversity           |
| 5. Australia has been hit by             | e. doing to the world        |
| 6. the environment is getting            | f. drought                   |
| 7. mammal                                | g. amazing creatures         |
| 8. 100 Australian species are            | h. worse and worse and worse |
| 9. a wake-                               | i. now extinct               |
| 10. the damage humans are                | j. reading                   |

## Discussion – Student B

- What do you think about what you read?
- What do you know about Australia's animals, marine life and plants?
- What animals have become extinct in your country?
- What makes you sad about the environment?
- What action should the government take?
- Why do governments do so little to stop species extinction?
- Why are so many people not listening to the 'wake-up call'?
- What questions would you like to ask the environmentalists?

## Spelling

- some of the most amazing seturrace
- famous for its idtyisrev
- It is dpeesqnsr reading
- Australia has been hit by rghodtu
- the loss of natural aiatht
- harming Australia's ecemysssto
- Australia's natural environment is ngfuriesf
- the tovengmern is not taking action
- Australia has lost more mlamam species
- than any other ottncenin
- 100 Australian species are now icetnxt
- the damage sunham are doing

### Answers – Synonym Match

|      |      |      |      |       |
|------|------|------|------|-------|
| 1. g | 2. c | 3. j | 4. e | 5. i  |
| 6. b | 7. h | 8. a | 9. f | 10. d |

## Role Play

### Role A – Pollution

You think pollution is the biggest cause of biodiversity loss. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't as bad. Also, tell the others which is the least damaging of these (and why): logging, war or illegal wildlife change.

### Role B – Logging

You think logging is the biggest cause of biodiversity loss. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't as bad. Also, tell the others which is the least damaging of these (and why): pollution, war or illegal wildlife change.

### Role C – War

You think war is the biggest cause of biodiversity loss. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't as bad. Also, tell the others which is the least damaging of these (and why): logging, pollution or illegal wildlife change.

### Role D – Illegal Wildlife Trade

You think the illegal wildlife change is the biggest cause of biodiversity loss. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't as bad. Also, tell the others which is the least damaging of these (and why): logging, war or pollution.

## Speaking – Biodiversity loss

Rank these with your partner. Put the things most responsible for biodiversity loss at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- |                |                          |
|----------------|--------------------------|
| • Habitat loss | • Illegal wildlife trade |
| • Pollution    | • Climate change         |
| • Logging      | • Invasive species       |
| • War          | • Population growth      |

### Answers – True False

|     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 1 F | 2 T | 3 T | 4 F | 5 F | 6 T | 7 T | 8 F |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|

Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.