



# How Human Activities Change the Natural World

KS2 GEOGRAPHY

KS3 SCIENCE

Ages 10-14 ⌚ 3 min read

## What Does It Mean to Affect Nature?

Every single day, humans do things that change the natural world. We build houses, drive cars, farm crops, and make products we use. These activities might seem small, but when **billions of people** do them every day, they add up to huge changes.

Understanding how our actions affect **nature** helps us make better choices for our planet.

## Pollution and Air Quality

One big way humans affect nature is through **pollution**. When we drive cars or use electricity from coal power plants, we release gases into the air. These gases trap heat in our atmosphere, warming up the planet. This is called **global warming** or **climate change**. Pollution also makes the air harder for animals and plants to breathe, and it makes people sick too.

Think of it like a blanket getting thicker around Earth. The thicker the blanket of gases, the more heat gets trapped, and everything heats up.

## Losing Habitats and Forests

When we clear forests to build cities or farms, we destroy the **habitats** where animals live. Thousands of species have nowhere to go. **Deforestation** also removes trees that clean our air by absorbing carbon dioxide. Over **10 billion trees** are cut down every year around the world.

Think of it like demolishing an apartment building where thousands of people live. The residents have nowhere else to go.

## Water and Ocean Damage

Humans pollute rivers and oceans with **plastic**, chemicals, and waste. Fish and sea animals get trapped in plastic or eat it by mistake. **Coral reefs**, which are home to

thousands of sea creatures, are dying from warming waters and pollution. When we pump too much water out of rivers for farms, those ecosystems collapse completely.

## Climate and Weather Changes

Human activities are making our **weather** more extreme. We're seeing stronger hurricanes, worse droughts, and more wildfires. These changes harm wildlife and make life difficult for people too, especially those in poorer countries who did the least to cause the problem.

## What Can We Do?

The good news is we can change! By using less energy, creating less waste, eating less meat, and protecting forests, we reduce our impact. Many people are working to make renewable energy like **solar power** and **wind power** normal. Every small action counts when millions of people join together.