

The ways in which human beings can conserve the environment essay sample



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Since the dawn of time, the earth has provided protection and nourishment to its inhabitants; the ozone layer providing protection from the sun's harmful rays, the vast forests providing oxygen and shelter, the rivers and oceans providing life sustaining water. Until the industrial age, man's relationship with his environment had been a beneficial one, in which only what was needed, was taken. However, with the advent of technology and machines, mankind has slowly sunk deeper into the recesses of destruction, rather than necessity. Blessed with the gift of intelligence mankind must make an effort to curb the slow, but sure depletion and destruction of the earth's resources. Nature has been kind to its inhabitants: providing us with plentiful resources. However man has in recent times, drained these resources, not out of necessity but out of greed. Healthy forests are critical to ensuring clean water supplies, pure air, abundant fish stocks and wildlife – the diversity of species on which all life depends. Forests mitigate global warming by absorbing and storing carbon.

Intact forests regulate regional and global hydrologic cycles insuring clean and adequate supplies of water. In addition, intact forests hold soils in place, preserving fertility, and preventing floods, landslides and the destructive siltation of fish spawning streams. Mankind has placed more importance on paper and lumber than he has on the environment. Possible solutions include using alternative sources for the creation of paper, and/or the recycling of existing paper. However to the problem of deforestation there is only one solution: the severe regulation of logging in industrial countries. Although the outlook appears grim, mankind can stop, or at least slow down, what he started. Nature works in mysterious ways, and will someday replenish her

precious forests. Perhaps earth's greatest gift to its inhabitants is protection from the sun's harmful rays, in the form of the ozone layer.

This layer of Trioxide (O₃) which has shielded countless organisms from sure death is now under threat. Over the short period of just one hundred years, man has managed to create a tear in this protective layer. Millions of tons of ozone depleting chemicals called Chlorofluorocarbons (CFC's) are pumped into the atmosphere each year. Automobiles have been the main cause of the ozone's depletion. The internal reaction in its combustion engines produces the harmful CFC's. Although several methods of reducing these emissions have been created, the single, most comprehensive solution is the discontinuation of the production of combustion engines, in favor of electrical engines. Electrical engines produce no harmful emissions and are therefore a viable alternative. While this solution may sound easy enough, it is proving difficult to replace mainstream combustion engines with electrical engines.

Higher prices of electrical engines and the popularity of combustion engines have only served to stunt the replacement process. It is hoped that within the next fifty years, the complete replacement of combustion engines will become a reality, thereby halting the depletion of earth's very necessary gift. Although efforts have been made to curb the destruction of the environment, few have been successful. Until these efforts can become reality, mother nature, and all that she protects, hangs in the balance.