



Here and now

- The human race is consuming resources at an incredible rate, much faster than they can be renewed.
- We are borrowing resources from future generations in order to meet our current needs and taking resources away from other species.
- This is eroding the capacity of the planet to sustain life and may ultimately lead to our demise.
- On top of all of the stress we're placing on the planet, we must contend with climate change. The world's leading climate scientists agree the world is warming at an alarming rate.
- Our awareness of the issues has come a long way since the birth of the green movement in the 1960s and 1970s. Concern for the environment is now mainstream.

What we're doing

- Environmental issues have gradually become more prominent on local, national and international agendas.
- Many battles have been fought. Some of our most prominent natural assets, such as Kakadu and the Great Barrier Reef, have been afforded protection. Others, such as Lake Pedder in Tasmania, have been lost forever.
- On the world stage, the United Nations has organised a series of Earth Summits, established the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (with the World Meteorological Organisation) and the Kyoto Protocol to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
- The business community is starting to push for sustainability. Companies such as News Corporation are taking action to reduce their impact on the environment.

What we're not doing

- Our world view needs to change in recognition of the fact that the Earth's resources are limited.
- We should not aspire to unlimited growth, of the human population or the economy. We need an open, honest dialogue about the path to sustainability.
- Along with the U.S. Government, the Australian Government has refused to sign the Kyoto Protocol, which has led to questions about its commitment to reducing emissions.
- We do need to reduce fossil fuel use and boost alternative energy supplies.
- We need to act fast to avoid the worst possible effects of climate change.

How you can change

- Learn more about the state of the environment so you can make informed decisions.
- Share what you have learned with your friends and family, talk about how you can make a difference.
- Be prepared to argue the case for climate change with knowledge about how the Earth has changed in the past.
- Support politicians with strong environmental values and policies that will help save the planet.
- Consider the demands you make on the planet's resources, such as water, energy, productive land and sea.
- Consume less and recycle more.

Crystal ball

- Our children will inherit an impoverished planet, with fewer natural resources. The question is whether the planet will continue to have the capacity to support our species.
- The WWF Living Planet Report 2006 suggests if the world continues on its current path, the human race will be using two planets' worth of natural resources every year by 2050. Natural assets will be exhausted and we will be heading towards large-scale collapse of the Earth system.
- An alternative path toward sustainable resource use will require big changes in the way we live our lives. There will be a short time lag before we see all the benefits but our lives will be richer and more fulfilling.

Find out more

- The Living Planet Report is the WWF's periodic update on the state of the world's ecosystems. It describes the changing state of global biodiversity and the pressure on the biosphere arising from human consumption of natural resources. Visit www.panda.org/livingplanet/ to find out more and see how you can reduce your impact.
- Visit the Sustainable Living Choices website at www.sustainableliving.sa.gov.au for suggestions on how to live more sustainably.
- Read the latest reports from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, which assesses scientific, technical and socio-economic information relevant for understanding the risk of human-induced climate change. Visit www.ipcc.ch



Inside tomorrow

LIVING EARTH - PART TWO

- How are our eco-systems coping with climate change?
- What plants have been lost?
- What species have become extinct?
- What is the flu-like problem for our reefs?
- Are penguins at risk in Antarctica?

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