

Key Vocabulary Overview	
natural resource	a material or substance that humans remove from its natural environment to use
deforestation	the human-led removal of areas of forest
habitat loss	the destruction of the natural place in which something lives
biodiversity	the variety of living things found in a specific area
palm oil	a yellow, oily liquid made by processing the fruit of oil palm trees
extinct	to no longer exist; a species that has no living individuals left
endangered	to be at risk of becoming extinct
sustainable	uses natural resources in a way that causes little or no harm to the environment, now or in the future

Deforestation

Deforestation is the process of removing trees and other vegetation from an area of forest or woodland. Often, **deforestation** is human-led.

It can occur for a number reasons, for example:

- humans chop down trees for wood or to clear space;
- areas of forest are accidentally or intentionally burnt down;
- large areas of trees die off due to disease.



Beef, soya and **palm oil** farming is responsible for about 60% of the **deforestation** in tropical areas.



Disclaimer: While every care has been taken to ensure that there are no significant emotional triggers regarding eco-anxiety for children in this lesson, any feelings that arise should be embraced and discussed non-judgmentally.

Impact on Animals and Plants

Deforestation can decrease levels of **biodiversity** and cause species of plants and animals to become **endangered**.



Animals may be killed and their habitats destroyed. They may lose food sources, water sources or the shelter of trees and plants.

Plants may be crushed by vehicles or falling trees, or may burn along with the trees in a forest fire. Some species of plant may become threatened due to **habitat loss**.

Soil becomes eroded and depleted of nutrients. This makes it more difficult for plants to grow in the future.



Reducing the Impact of Deforestation

Humans are working to reduce the impact of **deforestation** in many different ways.

In the UK, regulations set in place by the government protect **endangered** species of plants and animals, such as badgers and bats. This stops people from disturbing them when building.



Trees may be given a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) to protect them from being cut down.

Many companies try to use sustainably-sourced wood and paper for their products.

Charities and scientists are working together to 'reforest' areas by planting new trees.



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Palm oil

Palm oil is a yellow oil produced from the fruit of oil palm trees. It can be found in a surprising number of products, including:



margarine



chocolate



bread



soap

Palm oil is not always called '**palm oil**' in the ingredients list on the back of products. It has many names, including palm kernel, palm olein, glyceryl stearate and sodium laureth sulfate.

Reducing the Impact of Palm Oil

Many companies are trying to remove or reduce the amount of **palm oil** in their products.

Shoppers can choose to limit the number of products they buy that contain **palm oil**.

Some charities are working with **palm oil** producers to find ways to produce **palm oil** more **sustainably**. However, parts of the **sustainable palm oil** industry still cause **deforestation**, just at a reduced rate.

The Problem with Palm oil



85–90% of **palm oil** is produced in Indonesia and Malaysia. Rainforest land is cleared illegally to make room for more **palm oil** production. The 'slash and burn' strategy leads to pollution and **habitat loss**. When the soil is depleted of nutrients, it is even more difficult for these rainforest areas to recover.

The destruction of the rainforests caused by **palm oil** farming has led to orangutans becoming critically **endangered**. Orangutans are a keystone species, which means they are crucial for the survival of other living things in their habitats.



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