

Our Contaminated World

Reading

Cleaning up the world's environment is undoubtedly one of the major problems facing all the people inhabiting our planet. For many decades this issue has been neglected by many countries and the result is that it is more and more difficult to find any unpolluted place on Earth. Bearing that in mind, it seems obvious that the struggle against contamination and the need to protect the environment have become the most urgent of tasks because air, water and soil are slowly becoming unsuitable to sustain life.

As far as water is concerned, the prognosis is really gloomy. Sewage dumped directly into rivers or the sea has polluted the water so heavily that many countries, for example China, do not have enough safe drinking water. What is more, in some parts of the world, for instance in Peru, people are at the mercy of contractors who sell the precious liquid for money! This tragic situation is a result of population growth and above all industrial development which have contributed to the depletion and pollution of the world's water supply, raising the risk of starvation and epidemic. Equally dangerous are very frequent tanker leaks as oil spills make the water in many regions unfit for any use. Whatever the consequences for people, the pollution of water has an even greater effect on other living things. Fish, birds and countless other creatures are poisoned and ecosystems are disrupted. This, in turn, results in the serious violation of the ecological balance.

As far as the contamination of soil is concerned, again mainly industry and agriculture are to blame. One source of pollution are acid rains caused by chemical substances dissolved in rain, which results in polluting water and ruining crops. Another problem is mismanaged farming techniques, for instance the world-wide continuation of irrigation and the misuse or abuse of fertilizers and pesticides which are gradually destroying the fertile upper layer of soil. Deforestation is equally dangerous. It brings about floods and soil erosion during rainy seasons. At the same time the thoughtless and uncontrolled exploitation of forests for timber results in species extinction.

You can see the whole lesson from your teacher, please ask them to send it to you before the class.

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