

# **Humans and the Circle of life: how do they affect it?**

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## **Abstract**

The human race is very large and uses a lot of the Earth's resources. Humans consume too much so other species are suffering. Many species are dying off because of human actions. This is affecting other creatures and processes in the ecosystem. Humans are unaware of their damaging ways. This over consumption is shrinking the circle of life so rapidly, the race will end up killing itself in the process.

The human race is very large; there are approximately seven billion people at last count on the planet. So naturally the human race needs a lot of resources to supply all the people on the planet with food, drinkable water, and many other things. That means this species needs to use a lot of resources. However, there is a problem. The human race is not the only species on the planet. There are millions of other species on Earth already discovered or yet to be discovered. Those species need resources to survive also. Each tree cut down could also be a home, food source, or hiding place for some other species of animal. Each species is key to the planet's eco system. This linked chain can also be called the Circle of Life. Any lost species can seriously damage this Circle of Life. The human race's quest to use an ever greater share of the Earth's resources is damaging this circle.

The Human species quest to expand its' population has lead to this obstacle. Humans are producing consumable products at very high amounts .There is a problem though: every source has a limit. Resources that are not managed will eventually run out depending on the rate in which the user exploits said resource. The situation is illustrated with oil. Earth is running out of oil since there are so many cars in the world and the need for gas has risen massively. This means eventually humans will not be able to use many of the human's vehicles like

airplanes or cars until we find a renewable energy source like wind power or solar power.

Here in America, humans are starting to manage resources. An example is the Everglades. Finally a 9 year old promise is coming to be. A promise was made by the federal government nine years ago to send money to conserve the Everglades. Everglades's conservationists can start its restoration but this money was and is 9 years late. President Barack Obama has finally fulfilled that promise for them. President Obama has requested "279 million dollars next year on top of 183 million for the Everglades in March and 97 million out of stimulus" (Sun Sentinel 2). Naturally, Everglade's advocates and conservationists are enthusiastic about these three installments.

There is a better known case of pollution damaging natural habitats and that is the rain forest. Not just the Amazon rain forest, but rain forests all over the world are suffering. Rain forests are damaged mostly because of deforestation and pollution, though much of it is just land cleared for farms. Farmers will cut trees to make room for their farm; the Amazon has lost a total 20% of forest due to that. Guyana's rain forest has a sprawling gold mine in the middle like a scar. Though this area is pronounced a low threat area "So was Madagascar 50 years ago and Borneo 20 years ago; low threat rain forest destruction does not exist" Says Russell Mittermier (Griesing 3).

The circle of life has every species on the planet from the tiny fruit fly to the massive blue whale and every animal has a key part to this planet's ecosystem. The problem arises when a species goes extinct; one of those precious links to that chain goes away that can cause other things to die. Eventually the ecosystem will collapse. Many creatures are on the verge of extinction, just a few of which are: the manatee, the shark, and the big eyed and yellow fin tuna. The lists are massive. The Manatee, sea cow, and the dugong (sea cow and dugong are a species of manatee) are all fresh water mammals that generally feed off of water plants. These species generally eat 7-8 hours a day. The animals are going extinct because boats are hitting them; they also die because of pollution. If they were to die, rivers would start to over grow with plants making it impossible to navigate. One other species is the big-eyed and yellow-fin tuna. This species is going extinct because the fishing industries are over fishing. If tuna went extinct humans would lose a food source for millions of people. Sharks are also dying off, mostly because of poaching and professional sport called "Shark fishing" where all the fishermen individually try to catch the biggest shark. They do this without feeling bad because the fishermen believe that the shark species do nothing but kill for fun. Denise Mullins, a fully certified environmentalist, says that the shark population has been depleted and that only "approximately thirty percent [of my friends] would actually know [that]" (Mullins interview). If people were told, they would

not care because they believe sharks are monsters. Mrs. Mullins does not agree with what people say, she says “All animals have a purpose. Nothing kills for fun and anyways you have to do what you have to do to survive.” (Mullins interview) However Michael Tougias author of “When Man is Prey” has different ideas “it seems to me that a scarred motherless animal has the potential for carnage” (Tougias 2). Some people would point out that humans are beginning to manage these resources, for instance, the fishing industries has put limits on big eyed and yellow fin tuna fishing so the species will not go extinct.

Some people believe we should not worry about nature because the human race has risen to the top of the evolutionary ladder and there is a Law of Natural Selection, so therefore humans are now excluded from the circle of life. There are also many who believe that humans have a divine purpose. Either view seems to makes sense since human power has grown due to having the biggest brain. Humans have developed houses, vehicles, weaponry. However, no matter what the human race develops, that item will always require some form of fuel and that fuel comes from nature. Even humans require fuel for their bodies. This fuel, food, is also in jeopardy. Fully one third of man’s food requires pollination from the honey bee. If the honey bee were to become extinct, man would lose one third of his food supply.

Though despite flaws, humans have inadvertently helped nature some to. A local example is seen at Kennesaw Mountain, where there are no more predators. Now the White Tailed Deer has been multiplying like wild fire and there are hunts every year to kill deer so the eco system will not collapse. So even when humans try to improve the ecosystem, they cause problems.

Unfortunately, the fact is humans are a part of the circle of life. It is true and has always been true. Man does not hesitate to swat the bee, not knowing that the bee is important to his future. Unfortunately, man does not hesitate taking water from the everglades to fill his pool, not knowing the big swamp is home to species important to his survival. Unfortunately, man does not hesitate to burn an acre of rain forest to enlarge his farm, not knowing the loss will drive a species to extinction. Because of man, the circle of life is shrinking. Pretty soon that circle will become a noose around man's neck.

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