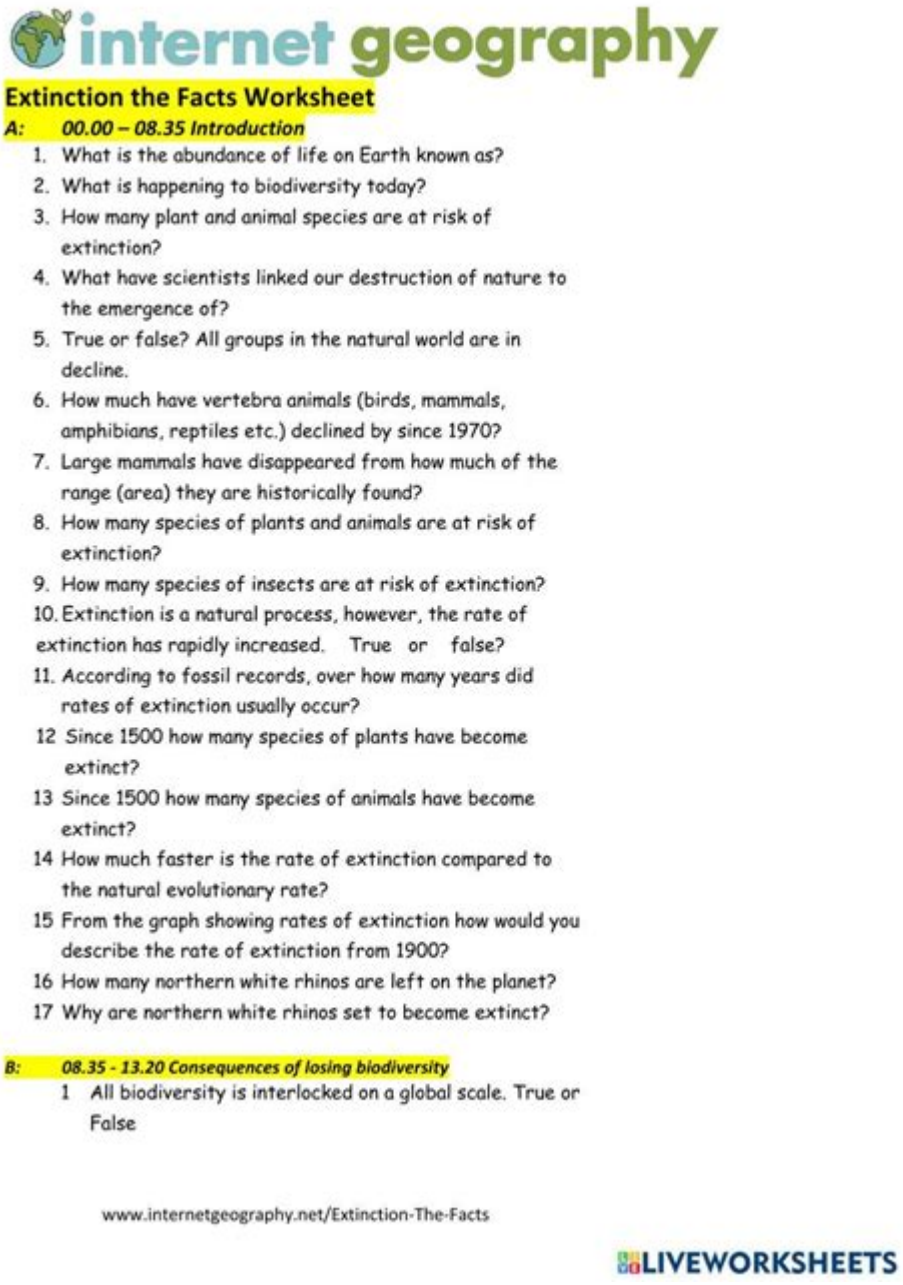
Extinction The Facts Worksheet Answers



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Extinction the Facts Worksheet

A: 00.00 – 08.35 Introduction

1. What is the abundance of life on Earth known as?
2. What is happening to biodiversity today?
3. How many plant and animal species are at risk of extinction?
4. What have scientists linked our destruction of nature to the emergence of?
5. True or false? All groups in the natural world are in decline.
6. How much have vertebra animals (birds, mammals, amphibians, reptiles etc.) declined by since 1970?
7. Large mammals have disappeared from how much of the range (area) they are historically found?
8. How many species of plants and animals are at risk of extinction?
9. How many species of insects are at risk of extinction?
10. Extinction is a natural process, however, the rate of extinction has rapidly increased. True or false?
11. According to fossil records, over how many years did rates of extinction usually occur?
12. Since 1500 how many species of plants have become extinct?
13. Since 1500 how many species of animals have become extinct?
14. How much faster is the rate of extinction compared to the natural evolutionary rate?
15. From the graph showing rates of extinction how would you describe the rate of extinction from 1900?
16. How many northern white rhinos are left on the planet?
17. Why are northern white rhinos set to become extinct?

B: 08.35 - 13.20 Consequences of losing biodiversity

1. All biodiversity is interlocked on a global scale. True or False

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LIVEWORKSHEETS

Extinction the facts worksheet answers can serve as a powerful tool for educators and students alike, providing insights into the critical issues surrounding species extinction. Understanding extinction is essential not only for grasping the history of life on Earth but also for recognizing the ongoing threats to biodiversity. This article aims to delve into the facts surrounding extinction, offering a comprehensive overview of its causes, consequences, and the steps we can take to mitigate this pressing issue.

Understanding Extinction

Extinction occurs when a species no longer exists anywhere on Earth. This can happen due to various natural and human-induced factors. It is important to differentiate between two types of extinction:

- **Background Extinction:** This is the normal process of species dying out over time due to natural selection and environmental changes. It typically occurs at a slow and relatively constant rate.
- **Mass Extinction:** This refers to events where a significant percentage of species are wiped out in a relatively short time due to catastrophic events, such as volcanic eruptions or asteroid impacts. The Earth has experienced five major mass extinctions, with the most recent one occurring 66 million years ago, which led to the demise of the dinosaurs.

Statistics on Extinction

The statistics surrounding extinction are alarming. According to the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN):

1. Current Extinction Rates: It is estimated that species are going extinct at a rate 1,000 times higher than the natural background rate.
2. Species at Risk: More than 28,000 species are currently threatened with extinction.
3. Habitat Loss: Approximately 50% of the Earth's land surface has been transformed for human use, leading to habitat loss for countless species.

Causes of Extinction

Understanding the causes of extinction is vital for addressing the issue effectively. The primary drivers of extinction can be categorized into several key factors:

1. Habitat Destruction

Habitat destruction is one of the most significant causes of extinction. This occurs when natural habitats are altered or destroyed due to:

- Urban development
- Agriculture and livestock grazing
- Deforestation
- Mining and industrial activities

2. Climate Change

Climate change poses a severe threat to biodiversity. Species that cannot adapt to rapid changes in climate conditions face extinction. Key impacts include:

- Altered habitats
- Changes in food availability
- Increased frequency of extreme weather events

3. Pollution

Pollution from industrial, agricultural, and urban sources can lead to the degradation of ecosystems. Key pollutants include:

- Plastics and waste
- Pesticides and fertilizers
- Heavy metals and chemicals

4. Overexploitation

Overexploitation of species, whether for food, medicine, or other resources, can lead to population declines and eventual extinction. Examples include:

- Overfishing of marine species
- Poaching of wildlife for ivory, fur, and other products
- Unsustainable harvesting of plants for medicinal purposes

5. Invasive Species

Invasive species can disrupt local ecosystems by outcompeting native species for resources. This can lead to declines in native populations, resulting in extinction. Examples include:

- The introduction of non-native plants that outcompete local flora
- Predators introduced to new environments that threaten local fauna

Consequences of Extinction

The extinction of a species can have far-reaching effects on ecosystems and human life. Some of the critical consequences include:

1. Loss of Biodiversity

Biodiversity is essential for ecosystem resilience. The extinction of a single species can disrupt food webs and lead to further extinctions, resulting in a cascade effect throughout the ecosystem.

2. Ecosystem Services Disruption

Ecosystems provide vital services, including pollination, water purification, and climate regulation. Extinctions can compromise these services, impacting agriculture, health, and overall quality of life.

3. Economic Impact

Numerous industries rely on biodiversity, including agriculture, forestry, and tourism. The loss of species can result in decreased productivity and increased costs associated with finding substitutes.

4. Cultural Loss

Many cultures have deep connections to specific species, whether through mythology, tradition, or livelihood. The extinction of these species can lead to a loss of cultural identity and heritage.

Preventing Extinction

While the situation may seem dire, there are effective strategies that can be employed to prevent further extinctions. Here are some key actions:

1. Conservation Efforts

Conservation programs aim to protect endangered species and their habitats. This can include:

- Establishing protected areas, such as national parks and wildlife reserves
- Implementing breeding programs for endangered species
- Restoring degraded habitats

2. Legislative Actions

Governments and international organizations can enact laws and treaties to protect threatened species. Examples include:

- The Endangered Species Act (ESA) in the United States

- The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)

3. Sustainable Practices

Sustainable agriculture, forestry, and fishing practices can help reduce the impact of human activities on biodiversity. This includes:

- Promoting organic farming
- Implementing sustainable fishing quotas
- Reducing deforestation through responsible forestry practices

4. Public Awareness and Education

Raising awareness about extinction and biodiversity is crucial. Educational programs can help inform the public about the importance of conservation and motivate individuals to take action.

5. Research and Monitoring

Ongoing research into species populations and ecosystems can inform conservation strategies. Monitoring programs can help track changes in biodiversity and the effectiveness of conservation efforts.

Conclusion

Understanding the facts about extinction is essential for addressing the challenges facing our planet today. By recognizing the causes and consequences of extinction, we can take informed steps towards preserving biodiversity. Through concerted efforts in conservation, sustainable practices, and education, we have the power to protect the myriad species that share our planet and ensure a healthier, more sustainable future for all. The answers to "extinction the facts worksheet" are not just statistics; they represent an urgent call to action for individuals, communities, and governments worldwide.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the primary cause of extinction discussed in the facts worksheet?

The primary cause of extinction highlighted in the worksheet is habitat loss due to human activities such as deforestation, urbanization, and pollution.

How does climate change contribute to species extinction according to the worksheet?

Climate change affects species by altering their habitats, disrupting food sources, and making it difficult for them to adapt to rapid environmental changes.

What role do invasive species play in extinction?

Invasive species can outcompete native species for resources, introduce diseases, and disrupt ecosystems, leading to the decline or extinction of native species.

Which human activities are identified as major threats to biodiversity?

Major threats to biodiversity identified include industrialization, agriculture expansion, overfishing, and pollution.

What is the significance of the Endangered Species Act mentioned in the worksheet?

The Endangered Species Act is significant as it provides legal protection to threatened and endangered species, helping to conserve their habitats and promote recovery efforts.

What are some conservation strategies outlined in the worksheet to prevent extinction?

Conservation strategies include habitat restoration, establishing protected areas, breeding programs for endangered species, and public education to raise awareness about biodiversity.

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