Nomads: today and tomorrow

Who are nomads?



Nomads are communities of people who move from one area to another, instead of living in one place. **1__** Nomads travel in groups of families or tribes and they move around for different reasons.

Pastoral nomads usually live in tents and travel to find food for their animals. **2__** Moving around helps these communities to make the best use of the land in countries where it is difficult for grass and plants to grow. For example, in the Andes mountains in Peru, during the rainy season the nomads take their animals to feed on richer grasses in the lower areas and then they move them higher up the mountains during the dry season.

The Sami people have lived in the Arctic for thousands of years and were traditionally nomads. There are approximately 80,000–100,000 Sami, with between 20,000–40,000 now living in Sweden, 50,000–65,000 in Norway, 8,000 in Finland, and 2,000 in Russia. **3__** Every year, they take their animals to winter feeding grounds in the forests and then move them about 300 km to the coastal grasslands in the summer.

The other type of nomads are hunter-gatherers, (like the Inuit of the Canadian Arctic and the hill tribes of Southeast Asia), who move around in search of animals to hunt or plants to eat. As our modern society is changing, these cultures are slowly disappearing or adapting.

What is the future for nomads?

4 __ Nomads are facing many threats from governments which want to control their movement or stop them from moving from place to place completely. They are driving nomads out of some areas and forcing families to live in permanent, modern housing.

Other governments are selling the land that nomads use. In Kenya, for example, the government has sold land that the Maasai use for their animals. Since 1978, the government has taken approximately 300,000 acres of land from the Maasai, who have ended up losing nearly half of their land.

5__ They are important for the economic development of some of the poorest countries in the world because they know how to use land that is difficult to farm or build on.

A) They have adapted their lifestyles to the weather, and their movement is connected with the seasons and when it rains.

B) Nomads have difficulty in finding jobs in modern societies.

C) About 6,000 of this native group in Sweden still have semi-nomadic lives, traveling for some of the year, but returning to their permanent modern housing for the rest of the time.

D) The nomadic way of life is in danger in the modern world.

E) Nomads are important for the culture of the country.

F) There are approximately 30–40 million nomads in the world today.

G) Nomads play an important part in world trade.

H) The Bedouin is one of the most famous nomadic communities that still exists today.

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