

In the text below, choose the correct word

# Easter Island

We tend to think that (1) \_\_\_\_\_ people were "environmentally friendly" and lived in harmony with (2) \_\_\_\_\_. Some people did indeed respect and (3) \_\_\_\_\_ their environment. But there are many examples of ancient peoples who (4) \_\_\_\_\_ the land they (5) \_\_\_\_\_. The people of Easter Island crossed the ocean to create a peaceful and prosperous 1000-year civilization. But then their culture (6) \_\_\_\_\_ into war and (7) \_\_\_\_\_ starvation. It's a lesson we have to learn from.

Over its three million years of existence before humans came along, Easter Island had developed a balanced ecosystem. This natural balance was (8) \_\_\_\_\_ by the arrival of voyagers, probably a few dozen Polynesians. During this early period, the islanders built simple types of platforms with small statues either on or in front of them.

From about AD 1000 to 1500, they became more prosperous and built bigger ceremonial platforms and hundreds of large statues. As the (9) \_\_\_\_\_ grew, the need for land increased. There is also evidence of a serious (10) \_\_\_\_\_ of the forest.

The third and final period saw the tragic (11) \_\_\_\_\_ of the earlier way of life. The (12) \_\_\_\_\_ of the island's change and decline were (13) \_\_\_\_\_, but mainly due to one thing – destruction of large numbers of trees.

Deforestation also caused (14) \_\_\_\_\_ soil erosion, which (15) \_\_\_\_\_ the island's potential for (16) \_\_\_\_\_ crops. It is impossible to know exactly what happened on Easter Island as there are no (17) \_\_\_\_\_. What is certain is that the civilisation (18) \_\_\_\_\_ because of (19) \_\_\_\_\_ growth, together with the (20) \_\_\_\_\_ in food production and the great expenditure of effort on (21) \_\_\_\_\_ activities (platform building, statue carving and transportation). Starvation led to raiding and violence.

The Easter Island story provides (22) \_\_\_\_\_ for disaster. The parallel between the ecological disaster on Easter Island (isolated in the Pacific) and what is happening elsewhere on planet Earth (isolated in space) is far too close for comfort.

