

## The most dangerous creatures?

People are part of nature but paradoxically they are dangerous to nature in many ways. They are responsible for the problem of deforestation, which is really a burning one. Deforestation means that forests are disappearing and it mainly happens because of the extensive agricultural or industrial activity of people. Extensive and unwise hunting is another nature-unfriendly action. Lots of species have become extinct or close to extinction and it's often people's fault too.

One of the examples of people's destructive behaviour is the tragic story of the dog-fish shark which has recently been added to the endangered list. It's one of the rarest deepwater sharks. It's about one meter forty centimetres long and it can live up to forty years. Sadly, the population of these sharks, that are not dangerous to people at all, has fallen by 99 percent over the past 20 years.

The problem for the shark is that its fat (which is called shark oil) is widely used in cosmetics for producing face and hand creams and in dietary food. People fish the

shark illegally for its oil and if fishing is not stopped immediately, the dog-fish shark will be added to the list of extinct creatures very soon.

However, even if we neither hunt nor fish, if we never cut down a tree but only travel to admire the wonders of nature in different parts of the world, we are still dangerous to the planet.

Usually, when the dangers of travelling are mentioned, it concerns harm that may be done to people. It's true that there *are* dangers as people could be stung by mosquitoes, bitten by spiders or snakes in the jungle. They could get sunstroke in the desert or they could drown in the sea — travellers can never be insured against all kinds of risk. But it never occurs to us how dangerous our travelling is to nature...

Tourist and business travelling is booming nowadays. Billions of cars poison the air, water and earth. Planes damage the ozone layer of the atmosphere. Millions of tons of gas, oil, and coal burned on the planet for travelling purposes destroy the rainforests and add to the greenhouse effect. The polluted atmosphere retains more warmth and it makes the average temperatures of the planet higher. At first sight it may seem unimportant but even a slight rise in the temperature is enough to make the icecaps of the Atlantic melt faster. Ice melt, in its turn, will raise the ocean level, and some regions, densely inhabited now, may disappear under the water. Rapid changes in climate will drive lots of plants and animals to extinction. It will be a snowball effect which may eventually cause the extinction of human beings too!

Does the above-mentioned mean that we should stop travelling and should spend our whole lives in our hometowns? Certainly not. People can't do without travelling but they should consider safer means of transportation and learn to use clean energy. It's time to invest in research and technology.

- 10** Deforestation means a process of restoring a forest after the fire.  
1) True    2) False    3) Not stated
- 11** The dog-fish shark is a close-to-extinction creature.  
1) True    2) False    3) Not stated
- 12** Dog-fish oil is an effective treatment for skin diseases.  
1) True    2) False    3) Not stated
- 13** The dog-fish shark is the smallest species of shark.  
1) True    2) False    3) Not stated
- 14** Today, travelling is a risk-free activity for people.  
1) True    2) False    3) Not stated
- 15** Modern travellers find traditional methods of protection against insects very effective.  
1) True    2) False    3) Not stated
- 16** A clear atmosphere is colder than an atmosphere polluted with chemicals.  
1) True    2) False    3) Not stated
- 17** The author believes that people should limit their appetite for travelling.  
1) True    2) False    3) Not stated