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Vocabulary: environment 词汇：环境

If a **species** of bee disappears forever or a particular plant is **extinct**, what does it have to do with us humans? Well, according to a team of international scientists, **biodiversity** is dropping below levels considered safe for the wellbeing of human societies.

The issue is that everything is **interconnected** and **ecosystems** support our societies because they provide us with, for example, food, fibres and fuels.

If species go on disappearing, this can **interfere** with vital processes such as crop **pollination** and the **decomposition** of waste.



If left unchecked, loss of biodiversity could have serious consequences, say scientists

A **framework** which defines the environmental limits within which humans can operate – called **planetary boundaries** - says that losing more than 10% of the biodiversity in an area places the local ecosystem at risk. Ecosystems are all different but this percentage is considered a good measure of safety.

A study published in the magazine Science suggests that 58% of the world's **land surface** already falls below this level. These areas house 71% of the global population.

Professor Andy Purvis, from Imperial College London and the **Natural History Museum**, is one of the authors of the study. He says: "Once we're the wrong side of the boundary it doesn't mean everything goes wrong immediately, but there is a markedly higher risk that things will go badly wrong."

The researchers found that **grasslands**, **savannas** and **shrub lands** were most affected by biodiversity loss on average.

Purvis hopes this report can be a wake-up call to those who design policies. Here's his warning: "**Decision-makers** worry a lot about economic recessions, but an **ecological recession** could have even worse consequences – and the biodiversity damage we've had means we're at risk of that happening. Until and unless we can bring biodiversity back up, we're playing **ecological roulette**."

词汇表

species	(动植物的) 种, 物种
extinct	消失的, 灭绝的
biodiversity	生物多样性
interconnected	(两个或多个事物) 互相联系的
ecosystem	生态系统
interfere	影响
pollination	植物授粉
decomposition	分解
framework	框架, 体系
planetary boundaries	地球界限 (概念)
land surface	大地表面
Natural History Museum	自然历史博物馆
grassland	草原, 草场
savanna	稀树草原
shrub land	灌木丛林
decision-maker	决策者
ecological recession	生物衰退
ecological roulette	生态轮盘赌

测验与练习

1. 阅读课文并回答问题。

1. Why is the existence of many species of animals and plants important for humans?
2. True or false? *If 10% of the species in any ecosystem disappear, everything will go badly wrong there.*
3. How much of the Earth's land cover houses almost three-quarters of the world's population?
4. What idea does Professor Purvis want to convey when using the expression 'ecological roulette'?
5. Which noun is often used to refer to a period in which trade and industrial activity are reduced?

2. 请你在不参考课文的情况下完成下列练习。选择一个意思合适的单词填入句子的空格处。

1. The more species you have in a particular area, the greater is its _____.

pollination	biodiversity	framework	savannas
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2. Birds and starfish live in different _____.

biodiversity	boundaries	ecosystems	societies
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3. If tropical forests are not preserved, many species of animals might end up _____.

interconnected	safe	playing ecological roulette	extinct
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4. An ecosystem is everything that exists in a particular _____.

society	environment	biodiversity	ecology
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5. It's necessary to avoid further loss of biodiversity or the _____ will be devastating.

boundaries	consequences	environment	land surface
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答案

1. 阅读课文并回答问题。

1. Why is the existence of many species of animals and plants important for humans?
Because many species take part in natural processes which guarantee that ecosystems work well and keep giving us food, fibres and fuel.
2. True or false? *If 10% of the species in any ecosystem disappear, everything will go badly wrong there.*
False. Ecosystems are different and this percentage is just a reference set up by scientists. And things don't go wrong immediately, according to Professor Andy Purvis.
3. How much of the Earth's land cover houses almost three-quarters of the world's population?
About 71% of the global population live in 58% of the world's land cover.
4. What idea does Professor Purvis want to convey when using the expression 'ecological roulette'?
Professor Purvis wants to convey the idea that human societies take a great risk in a deadly game.
5. Which noun is often used to refer to a period in which trade and industrial activity are reduced?
Recession.

2. 请你在不参考课文的情况下完成下列练习。选择一个意思合适的单词填入句子的空格处。

1. The more species you have in a particular area, the greater is its **biodiversity**.
2. Birds and starfish live in different **ecosystems**.
3. If tropical forests are not preserved, many species of animals might end up **extinct**.
4. An ecosystem is everything that exists in a particular **environment**.
5. It's necessary to avoid further loss of biodiversity or the **consequences** will be devastating.