



Environment and Conservation

Vocabulary Long List

Topic vocabulary, useful phrases, phrasal verbs and idioms | Cambridge IGCSE ESL

<p>1 Learn by theme Study one table at a time.</p>	<p>2 Notice combinations Learn complete phrases, not isolated words.</p>	<p>3 Use the examples Adapt each sentence for speaking or writing.</p>
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Pollution

Word or phrase	Meaning	Example sentence
air pollution	harmful substances in the air	Traffic is a major source of air pollution.
water pollution	contamination of rivers, lakes or seas	Factory waste can cause serious water pollution.
noise pollution	disturbing or harmful levels of sound	Airports may increase noise pollution nearby.
reduce pollution	decrease harmful contamination of the environment	Cleaner transport can reduce pollution.
toxic waste	poisonous material that must be handled safely	Toxic waste should never enter rivers.
environmental damage	harm caused to the natural world	The spill caused lasting environmental damage.

Waste and recycling

Word or phrase	Meaning	Example sentence
recycle waste	process used materials so they can be used again	Households should recycle waste correctly.
single-use plastic	plastic designed to be used once	Several shops have reduced single-use plastic.
landfill site	a place where waste is buried	Too much household waste goes to landfill sites.
separate rubbish	divide waste into suitable categories	Clear labels help residents separate rubbish.
reuse materials	use items or resources again	Art projects can reuse materials creatively.
reduce waste	decrease the amount of material thrown away	Buying only what we need can reduce waste.



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Climate change

Word or phrase	Meaning	Example sentence
climate change	long-term changes in global or regional climate	Climate change is increasing the frequency of extreme weather.
global warming	the long-term rise in Earth's average temperature	Greenhouse gases contribute to global warming.
carbon emissions	carbon dioxide released into the atmosphere	Renewable energy can lower carbon emissions.
greenhouse gas	a gas that traps heat in the atmosphere	Methane is a powerful greenhouse gas.
extreme weather	unusually severe weather conditions	Communities need plans for extreme weather.
carbon footprint	the total emissions caused by a person, activity or product	Using less energy can reduce a household's carbon footprint.

Energy and resources

Word or phrase	Meaning	Example sentence
renewable energy	energy from sources that are naturally replaced	Solar power is a form of renewable energy.
fossil fuel	coal, oil or gas formed over millions of years	Burning fossil fuels releases carbon dioxide.
energy-efficient	using less energy to provide the same result	Energy-efficient appliances reduce electricity use.
conserve water	use water carefully and avoid waste	Fixing leaks helps households conserve water.
natural resource	a useful material or substance found in nature	Fresh water is a vital natural resource.
sustainable use	use that can continue without exhausting a resource	Fishing limits encourage sustainable use of ocean resources.



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Wildlife and habitats

Word or phrase	Meaning	Example sentence
wildlife	animals and plants living naturally in an area	The wetland supports diverse wildlife.
natural habitat	the place where a species normally lives	Construction can destroy a natural habitat.
protect species	prevent types of plants or animals from disappearing	Conservation programmes protect endangered species.
endangered	at serious risk of extinction	The turtle is endangered because of habitat loss.
biodiversity	the variety of living things in an area	Forests with high biodiversity are more resilient.
food chain	a series showing how organisms depend on one another for food	Pollution can disrupt the food chain.

Conservation

Word or phrase	Meaning	Example sentence
conservation	protection and careful management of nature	Conservation requires cooperation with local communities.
protected area	land or water legally managed for conservation	Fishing is restricted in the protected area.
restore an ecosystem	help a damaged natural system recover	Volunteers planted trees to restore the ecosystem.
wildlife reserve	an area where animals and habitats are protected	The wildlife reserve attracts researchers and visitors.
breeding programme	an organised effort to increase a species' population	A breeding programme helped save the rare bird.
prevent extinction	stop a species disappearing completely	Habitat protection can prevent extinction.



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Everyday environmental action

Word or phrase	Meaning	Example sentence
environmentally friendly	causing less harm to the environment	Reusable bottles are an environmentally friendly choice.
take action	do something practical to address a problem	Communities must take action before pollution worsens.
use less energy	reduce energy consumption	Turning off unused lights helps people use less energy.
choose reusable products	select items designed for repeated use	Shoppers can choose reusable products instead of disposable ones.
travel sustainably	use forms of travel with lower environmental impact	Cycling allows people to travel sustainably.
raise awareness	increase public knowledge of an issue	The campaign raises awareness of plastic pollution.

Policy and community solutions

Word or phrase	Meaning	Example sentence
environmental law	a rule designed to protect the environment	Strong environmental laws can limit illegal dumping.
public campaign	an organised effort to influence public knowledge or behaviour	The public campaign encouraged recycling.
community project	local organised work intended to improve an area	Students joined a community project to clean the beach.
government target	an official result a government aims to achieve	The government set a target for renewable energy.
corporate responsibility	a company's duty to consider its social and environmental effects	Corporate responsibility includes reducing waste.
long-term solution	an answer designed to remain effective over time	Better public transport is a long-term solution to congestion.



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Phrasal verbs

Use these natural verb combinations when speaking or writing about this topic.

Word or phrase	Meaning	Example sentence
cut down on	reduce the amount of something	We should cut down on unnecessary packaging.
throw away	discard something	Repair items instead of throwing them away.
use up	consume all of a resource	Do not use up water carelessly.
clean up	remove pollution or rubbish	Volunteers cleaned up the beach.
die out	become extinct	Species may die out when habitats disappear.
wipe out	destroy an entire population	Disease can wipe out a small population.
break down	decompose into simpler substances	Some plastics take centuries to break down.
give off	produce and release something	Vehicles give off harmful gases.
run out of	use all of a supply	Some regions may run out of clean water.
phase out	gradually stop using something	The city will phase out older buses.
switch to	change from one thing to another	Households can switch to renewable electricity.
carry out	perform a task or study	Scientists carried out an environmental survey.

High-value collocations

reduce air pollution	recycle household waste	avoid single-use plastic
lower carbon emissions	reduce a carbon footprint	use renewable energy
conserve natural resources	protect wildlife	restore natural habitats
prevent extinction	take environmental action	raise public awareness
enforce environmental laws	set government targets	accept corporate responsibility
support community projects	develop long-term solutions	live more sustainably



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Idioms and figurative expressions

Use these selectively. One natural expression is more effective than several forced into the same answer.

Word or phrase	Meaning	Example sentence
go green	adopt environmentally friendly habits	More businesses are trying to go green.
a drop in the ocean	an amount too small to have much effect	One clean-up is a drop in the ocean without wider change.
tip of the iceberg	a small visible part of a much larger problem	The polluted beach is only the tip of the iceberg.
weather the storm	survive a difficult period	Diverse ecosystems can better weather the storm.
in hot water	in trouble	The company was in hot water after dumping waste illegally.
plant the seeds	begin a process that may develop later	School projects plant the seeds of environmental responsibility.
turn over a new leaf	begin behaving in a better way	The factory turned over a new leaf and reduced its emissions.
think globally, act locally	consider worldwide issues while taking local action	Recycling reflects the idea: think globally, act locally.

Exam-ready language

Purpose	Useful sentence frame
Introducing a benefit	<i>One significant benefit is that...</i>
Introducing a drawback	<i>A possible drawback is that...</i>
Balancing an argument	<i>Although this offers clear advantages, it may also...</i>
Explaining a result	<i>As a result, people may...</i>
Giving an example	<i>A clear example of this can be seen when...</i>
Making a comparison	<i>Compared with..., this option is...</i>
Giving advice	<i>People can improve the situation by...</i>
Suggesting action	<i>One practical solution would be to...</i>
Expressing caution	<i>It is important to consider whether...</i>
Giving an opinion	<i>In my view, the most sensible approach is to...</i>