

Mind Map - Combined Responses

How & why does the environment change negatively?

- **Pollution** – humans pollute the air, soil, and water in many different ways
- **Fossil Fuels** – humans use up resources that can't be renewed. Mining and burning them damages the environment, ruins air quality, creates pollution, causes global warming.
- **Deforestation** – land cleared affects balance of ecosystem. Plants can become extinct due to introduced species, pesticides, fertilizers, sewage etc. Loss of animal habitat.
- **Extinction** – Animal species can die out from too much hunting/fishing, introduced species, habitat loss, pollution etc
- **Overpopulation** – not enough resources to support this many people on the earth
- **Climate change** – greenhouse effect causes change in temperatures, melting icecaps, rise in sea levels, more extreme weather events. Many plants & animals can't survive in changed conditions.
- **Erosion** – landforms are worn away over time, often caused by humans changing things like adding dams or irrigation.
- **Natural disasters** – tornadoes, earthquakes, volcanoes, floods, cyclones
- **Destruction of cultural heritage sites** – tourism & careless use can lead to destruction of ancient landforms
- **Inequality** – gap between rich and poor, some people have way too much and some have nothing. Cycle of poverty because wealthy people in power make rules that suit them. Environmentally friendly alternatives are not available to people in poverty.
- **Wars & political unrest** – competition & arguments between superpowers leads to destruction, disease & lives lost. Governments more interested in gaining/keeping power than looking after the earth. Confusion and arguments in politics often affects economy, society, living standards, religion, education.
- **Culture** – society is becoming more morally corrupt. Big companies exploiting people and resources to make money. Media pushes the goal of getting rich, pleasing yourself, consuming goods. Throwaway culture (don't fix just buy another one, electronics designed to wear out quickly so you have to buy another one) Lack of education about environment leads to lack of care about it.

Effects of the environment changing negatively

- Warmer temperatures = melting icecaps = rising oceans = habitats & buildings destroyed, less land for people & animals to live on
- Less resources to go around & less room = starvation & overcrowding
- Bigger storms & more frequent natural disasters
- More extreme weather, droughts, floods
- Toxic water/air bad for health & wellbeing (people and animals)
- Animal extinction can't be reversed & leads to other animal populations being affected
- God designed the ecosystems of the earth. They are all beautifully balanced and all the parts rely on each other to work. Damaging one part affects them all
- Many of these problems won't be solved until Christ's return but we can still do what we can now

How & why does the environment change positively?

- **Recycling** – means less ends up in landfill/pollution, also means less needs to be produced.
- **Preserving endangered species** – increased awareness, programs to protect & breed/reintroduce species that may have otherwise died out
- **Renewable energy** – e.g. solar, hydro, wind energy create less emissions and are (can't be used up/run out.)
- **Replanting forests** – wildlife reserves & park areas help plants and wildlife to regrow & regain natural balance
- **Sustainable practices** – e.g. riding instead of walking, growing own food, recycling plastics in own home
- **Cleanup efforts** in landfill & oceans
- **Governments** – gradually increasing pressure on them from society to do the right thing. They can help to raise awareness & promote schemes to get people to live more sustainably. They can also put pressure on companies, offer incentives to use less fossil fuels
- **Increased awareness** Partly due to media – information is spread more quickly and easily in 21st century. Celebrities & influencers can use their power for good. People are becoming more educated & more willing to try and help. Social pressure to not be wasteful
- **Scientific advancement** – new tech helps us find ways to be more sustainable, medical advancement means people are living longer & healthier lives

Effects of environment changing positively

- Better conditions for growth = better agricultural yields
- Enough resources to go around
- Less death, starvation, suffering (people and animals)
- Preventing or reversing the damage caused by humans
- Sustainable – can continue into the future

Biblical perspective

Genesis 1 – God created the earth & made it very good (balance of ecosystems, clear design & intent evident in creation). Job 12:7-10 ask the beasts and they will tell you, ask the birds and they will tell you, ask the bushes of the earth, ask the fish in the sea. Who among these does not know that the hand of the Lord has done this.

Genesis 2 – God instructed Adam to look after the earth (dress it & keep it) and use its resources for food (I have given you every herb bearing seed, tree bearing fruit, beasts & fowls for meat). Gave him dominion over animals – knowing more than them & having more agency (free will), with that comes a responsibility, not to be abused.

Children of Israel – God gave them instructions about looking after the earth & animals, using sustainable practices e.g. letting land rest (lie fallow) in 7th year (exodus 23:10-11), not or cutting down too many trees or hunting too many birds (Deut 20:19, 22:6). Tells them he has given every good thing on earth to them for them to use (Jeremiah 2:7). Forbids cruelty to animals &

greed/wastefulness of resources. (muzzle not the ox as it treads the grain). Talks about how the earth is His.

Psalms – talks about how the earth belongs to God & reiterates our dominion (psalm 8:6-8, 104) – knowing He made it & cares for it, shouldn't we look after it Psalm 24, Proverbs 12:10 (look after animals)

Jesus – spoke of how God knows about & cares for the environment, speaks of him 'feeding' the birds (set up systems so they can). (Matt 6:26) explains/reiterates that the earth is God's, belongs to him, we should look after it.

End times – will destroy those who destroy the earth