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Human noise pollution a danger to sea life

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5th December, 2008

THE ARTICLE

Human-made noise pollution in the Earth's oceans and seas is becoming a serious threat to marine wildlife. Scientists report that there is hardly an underwater place left where marine mammals can live in peace and quiet. Dozens of species of whale, dolphin, turtle and other creatures rely on sound to communicate, find mates and hunt for food. Their increasingly noisy environment is making it more and more difficult to lead a normal life. This is according to a report from the International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW), called "Ocean Noise: Turn it Down". The environmental group says noise from shipping, military sonar, oil and gas surveys, offshore construction and marine sports has reached dangerous levels for sea life.

The IFAW says the distance over which blue whales can communicate is down by 90 per cent. It also reports that in the past decade, many whales have become beached after being disorientated because of loud noise. The group also warns that noise pollution is only going to get worse. It highlighted the use of seismic surveys as one example of the extent of the problem. These generate incredibly loud sounds every ten seconds that can travel 3,000 km. There are 90 survey ships active in the oceans today. In addition, the number of ships sailing the seas will double by 2025. Mark Simmonds, a conservation spokesman, said, "man-made noise is already triggering a kind of acoustic fog," and called for a "response to noise pollution in the underwater world".

WARM-UPS

1. NOISE: Walk around the class and talk to other students about noise. Change partners often. After you finish, sit with your partner(s) and share your findings.

2. CHAT: In pairs / groups, decide which of these topics or words from the article are most interesting and which are most boring.

humans / Earth / oceans / mammals / peace and quiet / communicate / marine sports / loud noise / pollution / surveys / ships / conservation / the underwater world

Have a chat about the topics you liked. Change topics and partners frequently.

3. POLLUTION: Do you worry about pollution? Complete the table below with your partner(s). Share what you wrote with other students. Decide as a class which solutions are best.

Pollution	Problems	Solutions
Traffic pollution		
Noise pollution		
Underwater noise		
Industrial		
English language		

4. TURN IT DOWN: Students A **strongly** believe we should stop creating noise pollution in the oceans; Students B **strongly** believe noise pollution in the oceans is unavoidable and is no problem. Change partners again and talk about your conversations.

5. NOISES: What noises do you associate with different things? Talk about these things with your partner(s). Change partners and discuss what you talked about.

- Ocean noises
- Childhood noises
- English noises
- 21st century noises
- Interesting noises
- Unwanted noises
- Favourite noises
- Noise-pollution noises

6. WHALE: Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with the word 'whale'. Share your words with your partner(s) and talk about them. Together, put the words into different categories.

BEFORE READING / LISTENING

1. TRUE / FALSE: Look at the article's headline and guess whether these sentences are true (T) or false (F):

- | | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| a. The noise humans make is threatening creatures living in the oceans. | T / F |
| b. There are very few quiet places left in the oceans. | T / F |
| c. Turtles use sound to hunt for food and look for a mate. | T / F |
| d. An environmental group said noise from shopping upset whales. | T / F |
| e. The distance over which blue whales can communicate has increased. | T / F |
| f. Noise pollution can mean whales lose their way and die on beaches. | T / F |
| g. The number of ships on the seas will triple in the next 20 years. | T / F |
| h. An environmental spokesman said it's very foggy in the oceans. | T / F |

2. SYNONYM MATCH: Match the following synonyms from the article:

- | | |
|------------------|-------------|
| 1. threat | a. starting |
| 2. marine | b. live |
| 3. rely | c. answer |
| 4. lead | d. aquatic |
| 5. levels | e. confused |
| 6. distance | f. danger |
| 7. disorientated | g. scale |
| 8. extent | h. amounts |
| 9. triggering | i. length |
| 10. response | j. depend |

3. PHRASE MATCH: Match the following phrases from the article (sometimes more than one combination is possible):

- | | |
|----------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Human-made noise pollution in the Earth's | a. double by 2025 |
| 2. marine mammals can live in peace | b. to communicate |
| 3. creatures rely on sound | c. can communicate |
| 4. difficult to lead | d. for sea life |
| 5. ...has reached dangerous levels | e. sounds every ten seconds |
| 6. the distance over which blue whales | f. oceans and seas |
| 7. noise pollution is only going to | g. kind of acoustic fog |
| 8. These generate incredibly loud | h. a normal life |
| 9. the number of ships sailing the seas will | i. and quiet |
| 10. man-made noise is already triggering a | j. get worse |

WHILE READING / LISTENING

GAP FILL: Put the words into the gaps in the text.

Human-made noise pollution in the Earth's oceans and seas is becoming a _____ threat to marine wildlife. Scientists report that there is _____ an underwater place left where marine mammals can live in peace and quiet. Dozens of species of whale, dolphin, turtle and other creatures _____ on sound to communicate, find mates and hunt for food. Their increasingly _____ environment is making it more and more difficult to _____ a normal life. This is according to a report from the International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW), called "Ocean Noise: Turn it Down". The environmental _____ says noise from shipping, military sonar, oil and _____ surveys, offshore construction and marine sports has reached dangerous _____ for sea life.

group

rely

noisy

serious

gas

lead

hardly

levels

The IFAW says the _____ over which blue whales can communicate is down by 90 per cent. It also _____ that in the past decade, many whales have become beached after being disorientated because of loud noise. The group also _____ that noise pollution is only going to get worse. It highlighted the use of seismic surveys as one _____ of the extent of the problem. These generate _____ loud sounds every ten seconds that can travel 3,000 km. There are 90 survey ships _____ in the oceans today. In addition, the number of ships sailing the seas will _____ by 2025. Mark Simmonds, a conservation spokesman, said, "man-made noise is already triggering a kind of acoustic fog," and called for a "_____ to noise pollution in the underwater world".

example

warns

double

active

distance

response

incredibly

reports

LISTENING: Listen and fill in the spaces.

Human-made noise pollution in the Earth's oceans and _____ a serious threat to marine wildlife. Scientists report that there is hardly an underwater place left where marine mammals can _____ quiet. Dozens of species of whale, dolphin, turtle and other creatures _____ communicate, find mates and hunt for food. Their increasingly noisy environment _____ more difficult to lead a normal life. This is according to a report from the International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW), called "Ocean Noise: Turn it Down". The environmental group _____, military sonar, oil and gas surveys, offshore construction and marine sports has reached dangerous _____.

The IFAW says the _____ blue whales can communicate is down by 90 per cent. It also reports that in the past decade, many whales have become beached after being _____ of loud noise. The group also warns that noise pollution is only going to get worse. It highlighted the use of seismic surveys _____ the extent of the problem. These generate incredibly loud sounds every ten seconds that can travel 3,000 km. There are 90 survey ships _____ today. In addition, the number of ships sailing the seas will double by 2025. Mark Simmonds, a conservation spokesman, said, "man-made noise is already triggering a kind _____," and called for a "_____ pollution in the underwater world".

AFTER READING / LISTENING

1. WORD SEARCH: Look in your dictionaries / computer to find collocates, other meanings, information, synonyms ... for the words '**noise**' and '**pollution**'.

noise	pollution
--------------	------------------

- Share your findings with your partners.
- Make questions using the words you found.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

2. ARTICLE QUESTIONS: Look back at the article and write down some questions you would like to ask the class about the text.

- Share your questions with other classmates / groups.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

3. GAP FILL: In pairs / groups, compare your answers to this exercise. Check your answers. Talk about the words from the activity. Were they new, interesting, worth learning...?

4. VOCABULARY: Circle any words you do not understand. In groups, pool unknown words and use dictionaries to find their meanings.

5. TEST EACH OTHER: Look at the words below. With your partner, try to recall how they were used in the text:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• serious• hardly• dozens• hunt• normal• gas	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 90• worse• extent• 3,000• 2025• fog
-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

STUDENT NOISE POLLUTION SURVEY

Write five GOOD questions about noise pollution in the table. Do this in pairs. Each student must write the questions on his / her own paper.

When you have finished, interview other students. Write down their answers.

	STUDENT 1 _____	STUDENT 2 _____	STUDENT 3 _____
Q.1.			
Q.2.			
Q.3.			
Q.4.			
Q.5.			

- Now return to your original partner and share and talk about what you found out. Change partners often.
- Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.

NOISE POLLUTION DISCUSSION

STUDENT A's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student B)

- a) What did you think when you read the headline?
- b) What springs to mind when you hear the term 'noise pollution'?
- c) Do you suffer as a result of noise pollution?
- d) What do you think of the concept of noise pollution in the oceans?
- e) Do you think it's important to live in peace and quiet?
- f) Do you think this is a serious problem?
- g) What would life be like if your environment was so noisy you couldn't even hear yourself think?
- h) Do you think governments and corporations need to scale down their activities in the oceans?
- i) What would governments do if all whales and dolphins were in danger of becoming extinct because of noise pollution?
- j) Do you get fed up with noisy jet skis and power boats when you are at the beach?

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NOISE POLLUTION DISCUSSION

STUDENT B's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student A)

- a) Did you like reading this article?
- b) What do you think will happen to whales if they cannot communicate?
- c) How do you think we can reverse noise pollution in the oceans?
- d) What will happen to marine mammals if noise pollution gets worse?
- e) Do you think there should be human-free zones in whole oceans?
- f) Do you think human activity will eventually kill the oceans?
- g) What would life be like without human-made noises?
- h) What do you think "acoustic fog" is?
- i) What other kinds of pollution are you worried about?
- j) What questions would you like to ask Mark Simmonds?

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LANGUAGE

Human-made noise pollution in the Earth's oceans and seas (1) _____ becoming a serious threat to marine wildlife. Scientists report that there is (2) _____ an underwater place left where marine mammals can live in peace and quiet. Dozens of species of whale, dolphin, turtle and other creatures (3) _____ on sound to communicate, find mates and hunt for food. Their increasingly noisy environment is making it more and more difficult to (4) _____ a normal life. This is according to a report from the International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW), called "Ocean Noise: Turn it Down". The environmental group says noise from shipping, military sonar, (5) _____ and gas surveys, offshore construction and marine sports has reached dangerous levels (6) _____ sea life.

The IFAW says the distance over which blue whales can communicate is (7) _____ by 90 per cent. It also reports that in the past decade, many whales have become beached after (8) _____ disorientated because of loud noise. The group also warns that noise pollution is only going to get worse. It highlighted the use (9) _____ seismic surveys as one example of the extent of the problem. These generate incredibly loud sounds (10) _____ ten seconds that can travel 3,000 km. There are 90 survey ships active in the oceans today. In addition, the number of ships sailing the seas will double (11) _____ 2025. Mark Simmonds, a conservation spokesman, said, "man-made noise is already triggering a kind of acoustic (12) _____," and called for a "response to noise pollution in the underwater world".

Put the correct words from the table below in the above article.

- | | | | | |
|-----|------------|--------------|---------------|--------------|
| 1. | (a) to | (b) are | (c) will | (d) is |
| 2. | (a) harden | (b) hardly | (c) hard | (d) harder |
| 3. | (a) rely | (b) relay | (c) rally | (d) reliance |
| 4. | (a) steel | (b) iron | (c) lead | (d) tin |
| 5. | (a) oils | (b) oily | (c) oil | (d) oiled |
| 6. | (a) at | (b) for | (c) by | (d) from |
| 7. | (a) down | (b) decrease | (c) depressed | (d) low |
| 8. | (a) was | (b) be | (c) were | (d) being |
| 9. | (a) if | (b) of | (c) for | (d) from |
| 10. | (a) total | (b) whole | (c) all | (d) every |
| 11. | (a) with | (b) for | (c) by | (d) up |
| 12. | (a) fog | (b) foggier | (c) foggy | (d) fog over |

HOMEWORK

1. VOCABULARY EXTENSION: Choose several of the words from the text. Use a dictionary or Google's search field (or another search engine) to build up more associations / collocations of each word.

2. INTERNET: Search the Internet and find out more about noise pollution in the oceans and the report "Ocean Noise: Turn it Down". Share what you discover with your partner(s) in the next lesson.

3. POLLUTION: Make a poster about the different kinds of pollution we create. Include an action plan for reducing the pollution. Show your work to your classmates in the next lesson. Did you all have similar things?

4. TURN IT DOWN: Write a magazine article about a person whose health is being affected by noise pollution in his city. Include imaginary interviews with the person and the city's environmental health officer.

Read what you wrote to your classmates in the next lesson. Write down any new words and expressions you hear from your partner(s).

5. LETTER: Write a letter to your government's leader. Ask him/her three questions about noise pollution in the oceans. Give him/her your three ideas on what to do to reduce it. Read your letter to your partner(s) in your next lesson. Your partner(s) will answer your questions.

6. DIARY / JOURNAL: You are a whale. You are fed up with noisy humans. Write a diary entry about one day in the ocean. How are humans affecting your daily life? Read what you wrote to your classmates in the next lesson.

ANSWERS

TRUE / FALSE:

- a. T b. T c. T d. F e. F f. T g. F h. F

SYNONYM MATCH:

- | | |
|------------------|-------------|
| 1. threat | a. danger |
| 2. marine | b. aquatic |
| 3. rely | c. depend |
| 4. lead | d. live |
| 5. levels | e. amounts |
| 6. distance | f. length |
| 7. disorientated | g. confused |
| 8. extent | h. scale |
| 9. triggering | i. starting |
| 10. response | j. answer |

PHRASE MATCH:

- | | |
|----------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Human-made noise pollution in the Earth's | a. oceans and seas |
| 2. marine mammals can live in peace | b. and quiet |
| 3. creatures rely on sound | c. to communicate |
| 4. difficult to lead | d. a normal life |
| 5. ...has reached dangerous levels | e. for sea life |
| 6. the distance over which blue whales | f. can communicate |
| 7. noise pollution is only going to | g. get worse |
| 8. These generate incredibly loud | h. sounds every ten seconds |
| 9. the number of ships sailing the seas will | i. double by 2025 |
| 10. man-made noise is already triggering a | j. kind of acoustic fog |

GAP FILL:

Human noise pollution a danger to sea life

Human-made noise pollution in the Earth's oceans and seas is becoming a **serious** threat to marine wildlife. Scientists report that there is **hardly** an underwater place left where marine mammals can live in peace and quiet. Dozens of species of whale, dolphin, turtle and other creatures **rely** on sound to communicate, find mates and hunt for food. Their increasingly **noisy** environment is making it more and more difficult to **lead** a normal life. This is according to a report from the International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW), called "Ocean Noise: Turn it Down". The environmental **group** says noise from shipping, military sonar, oil and **gas** surveys, offshore construction and marine sports has reached dangerous **levels** for sea life.

The IFAW says the **distance** over which blue whales can communicate is down by 90 per cent. It also **reports** that in the past decade, many whales have become beached after being disorientated because of loud noise. The group also **warns** that noise pollution is only going to get worse. It highlighted the use of seismic surveys as one **example** of the extent of the problem. These generate **incredibly** loud sounds every ten seconds that can travel 3,000 km. There are 90 survey ships **active** in the oceans today. In addition, the number of ships sailing the seas will **double** by 2025. Mark Simmonds, a conservation spokesman, said, "man-made noise is already triggering a kind of acoustic fog," and called for a "**response** to noise pollution in the underwater world".

LANGUAGE WORK

- 1 - d 2 - b 3 - a 4 - c 5 - c 6 - b 7 - a 8 - d 9 - b 10 - d 11 - c 12 - a