

Years 6 & 7

# Impact

## Thematic Unit



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## **Acknowledgements**

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# About this Thematic Unit

This Thematic Unit is linked to the Years 6/7 ICL *Eco-Warriors*. Each of us has an impact on the environment, locally and globally. In this Thematic Unit, children develop an understanding of how the things we do can impact on people and animals in other countries and how we can make a positive contribution to our world.

Children begin to be aware of the contribution they have to habitats elsewhere in the world. They explore ways in which they can make a positive contribution.

Children will have the opportunity to develop some of the skills that meet the requirements of the Northern Ireland Curriculum at Key Stage 2. The focus within this unit is outlined below:

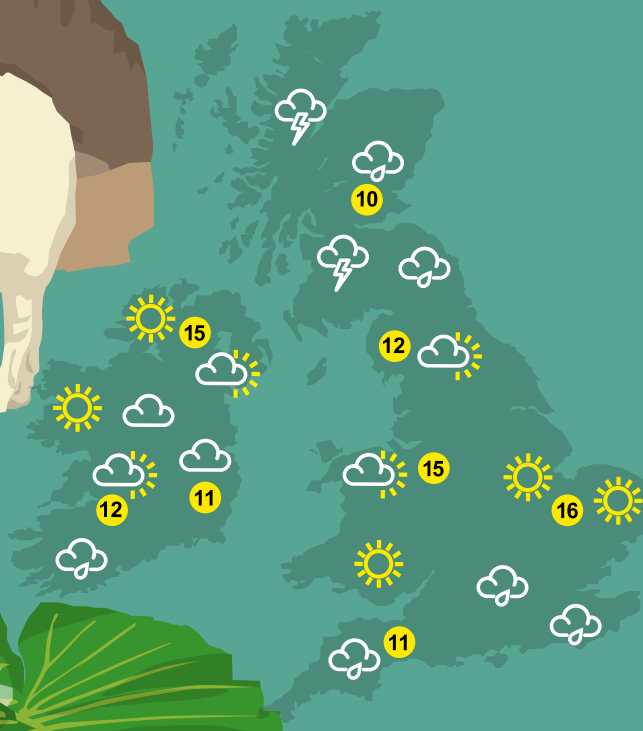
Children explore:

- Different ecosystems;
- Global issues and their impact on the environment; and
- Our collective responsibility to the local and global environment.

<b>Northern Ireland Curriculum Objective</b>	To develop the young person as a contributor to the economy and environment.
<b>Key Element</b>	<i>Education for Sustainable Development</i>
<b>Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities</b>	This Thematic Unit focuses on <b>Thinking, Problem-Solving and Decision-Making</b> . Children will have opportunities to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Examine evidence and make links between possible causes and effects;</i></li> <li>• <i>Understand more than one point of view;</i></li> <li>• <i>Examine options and weigh up pros and cons; and</i></li> <li>• <i>Suggest possible solutions to problems.</i></li> </ul>
<b>Cross-Curricular Skills</b>	Where appropriate, learning intentions that relate to the cross-curricular skills are signposted. These cross-curricular skills are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communication (Comm);</li> <li>• Using Mathematics (UMaths); and</li> <li>• Using ICT (UICT).</li> </ul>
<b>Connecting the Learning</b>	This Thematic Unit provides teachers with opportunities to connect learning across the following Areas of Learning: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The World Around Us;</li> <li>• Personal Development and Mutual Understanding; and</li> <li>• Language and Literacy.</li> </ul>
<b>Aim</b>	The aim of this Thematic Unit is to encourage children to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider how they can make a difference;</li> <li>• Understand how their actions locally may impact globally; and</li> <li>• Build knowledge of the wider world through examining an ecosystem/region.</li> </ul>



# SECTION 01



What's Happening?



# Activity One

## Get the Picture

### Suggested Learning Intentions

Children will:

- be aware how place affects plant and animal life;
- sort and classify photos of information about a range of places (TSPC); and
- identify similarities and differences between a range of features and places (TSPC).

### Suggested Learning and Teaching Activities

Ask children to think about and share with a partner, areas of the world that have a different climate and ecosystems to our own. Record the children's ideas on a flipchart or board.

Display a range of photographs of different ecosystems from around the world, for example:

- Rainforests
- Polar Regions
- Deserts

The children sort the photographs into their distinct ecosystems/regions. Ask them to compare and contrast the different regions, using the following questions to help discussion:

- What colours do you see?
- In what ways are the photos different?
- What words describe each region being studied?
- Why do you think the regions are so different to one another?

For further ideas, see **Using Photographs** in 'Active Learning and Teaching Methods for Key Stages 1 & 2'.

Ask the children to imagine they are environmental investigators. Divide the class into research teams. Give each group one of the regions to focus on.

Each group should think of ways to research their region. The groups should try to locate and name places in the world where their region may be found.

Provide the groups with film extracts appropriate to the region they are investigating. For example: rainforest – 'The Jungle Book' or 'Madagascar'; polar regions – 'Happy Feet' or 'Pingu'; desert – 'Aladdin' or 'Prince of Egypt'.

Using the photographs and film clips complete the 'Know' section of a **KWL grid** for their region.



# Optional Activity

## Plant Life

### Suggested Learning Intentions

Children will:

- be able to plan what they need to do to complete a task;
- learn how place affects plant life; and
- make suggestions about what, when and how to measure (TSPC).

### Suggested Learning and Teaching Activities

Discuss the plant life found in the regions studied. Explain to the class that they will investigate plant life in a variety of conditions. Ask the class for suggestions where plants may be placed for warmth and coolness within the school. How can they make their investigation fair?

Place two plants in the warmth, watering one to represent the rainforest, the other unwatered plant represents the desert. Use a propagator to give plants extra warmth. The children observe the changes to the plants over three weeks. Ask them to suggest reasons for the changes.



# Activity Two

## What's What?

### Suggested Learning Intentions

Children will:

- be able to identify and ask appropriate questions to seek information (TSPC);
- identify and use appropriate sources to gain information/data (TSPC);
- demonstrate skills of working in groups (TSPC);
- use ICT to research, select, evaluate and communicate information (Comm, UICT);
- understand the interdependence of the natural world; and
- learn about some of the plants and animals in a chosen habitat.



### Suggested Learning and Teaching Activities

Organise the class into their groups from the previous activity. Distribute each group with a freestanding whiteboard or flipchart. Each member of the group takes on a role, such as, researcher, collator and chief investigator. Ask the children to identify categories for research about the region studied (such as, animals, plants, weather, people who live there, homes in the area). Discuss and share the ideas. Each group then researches the region they were assigned in the previous activity, focusing on the categories selected by the class. They display their findings on the board or flipchart.

The groups compile a list of their own questions about what they want to know in order to plan their research. This can also be used to complete part of the 'Want to Know' section of the **KWL grid**.

Use the groups' findings on the three boards to stimulate a discussion based on the similarities and differences of the three ecosystems/regions.

# Activity Three

## Weather Watch!

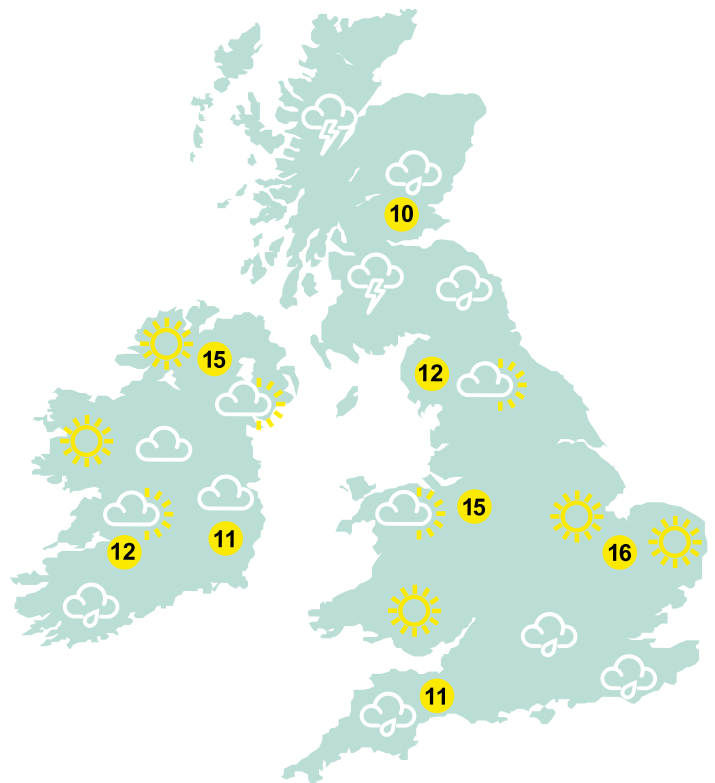
### Suggested Learning Intentions

Children will:

- use ICT to communicate and develop ideas (UICT);
- be encouraged to use a range of creative outcomes to aid geographical understanding (TSPC);
- be able to explore a variety of ways of communicating information; and
- demonstrate how weather affects the lives of people and animals.

Record a television or radio weather forecast and replay it to the children. Using the information gathered in Activity Two, each group writes a weather report for their ecosystem/region, explaining the typical weather experienced there, which may include features such as temperature and wind.

Ask each group to prepare and present a report or digital presentation based on the findings of their research. Remind children to consider their audience when preparing their presentation and use a range of media.



# Activity Four

## Explore, Exploit, Endanger

### Suggested Learning Intentions

Children will:

- know how explorers had both a positive and negative impact on communities;
- be able to locate relevant information and use it appropriately (TSPC);
- be aware of the changes man has made to the environment; and
- be able to use an appropriate form in writing (Comm).

### Suggested Learning and Teaching Activities

In this activity, children try to understand what each environment was like before man impacted on it. They should identify modern technologies which could have helped early explorers to these regions, for example:

- Egyptologists exploring the tombs of the Pharaohs in Egypt.
- Scott or Shackleton exploring the Antarctic.

Challenge the investigation groups to find out about people who explored the areas they have studied. Distribute the Exploration Questions **Resource A** to the relevant groups and ask them to answer the questions.

Ask each of the children to create a factsheet on their explorer. Each group nominates a spokesperson who will answer the investigation questions. The other groups will assess if the questions set were answered successfully.

Each child can write a diary entry for one of the members of these expeditions, describing the climate and the travelling conditions.







# SECTION 02

How Do I Have  
an Impact?



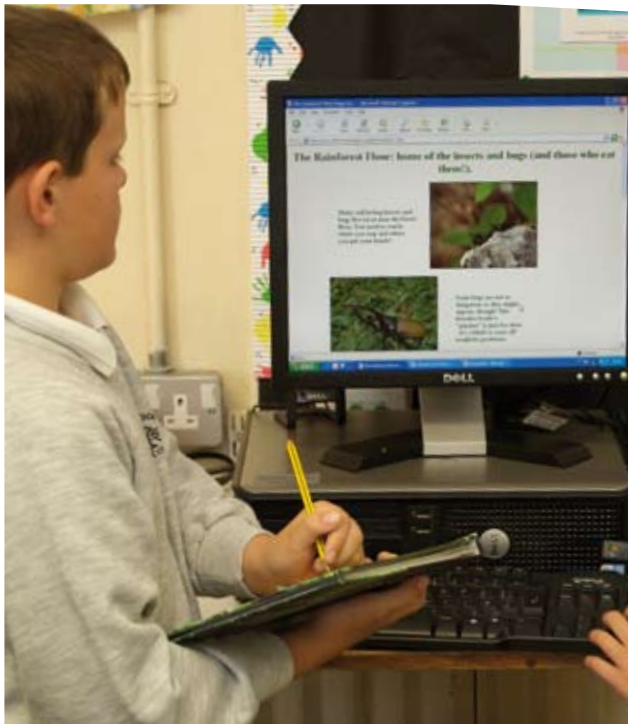
# Activity Five

## In An Ideal World

### Suggested Learning Intentions

Children will:

- be able to develop ideas and interpretations from stimulus materials;
- know the ideal environment for each ecosystem;
- use a range of materials to convey their response to a stimulus; and
- know ways in which place influences life.



### Suggested Learning and Teaching Activities

Display photographs, drawings and pictures of the regions the groups have studied. Ask the children to consider the colours used in the image. What mood is conveyed by the image? What message might the artist/photographer have been trying to convey?

Divide the class into their investigation groups. Explain to the children they are going to use their findings from previous research to create a collage of the different ecosystems. Each group will create part of the collage showing the features and characteristics of a 'perfect' form of their particular region. Each group should plan their part of the collage, discussing what it will look like and the materials they will use. The collage should show plant life, landscape, homes and the different peoples of the particular region. These features should be attached in a way that allows them to be removed later in the unit. Use a wide variety of materials and media to create the collage.

The children may use materials such as fabric and pictures, cotton wool, lollipop sticks, twigs and straw to create the collage.

When the collage is completed the class can fill in the 'Learned' part of their **KWL grid**.

# Activity Six

## What's the Issue?

### Suggested Learning Intentions

Children will:

- learn about the ways in which people may conserve and change the environment;
- learn about organisations that work to protect the environment;
- know about the specific issues affecting the region they are investigating;
- be able to locate relevant information and use it appropriately (Comm);
- be able to talk about and plan their writing (Comm & TSPC);
- use ICT to research, select, evaluate and communicate information (UICT); and
- help identify an issue and structure a geographical enquiry (TSPC).



### Suggested Learning and Teaching Activities

Explain to the children that they will be exploring issues affecting the ecosystem/region they are studying.

Organise the class into their investigation teams. Each group accesses the websites of an environmental or campaigning organisation (for example, Survival International or Greenpeace) to identify issues affecting their region/ecosystem. Ask the children to consider the impact of these environmental issues and which issue they consider to be most important. The children plan, draft and edit a news report to inform the rest of the class about an issue affecting their particular region.

Ask the children to write to an environmental organisation to obtain information about these issues and their work. They can then present their findings to the school or the rest of Key Stage 2 at Assembly. The children create an information board to inform parents or visitors to the school about the global issues they have studied.

## Optional Activity

### Change Opinions

Show the children examples of placards. Ask how they might be used in campaigns to change people's opinions. Organise the children into their investigation groups. Each group designs a set of placards to inform people about a global issue affecting the world and ecosystems.

# Activity Seven

## What's the Impact?

### Suggested Learning Intentions

Children will:

- learn about the ways in which people may conserve and change the environment globally;
- understand the inter-relationships between animals and plants in a habitat;
- know about the effects that people's actions have on the environment;
- be able to talk about and plan their writing (Comm);
- be able to respect the views and opinions of others and reach agreements using negotiation and compromise (TSPC); and
- use ICT to collect, organise and present data (UICT).

### Suggested Learning and Teaching Activities

Organise the children into their investigation groups. The groups will explore the impact of a particular issue on the ecosystem/region they are studying. For example, how does logging impact on the lives of the peoples, animals and plant life of the rainforests. Each group creates a flowchart or spider diagram to show all the effects of the issue they are investigating.

Ask the children to compile a set of statements about the issues their particular region faces and the problems they cause. They then try to assess the impact of these problems or issues and rank them in order using a **Diamond Ranking\*** strategy.

Each group adapts their part of the class collage to show some of the problems faced in these areas.

They should remove the animals, people and plants which are being affected. The pictures that have been removed can then be added to an 'Under Threat' board.

The investigation groups gather relevant information to create a graphical representation of the changes these regions face using ICT. For example, they could create a graph to show how many kilometres of rainforest have been destroyed over the last ten years or what percentage of the polar ice caps have melted in the last century.

The groups could then focus their research on how one particular plant or animal has been affected by the issues they have been looking at.

## Optional Activity

### Global Issues

The groups create a radio advertisement or podcast to highlight the impact of certain global issues and their effect on the natural environments studied. Children should listen to and analyse a variety of radio broadcasts and podcasts to identify how to make an effective recording.

\* See Active Learning and Teaching Methods for Key Stages 1 & 2





STOP GLOBAL  
WARMING

How Can I Help?

# SECTION 03



# Activity Eight

## I'm Pact - My Impact on the World

### Suggested Learning Intentions

Children will:

- know about the effects that people's actions have on the environment;
- know about the environmental benefits of reducing, reusing and recycling;
- learn how to prevent pollution and reduce waste;
- be able to talk about and plan their writing (Comm);
- be able to structure and sequence their writing (Comm);
- be able to use ICT to communicate and develop ideas by creating and presenting images (UICT); and
- be able to make links between cause and effect (TSPC).

### Suggested Learning and Teaching Activities

In their investigation groups, children should think about a range of global issues as a starting point and discuss how individuals affect the issue, for example, global warming – is caused by pollution – cars create pollution – I travel by car sometimes when I could walk. Ask them to think about how they contribute to these global issues/problems and how their parents or their school might contribute to the problem?

The children identify changes we could make to our lives at school or at home which would reduce our negative impact on the world.

The children identify an environmental issue within their school, for example, wasting paper or using a non-renewable energy source. Challenge them to create a poster, leaflet or presentation that shows how the whole school could take action to solve the problem or reduce their negative impact. This could be added to the Information Board (from Activity 5) to highlight the issue to a wider audience.



# Optional Activities

## Global Issues



Display a number of advertisements used to sell a product or campaign for a cause. The children discuss how advertisements promote a particular point of view. They then use their findings to plan an advertising campaign showing how we can take action to solve environmental issues.

The children explore ways to reduce, reuse and recycle waste made from wood or oil, both at school and at home.

The children investigate the ways in which old materials are recycled into something new. Ask the investigation groups to plan how they might use something that is thrown out to make something new. The groups then create a 'reduce, reuse and recycle' collage using waste materials in the classroom and brought in from home.

Invite environmental officers from the local council to explain ways in which they are combating environmental issues locally. Visit a local recycling facility at your local council and observe how items are separated. Ask the children why this might be the case.

Children design a T-shirt that shows our individual responsibility towards the environment. Challenge the children to see if there are ways the garment can be made from recycled material.

Ask the children if they think the air we breathe is clean. Discuss the exhaust fumes from cars and aircraft - are they clean? Demonstrate that our air is polluted by constructing a simple investigation.

Collect the following items:

- String
- Three paper plates
- Petroleum jelly
- Hole punch

Punch a hole at the top and bottom of the paper plates. Spread a layer of petroleum jelly on the flat surface of the plate. Place one of the plates indoors, one near a busy road and one on the exterior of the school building. Tie the plates with string to hold them in place. Make sure the plates are up for a couple of days when there is no rain.

Dirt and pollution in the air may 'stick' to the petroleum jelly. Ask the children to observe the plates and compare the differences between them. Ask them to explain why some should be dirtier than others.

# Activity Nine

## Protest or Peace

### Suggested Learning Intentions

Children will:

- investigate a geographical issue from different viewpoints (TSPC); and
- be able to confidently express their own views and opinions (Comm).

### Suggested Learning and Teaching Activities

Using the **Spectrum Debate\*** strategy, children will think about appropriate ways of expressing opinion. Place the notice 'Agree' at one end of the classroom, and 'Disagree' at the other. Read out a number of statements from **Resource B**. After each statement, give the children some time to think about the statement and then move to the appropriate side of the room. Some of the issues may be clear cut, while other statements may provoke differences of opinion. Ask the children to explain their responses.

Provide children with a range of newspaper/website reports which outline different ways in which people have expressed their opinion (include peaceful means and non-peaceful means). These ways may include:

- strikes
- riots
- advertising
- a march
- terrorist attack
- leaflets

During circle time, explore the consequences of how different people express their opinions. Discuss how worthwhile issues can be damaged by people who use non-peaceful means of protest, for example, the campaign to end cruelty to animals can be harmed by violent protestors or football hooligans can ruin the reputation of a football club. Compare and contrast the actions of these people to the actions of the campaigning groups and organisations they have looked at throughout this unit.

Ask the group to explore the negative consequences of non-peaceful protest. What would happen to the protestors? Would people listen to them?

Use a **Conscience Alley\*** activity to discuss how people can enforce their opinion on others. Discuss the consequences of such behaviour.

The children create a list of rules on how to express an opinion constructively in group or class situations.

Design posters to show how the impact of personal opinion is greater when it is expressed peacefully and in a constructive manner.

Encourage the children to view the consequences of different ways of expressing an opinion and debate the best way to make their point. Ask if particular ways of expressing a view have impacted on their own viewpoint. They should give examples of how people express themselves in different ways. The children watch news and campaigns on television and make a note of when people express their opinion in a particular way.

\* See Active Learning and Teaching Methods for Key Stages 1 & 2

# Activity Ten

## Trading Places

### Suggested Learning Intentions

Children will:

- understand how injustice and inequality affect peoples' lives;
- appreciate the range of cultures and traditions in other countries;
- be able to use empathy to express the view or opinion of someone else;
- understand the consequences of change on peoples' lives; and
- be able to examine options and weigh up pros and cons (TSPC).

### Suggested Learning and Teaching Activities

Encourage children to use all the information they have gathered in this unit to view one of the environmental issues through the eyes of a child who lives in the affected region.

As a class they can brainstorm some generic key questions that they need to answer, for example:

- How has this issue changed my lifestyle?
- What will happen in the future to my home?

Distribute a sheet of flipchart paper to each investigative group. The groups compile a 'pros and cons' list to explore the good changes and bad, for example, a child from the rainforest might say logging has brought more money to the area but it has meant they have had to move home.

In groups, the children should be encouraged to explore how their lives would change if they had to trade places with a child from the ecosystem/region they have studied. They should consider the ways in which their lifestyle might improve for example – healthy eating or more exercise. Individually, they write an autobiography of a child from their chosen region.

In a plenary session, the class consider what would happen in their lives if we do not make changes to combat some of these environmental issues.



# Activity Eleven

## Environmental Passports

### Suggested Learning Intentions

Children will:

- know the effects that people's actions have on the natural environment; and
- use ICT to communicate and develop ideas by creating and editing text on screen (UICT).

### Suggested Learning and Teaching Activities

Show the class a passport. Ask the class to discuss what is placed within the passport and what information does it hold. Note the area for stamps. What does it allow us to do? Explain to the class that they are going to create their own environmental passports to carry through school or Key Stage 2. They use the environmental passports to show all the environmental issues that they are aware of, have studied, have campaigned about and have resolved. It should include school, local and global issues.

Using ICT, the children design a passport that can travel from year to year with the pupils in the school. They can also design the stamps or stickers to be added to the passport when a particular level or objective has been achieved. For example, pupils who have studied this unit would have a stamp to show 'Awareness of Global Issues' or 'Campaigning on Global Issue'. The passport will build up a record of all their work as 'ecowarriors' and can be included in the Records of Achievement presented to Year 7 pupils on leaving the school.





# Resources

# Resource A

## Exploration Questions

### North Pole/South Pole

Choose one of the following Polar Explorers and then answer the questions below:

- RF Scott – Antarctic
- Ernest Shackleton – Antarctic
- Robert E Peary – North Pole

1. When did they make their exploration?
2. How did they travel?
3. What equipment did they bring?
4. What did they find when they arrived?
5. What dangers did they face?
6. Why did they explore the region?

Think of at least two more questions you would like to find the answers too regarding the desert explorers.

### Desert

Choose one of the following explorers and then answer the questions below:

- Howard Carter – discovered Tutankhamun's tomb in the desert in Egypt
- Marco Polo – European explorer who crossed the Gobi Desert on his travels to China.

1. How did the explorer travel in this region?
2. What equipment did they bring?
3. What did they find there?
4. What dangers did they face?
5. Why were they exploring this area?

Think of at least two more questions you would like to find the answers too regarding the desert explorers.

### Rainforest

Choose of the following explorers and then answer the questions below:

- Dr David Livingstone – explored Africa.
- Henry Stanley – explored Congo river through rainforest.

1. When did they explore this area?
2. How did they travel in this area?
3. What equipment did they bring?
4. What did they find there?
5. What dangers did they face?
6. Why were they exploring the region?

Think of at least two more questions you would like to find the answers too regarding the rainforest explorers.

## Resource B

# Protest or Peace - Express your opinion

Lying is always wrong.

Using a mobile phone is dangerous.

Your best friend kicked a ball and broke a window. He told everyone that you did it. Do you take the blame?

It is raining. You take the bus home from school. You have lost your money and can't pay the fare. There are a lot of children waiting at the bus stop and you know you could probably sneak onto the bus without the driver noticing. What should you do?

One of the children in your class is picking on your little brother. You don't think it's fair, so you punch them.

You don't like the food that is served in the school canteen, so you decide to talk to your school councillor or your teacher about the problem.

Testing products on animals is always wrong.

Children should be made to walk to school to stop pollution by cars.

# List of Suggested Resources

## Useful Websites:

**British Antarctic Survey**  
[www.antarctica.ac.uk](http://www.antarctica.ac.uk)

**National Maritime Museum**  
[www.nmm.ac.uk](http://www.nmm.ac.uk)

**Environmental Education Forum**  
[www.eefni.org.uk/](http://www.eefni.org.uk/)

**Global Dimension**  
[www.globaldimension.org.uk](http://www.globaldimension.org.uk)

**Greenpeace**  
[www.greenpeace.org](http://www.greenpeace.org)

**Survival International**  
[www.survival-international.org](http://www.survival-international.org)

**ICT**  
Encarta World Atlas  
Google Earth

**Television**  
Landmarks: Tropical Rainforest, BBC  
Primary Geography: Weather, Place and People, BBC  
Primary Geography: Coping with the Climate, BBC  
Eureka!: The Inuit, Channel 4  
Geography Junction: Extreme Weather, Channel 4

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