Environment and Climate Vocabulary List: 24 Words

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Word or phrase	Meaning	Example
climate change	long-term change in the Earth's weather	Climate change is making summers hotter.
global warming	the rise in the Earth's temperature	Global warming is melting the ice caps.
greenhouse gases	gases that trap heat in the atmosphere	Cars produce greenhouse gases.
carbon footprint	the amount of CO_2 your activities produce	Flying increases your carbon footprint.
pollution	damage to air, water or land	Air pollution is a problem in big cities.
renewable energy	energy from sun, wind or water	The country gets half its power from renewable energy.
fossil fuels	coal, oil and gas	We need to stop burning fossil fuels.
to recycle	to process used materials to use again	We recycle glass, paper and plastic.
waste	things that are thrown away	Restaurants produce a lot of food waste.
single-use plastic	plastic used once and thrown away	Many countries have banned single-use plastic bags.
to reduce	to make smaller or less	We're trying to reduce our energy use.
to reuse	to use again	I reuse glass jars for storage.
endangered species	animals or plants that may disappear	The tiger is an endangered species.
deforestation	cutting down large areas of forest	Deforestation destroys animal habitats.
a drought	a long period without rain	The drought ruined the crops.
a flood	a large amount of water covering land	The floods damaged hundreds of homes.
sustainable	able to continue without harming the planet	We need more sustainable transport.
eco-friendly	not harmful to the environment	This detergent is eco-friendly.
to emit	to send out gas, heat or light	Old factories emit a lot of smoke.
public transport	buses, trains and metros	I use public transport to get to work.
to go green	to start living in a more eco-friendly way	Our company is trying to go green.
the ozone layer	a layer of gas protecting Earth from the sun	The ozone layer is slowly recovering.
a heatwave	a period of very hot weather	There was a heatwave in Europe last July.
compost	decayed food and plants used in gardens	We turn our food scraps into compost.

Practice: complete with a word from the list

Use the correct form of the word or phrase.

1. Solar and wind power are types of _____ energy.
2. We should use less _____ plastic, like straws and bags.
3. There was no rain for months. It was a terrible _____.
4. Taking fewer flights reduces your carbon _____.
5. Coal, oil and gas are fossil _____.
6. The panda is no longer an _____ species.
7. Cutting down the Amazon rainforest is called _____.
8. Many companies say they want to _____ green.

Speaking

- What do you do to reduce your carbon footprint?
- Should governments ban single-use plastic completely? Why or why not?
- Has the weather in your country changed since you were a child?
- Who is more responsible for climate change: individuals or companies?

My new words

Answer key

Practice: 1 renewable · 2 single-use · 3 drought · 4 footprint · 5 fuels · 6 endangered · 7 deforestation · 8 go