

Dear Humans

To: all-humans@googlemail.com

From: lucky-lizard42@save-the-animals.org

Subject: FAO Humankind

Hi humans! It's me, Chameleon. I wanted to write you a letter, but I couldn't find a pen, so I've decided to email you from my FlyPod. You suck. Seriously. I wanted to send you a message to let you know that all of us animals are fed up with the way you are going about destroying our planet. Do you have any idea how long my species has been calling this place home? 65 million years! Pretty much, we waved goodbye to the dinosaurs and then stepped up to take our place. You've only been around for a hundred thousand years or so, and you've already managed to mess it all up. You've only been able to travel for a few hundred years, so that makes it even more depressing!

Here in Madagascar, I'm lucky if I can find a tree to call home now. You guys need so much wood it seems; I've no idea what you use it all for. It's not really the wood you want, though. Everywhere I go now there are herds of cows grazing on the grass where trees once used to be, or where the farmers have burnt the land to the ground.

Yesterday, I had a letter from my cousin in Africa, he lives just south of the Sahara Desert. He used to be able to look out of his tree each morning and watch as herds of elephant and rhino drifted across the plains. He used to love moving to make way for a giraffe to grab some breakfast. Now, he looks out, and there's nothing to see. Nothing he wants to see, anyway.

He still sees elephants and rhinos, although mainly they are dead. Poached for their tusks or horns. The other day, and I know you won't believe this, hundreds of acres of habitat were destroyed so that an enormous pipe could be placed under the ground. Thousands of animals killed or displaced. And do you know what is going through that pipe? Cables for your broadband. All of those homes destroyed just so that you can watch dancing cats. Does that seem fair? It doesn't to me.

I wandered over to the beach last week, just to see how it was going. I was sat on a deck chair (it was striped; you should've seen the colour of my skin!) when who should wander over to me but my old friend Taz. Taz is a green turtle, and she does a lot of miles. She'd just returned all the way from Australia to lay some eggs. All that way!

She's been floating to and from Australia for a long time now; she's always talked about how amazingly colourful the Great Barrier Reef is. It's so full of life, she'd tell me. This time, she had a tear in her eye. It's all white, she said. All the colour has been bleached away. Oh sure, the warmer oceans might be great for you lot to swim in, but they are killing the corals and the animals that depend on them. I'm sure all this destruction is worth though, isn't it?

I'll say it again. Humans suck. But not all of you. Some of you are working hard to help, and we honestly appreciate that. The thing is, we need more and we need it quickly. If you don't start to make a real change soon, there won't be many of us left to save. Remember, there is no second chance; no Planet B.

Thanks for listening. Chameleon.

Reading Task:

1. What device did Chameleon use to write the email?
2. How long have the animals been calling Earth home?
3. What animals was Chameleon's cousin used to seeing?
4. Why had Taz returned from Australia?
5. Which word shows how Chameleon feels about the damage humans have caused?
6. How does Chameleon feel about the warming oceans? What gives this impression?
7. Write a summary of the damage to the Earth that Chameleon sees or knows about.
8. Find a word that tells you that animals were forced from their home.
9. Explain how you know that this is an informal letter.

Writing Task:

Write an **informal** letter back to the Chameleon, to let him know that you are going to do everything that you can to help. Tell him about some of the amazing steps that your family, friends and our school have taken to help the environment. Maybe you could think of some new ideas that you could try and tell him those too. You need to persuade and convince the chameleon that you will do everything that you possibly can, so use emotive and powerful language to make him feel better.

Some things you may do already or could consider doing to help the environment include:

recycling / clothes banks / making posters about deforestation / writing to local MPs / repair old clothes rather than buy new ones / reusable bottles / turn off lights / use recycled paper ...