

ENVIRONMENTAL CRISES AND THE MAIN CAUSES OF THEM

Abstract: This article discusses the environmental crisis and its causes. The main factors that led to environmental disasters are analyzed.

Key words: environmental crisis, environmental disasters, water scarcity, global warming

Intervention in the natural cycle began by man at the moment when he first threw grain into the ground. Thus began the era of man's conquest of his planet.

But what prompted the primitive man to take up agriculture, and then cattle breeding? First of all, at the dawn of their development, the inhabitants of the Northern Hemisphere destroyed almost all ungulates, using them as food (one example is mammoths in Siberia). The lack of food resources led to the fact that most of the individuals of the then human population became extinct. It was one of the first natural crises that hit people. It should be emphasized that the extermination of certain large mammals could not be universal. A sharp decrease in the number as a result of hunting leads to the division of the species range into separate islands. The fate of small isolated populations is deplorable: if a species is not able to quickly restore the integrity of its range, its inevitable extinction occurs due to epizootics or a shortage of individuals of one sex with an overabundance of the other.

The first crises (not just the lack of food) forced our ancestors to look for ways to preserve the size of their population. Gradually, a person took the path of progress (how could it be otherwise?). The era of the great confrontation

between man and nature began. Man more and more moved away from the natural cycle, which is based on the replacement of natural parts and the non-waste nature of natural processes. Over time, the confrontation turned out to be so serious that it became impossible for a person to return to the natural environment.

In the second half of the XX century, humanity is facing an ecological crisis. Theorist of modern ecology N.F. Reimers defined the ecological crisis as a tense state of relations between mankind and nature, characterized by a discrepancy between the development of productive forces and production relations in human society and the resource and ecological possibilities of the biosphere. One of the characteristics of the ecological crisis is the increase in the influence of nature changed by people on social development. Unlike a catastrophe, a crisis is a reversible state in which a person acts as an active party. In other words, the ecological crisis is a violation of the balance between natural conditions and human impact on the natural environment.

Sometimes an ecological crisis refers to a situation that has arisen in natural ecosystems under the influence of natural disasters (flood, volcanic eruption, drought, hurricane, etc.) or as a result of anthropogenic factors (environmental pollution, deforestation).

The use of the term "environmental crisis" to refer to environmental problems takes into account the fact that a person is part of an ecosystem that changes as a result of his activity (primarily production). Natural and social phenomena are a single whole, and their interaction is expressed in the destruction of the ecosystem.

It is now obvious to everyone that the ecological crisis is a global and universal concept that concerns each of the people living on Earth. What specifically can indicate an approaching ecological catastrophe?

Here is a far from complete list of negative phenomena that indicate a general ill-being:

- global warming, greenhouse effect, shift of climatic zones;
- ozone holes, destruction of the ozone screen;
- reduction of biodiversity on the planet;
- global environmental pollution;
- non-utilizable radioactive waste;
- water and wind erosion and reduction of fertile soil areas;
- population explosion, urbanization;
- depletion of non-renewable mineral resources;
- energy crisis;
- a sharp increase in the number of previously unknown and often incurable diseases;
- lack of food, a permanent state of hunger for most of the world's population;
- depletion and pollution of the resources of the oceans.

Overall economic burden on ecological systems depends on three factors: the size of the population, the average level of consumption and the widespread use of various technologies. The environmental damage caused by the consumer society can be reduced by changing agricultural patterns, transportation systems, urban planning methods, energy consumption intensity, rethinking industrial technologies, and so on. In addition, when technology changes, the level of material requests can be reduced. And this is gradually happening due to the rise in the cost of living, which is directly related to environmental problems.

Separately, it should be noted the crisis phenomena occurring as a result of local hostilities that have become more frequent in recent times. An example of an ecological catastrophe caused by an interstate conflict was the events that took place in Kuwait and neighboring countries on the coast of the Persian Gulf after Operation Desert Storm in early 1991. Retreating from Kuwait, the Iraqi invaders blew up over 500 oil wells. A significant part of them burned for six

months, poisoning a large area with harmful gases and soot. From boreholes that did not ignite, oil gushed out, forming large lakes, and flowed into the Persian Gulf. A large amount of oil spilled here from the blown up terminals and tankers. As a result, about 1554 km² of the sea surface and 450 km of the coastline were covered with oil. Most of the birds, sea turtles, dugongs and other animals died. The fire torches burned 7.3 million liters of oil daily, which is equal to the volume of oil imported by the United States daily. Clouds of soot from fires rose to a height of up to 3 km and were carried by winds far beyond the borders of Kuwait: black rain fell in Saudi Arabia and Iran, black snow fell in India (2000 km from Kuwait). Air pollution with oil soot has affected people's health, as soot contains many carcinogens.

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