

This is a fun game with a serious point. The endangered species game is a great introduction to raising awareness about conservation issues without complicated explanations. Through demonstrating what happens when endangered species face too many threats, the participants naturally learn and remember important facts about species extinctions.

Instructions

1. Split the group into two teams.
2. There should be one large group and one smaller group.
3. The largest group is called 'Environmental issues'.
4. Starting with the 'Environmental issues' group, begin a discussion by asking what environmental issues the participants know about.
5. Each participant in the 'Environmental issues' group decides which environmental issue they are going to be (i.e. deforestation, desertification...) and writes that on a label.
6. The small group is the 'Endangered species'. Discuss what endangered species are and each participant can decide what species they would like to be to write on their label.
7. The 'Environmental issues' have to chase the 'Endangered species'. When an 'Endangered species' is caught they stand still.
8. The only way to save an 'Endangered species' is if another 'Endangered species' who hasn't been caught can put their arms around the endangered species.
9. Very quickly you will see that all the 'Endangered species' are caught by the 'Environmental issues'.
10. Start a discussion about what happens when there are too many environmental issues. You can use an example of an endangered species*.
11. Now change the teams to have less 'Environmental issues' and more 'Endangered species'.
12. This version will show that when there are less environmental issues, the endangered species can survive.
13. Have a discussion about the global conservation movement to save endangered species and what we can do to help.*

Maltese Freshwater Crab: Endangered species case study*

The Maltese Freshwater Crab (Scientific: *Potamon fluviatile lanfrancoi*; Maltese: *Il-Qabru*, *Granċ tal-Ilma #elu*) is endemic which means Malta is the only place in the world where you can find this species.

It has a varied diet and will eat leaves and fruit; however it prefers to feed on animals, such as large insects and snails. This crab lives where there is a permanent source of freshwater, generally near a watercourse, in burrows that it excavates. As the crab only lives in areas with a permanent water source, the habitat is very restrictive.

Environmental threats to the Maltese Freshwater Crab:

- Water abstraction
- Loss of habitat
- Pollution of freshwater from agricultural pesticides
- Human persecution through illegal killing and hunting.

The Maltese Freshwater Crab has a very limited chance of survival with so many environmental threats to contend with. Despite protection through legislation under the Environment Protection Act (it is illegal to deliberately disturb, capture or kill, attempt to kill, keep or transport any specimen of this species, without a prior official permit from the Malta Environment and Planning Authority), the species is critically endangered.

Unless radical conservation measures are taken, the Maltese Freshwater Crab will become extinct.