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ANIMALS THREATENED WITH EXTINCTION

Million of years ago, there were three hundred or more different species of dinosaurs. Then, about 65 million years ago, something happened, and now there are no dinosaurs. At about the same time, 70 per cent of all species in the world became extinct. Most of the species in the sea disappeared 250 million years ago [1, c.1].

Scientists state that many species of plants, animals, birds and insects disappear from the face of our planet 1000 times faster than the natural level. This means that we lose 10 to 130 species every day. To date, more than 40 per cent of all living species on the Earth are threatened with extinction [2].

The greatest danger threatening amphibians: the risk is 41% of the species. For comparison, the risk among the birds is 13% of species. The greatest losses were reported in the Southeast Asia. There, the animals most likely lose their traditional habitat through cutting down the jungle for agricultural purposes. Paradoxically, one of the aims of cutting down the jungle is planting of the crop which produces environmentally friendly biodiesel [3].

Disappearance of such a large number of animals will inevitably lead to environmental disaster. If this will last, then the number of endangered species will be calculated not in hundreds or thousands, but in millions.

There is the reason for optimism, as environmentalists claim. According to intensive scientific collaboration some kinds of total destruction are maintained. For example, it was succeeded to breed in captivity and restore natural habitat for California condor, black-footed ferret (the USA) and Przewalskii horse (Mongolia). Particular restrictions helped to rapid humpback whales growth and their exclusion from the Red Book [3].

The main cause of extinction of animals is human activity. Man does not hesitate destroying the natural habitat of animals. Plowing the soil, cutting down forests, building factories and roads, a person deprives animals of their habitat and reduces the amount of fodder resources, which leads to a sharp reduction in the population size. Wastes of industry fall into rivers, seas and oceans, which leads to the extinction of hundreds, and even thousands of marine animals. Some species are hunted because of their valuable parts of the body, for example, horns, skin, and fangs.

In all countries of the world there are certain laws on protection from the extermination of wild animals that regulate rational hunting and fishing, Ukraine has laws “On the protection of the natural environment”, “On the protection and use of wildlife”, “On wildlife”, etc. [4].

At the moment there is the so-called Red Book of the International Union for Conservation of Nature, adopted in 1948, where all rare animals and plants are recorded. In Ukraine there is a similar Red Book. In the first edition (1980) 85 species and subspecies of animals were introduced, in the second (1994) - 297 species, and in

the third (2009) - 542. Unfortunately, every year the list of rare animal species increases [5].

What can we do? How to keep animals from completely disappearing? I think we should open more reserves and national parks, where the animals could live in their natural environment. In these areas, it is necessary to prohibit hunting, deforestation, construction of buildings, paving roads, etc. It is also necessary to organize feeding of animals.

REFERENCES

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