

How Tourism is Damaging Antarctica's Environment

VOCABULARY WORDS

1. **Tourism** (noun) /'tʊərɪzəm/: The activity of traveling for pleasure.
Example: Tourism brings money but also challenges to many places.
2. **Environment** (noun) /ɪn'vaɪrənmənt/: The natural world, including land, water, and air.
Example: We must protect the environment from pollution.
3. **Damage** (verb) /'dæmɪdʒ/: To cause harm or destruction.
Example: The storm damaged many homes in the village.
4. **Wildlife** (noun) /'waɪldlaɪf/: Animals living in their natural environment.
Example: Antarctica has many unique types of wildlife.
5. **Pollution** (noun) /pə'luːʃən/: Dirty or harmful substances in the environment.
Example: Water pollution is a big problem in many countries.



Antarctica is one of the coldest and most remote places on Earth. It is home to many kinds of birds, seals, and penguins. In recent years, more people have started visiting the area. They come on cruise ships to see the ice and animals. While tourism brings awareness, it also causes serious problems.

The rise in tourism has started to harm the local environment. Ships bring pollution to the clean waters. Visitors sometimes disturb the animals. Foot traffic can damage the fragile ice and snow. These actions may seem small but can add up quickly.

Experts say that even small numbers of tourists can make a big difference. Antarctica is very sensitive, and its wildlife is not used to people. Changes in behavior have been seen in

penguins. Some move away from their nests when people are near. This can lead to fewer chicks surviving.

Rules do exist to limit the damage. Tour companies must follow strict guidelines. Visitors are told not to leave trash or get too close to animals. Some areas are completely off-limits. But not all companies follow these rules perfectly.

Many scientists and environmental groups are calling for fewer tourists. They say that saving Antarctica is more important than seeing it. Some suggest virtual tours as a safer option. Others want stronger rules and limits. The future of Antarctica may depend on the choices we make today.

DISCUSSION

1. If penguins made a “No Humans Allowed” sign, what would it say?
2. Imagine you're on a tour and the ice starts to talk. What would it complain about?
3. If tourists had to earn a badge to enter Antarctica, what test should they pass?
4. How could a “Virtual Antarctica” tour be both fun and educational?
5. What would a penguin's daily diary entry look like during tourist season?