

# Build THE Change



## ACTIVITY

# BALANCING ECOSYSTEMS

## You Will Need

- Books or the internet to research your animal
- Pens and Paper
- Material to complete your actions, such as art materials, photographs or LEGO or DUPLO bricks

On Planet Earth, humans and wildlife co-exist together - this means that they share things like space for their homes and shelters, food and water. Sometimes this can cause competition. As humans take up more space, wildlife has less room to make their homes and find the food and water they need. This is what we call a human-wildlife conflict. As the Earth's climate changes and human populations grow, it is important for us all to learn how we can play our part in protecting wildlife and the spaces they call home.

Lots of people are already working hard to find imaginative ways to reduce the competition between humans and wildlife, and find ways for all to exist peacefully together. In this activity, we will be sharing an example of how humans and elephants use the same space and what actions can be taken to help them co-exist. We would then like you to get creative and think about what action you would take to help humans and wildlife, and how would you let other people know about it?

## Case Study: Elephants in India

In rural parts of India, elephants and humans are finding it hard to live together, or co-exist. Elephants are quickly losing the forest that they live in, and so are entering farmers' tea fields. They trample the tea crop which is a challenge for communities who rely on the tea fields to make money. Communities are unsure why elephants are appearing and so fear them.





Here are a few actions that can be taken to help humans and elephants co-exist together:

- Education for communities on conservation efforts and threats to elephants.
- Replanting forests and creating pockets of forests with safe passage ways.
- Using bright spotlights to stop elephants from going near the tea fields.
- Force the community to move further away from the forest.
- Create wildlife areas with electric fences.

Some of these solutions are used to scare the elephants away – spotlights and fences work well, but only for short periods of time. If we continue to remove habitats, we need long term solutions. Education and protecting and creating safe spaces for animals is important for long term impacts.



## What to do:

**STEP 1** Start by choosing the animal you would like to focus on, this could be the Indian Elephant, it could be one of the animals on the Build The Change fact files, or it could be an animal that lives locally to you.

**STEP 2** Time to find out more about this animal – where does it live? What does it eat? What does it need for its shelter? How is the animal's home being affected by humans?

**STEP 3** Time to get creative – have a think about what actions could be taken to help the animal you have chosen and humans live happily whilst close to each other. Write down your ideas ready for step 4.

**STEP 4** Using your imaginative ideas, you can now visualise your action so that you can share it with other people.

- You could build a model of your action out of LEGO or bits 'n bobs from around the house.
- You could use materials to create a collage picture of your action.
- You could use photographs to show how your action would work.

**STEP 5** Once you have completed your design, have a think about what might need to be adapted as humans move and continue to use more space. If we build new roads, how might the wildlife safely cross it? Could we build a 'wildlife corridor', a bridge covered with plants where the animals can safely move across the road allowing them to keep using the forest on both sides of the road?