

100 Ethical Questions: Environment & Sustainability

Planet vs. People/Business

1. Should the needs of the planet come before the needs of businesses?
2. Should companies be legally required to put environmental sustainability above profit?
3. Is it ethical for businesses to operate if they knowingly produce significant pollution?
4. Should corporations be forced to pay for the environmental damage they cause, even if it impacts their profits?
5. Should industries that heavily pollute be shut down, even if thousands of jobs are lost?
6. Is it ethical for wealthy companies to continue extracting fossil fuels?
7. Should governments ban products that are harmful to the environment even if they are popular?
8. Should businesses be taxed based on their carbon emissions?
9. Should fast-fashion companies be penalized for encouraging wasteful consumption?
10. Should companies be required to disclose the environmental impact of their products on labels?

Water Usage & Rights

11. Should there be stricter rules for water consumption for businesses?
12. Should private companies be allowed to control access to water?
13. Is it ethical to bottle water and sell it for profit?
14. Should farmers get priority access to water during droughts?
15. Should water-intensive crops (like almonds) be banned in drought-prone regions?
16. Should households face water restrictions before industries do?
17. Should water be considered a human right even if it costs governments money to provide?
18. Should tourism be limited in areas experiencing water shortages?
19. Should countries be allowed to import water from places that are running out of it?
20. Should companies have to prove they can replenish the water they use?

Climate Change Responsibility

21. Should wealthy nations be required to pay for climate damage in poorer nations?
22. Should individuals be held legally responsible for their personal carbon footprints?
23. Should the meat industry be taxed for its contributions to climate change?
24. Should future generations have legal rights protecting them from climate change?
25. Should climate refugees be guaranteed asylum?
26. Should scientists be allowed to use geoengineering to cool the planet?
27. Should oil and gas companies be banned from advertising?
28. Should governments ban products with high carbon emissions?
29. Should there be a global limit on how much carbon any person can use?
30. Should businesses be banned from offsetting emissions instead of reducing them?

Energy & Resources

31. Should all countries be required to switch to renewable energy?
32. Should nuclear power be expanded despite potential risks?
33. Should mining for rare-earth metals (needed for electronics) be limited?
34. Should countries with rare natural resources limit exports to protect the environment?
35. Should energy be rationed during extreme weather events?
36. Should solar panels be mandatory on new homes?
37. Should people be allowed to own gas-powered cars in 2050?
38. Should governments subsidize electric vehicles even for wealthy buyers?
39. Should energy companies be forced to invest in renewables?
40. Should businesses lose licenses if they waste too much energy?

Waste, Pollution & Consumption

41. Should single-use plastics be banned worldwide?
42. Is it ethical for companies to export waste to other countries?
43. Should consumers be fined for excessive waste?
44. Should packaging be standardized to reduce waste?
45. Should companies be required to design products that last at least 10 years?
46. Should repair be cheaper than replacement by law?
47. Should landfills be banned?
48. Should chemical companies be forced to disclose every ingredient they use?
49. Should manufacturers be responsible for recycling their own products?
50. Should governments ban disposable electronics?

Biodiversity & Animals

51. Should humans prioritize endangered species over economic development?
52. Should all zoos be banned?
53. Should trophy hunting be illegal worldwide?
54. Should deforestation be banned even if it limits housing development?
55. Should genetically modified animals be used to restore endangered species?
56. Should wildlife corridors be mandatory near highways?
57. Should invasive species be removed even if it harms individual animals?
58. Should fishing quotas be stricter even if it increases food prices?
59. Should we ban all fossil fuel drilling in the Arctic to protect wildlife?
60. Should global trade in exotic animals be completely banned?

Technology & Ethics

61. Should artificial intelligence be used to monitor environmental crimes?
62. Should governments use drones to catch illegal polluters?
63. Should gene editing be used to create climate-resilient crops?
64. Should digital products include environmental ratings (energy use, emissions)?
65. Should tech companies be responsible for the pollution caused by servers and data centers?
66. Should cryptocurrencies be restricted due to their energy use?
67. Should we allow self-driving cars if they increase battery waste?
68. Should mining for battery materials be banned?
69. Should companies be forced to prove their technology does not harm the environment?
70. Should satellites be limited to reduce space debris?

Environmental Justice & Fairness

71. Should low-income communities have stronger environmental protections?
72. Should polluting industries be banned from operating near schools?
73. Should Indigenous communities have veto power over land-use decisions?
74. Should companies be required to hire local workers when using local natural resources?
75. Should cities compensate residents for pollution-related health effects?
76. Should governments prioritize poor neighborhoods for green investment?
77. Should environmentally harmful products be more heavily taxed?
78. Should environmental crimes carry jail sentences?
79. Should companies be required to publicly report pollution in real time?
80. Should global environmental regulations be enforced by an international court?

Food & Agriculture

81. Should factory farming be banned?
82. Should the world switch to plant-based diets to reduce emissions?
83. Should genetically modified crops be required to prove they benefit the environment?
84. Should local farming be subsidized over large-scale industrial farming?
85. Should food companies be required to disclose the environmental impact of products?
86. Should we ban foods with extremely high environmental footprints?
87. Should food waste be illegal for restaurants and grocery stores?
88. Should the government limit how much meat people can buy per week?
89. Should organic farming be mandatory?
90. Should farmland be protected from being turned into housing?

Global Responsibility & Future Generations

91. Should countries that caused more pollution historically pay more to fix it?
92. Should future generations have legal standing in environmental lawsuits?
93. Should humanity prioritize colonizing other planets if Earth becomes unlivable?
94. Should wealthy nations be required to help poorer nations adapt to climate change?
95. Should we limit population growth to protect the planet?
96. Should international travel be restricted to reduce emissions?
97. Should climate education be mandatory in all schools?
98. Should we prioritize saving the environment even if it limits personal freedoms?
99. Should space exploration be halted if it harms Earth's environment?
100. Should humans rethink what "progress" means if it harms the planet?