**How Consumption Affects the World and Nature**

Consumption is one of the ways society operates and one that cannot be separated from our social systems and nature. Every purchase we pay for, every travel we go on, and every decision we make about leisure activities, we have choices which influence the economy, the natural environment, and our communities' relationship to the world.

I live in a city area, and so my consumption habit is influenced by the advantages and disadvantages of life in the city. With superb public transport facilities and a huge population density, going out for public transport purposes is a preferable mode for me, and thus I don't need to use a car. That is a positive contribution to the environment since I consume less in terms of resources and create less pollution than someone in an urban setting, where driving is often the only option. My consumption of goods and services is also influenced by location—urban living means higher availability of stores, restaurants, and entertainment, tending to encourage higher consumption in general.

Prior to the pandemic, I did the majority of shopping at local stores for nearly everything. With COVID-19 lockdown, online shopping was the easiest. I never had to set foot outside, and everything would be delivered to me. Nowadays, however, those deliveries were accompanied by consequences—additional trash in the form of packaging material and an increased carbon footprint on shipping. Since the pandemic, I still buy most of my things online, but now I try deliberately to pay attention to what is being used as packaging and shop locally where I can. That way, I can have a smaller footprint but still get what I need.

It all changed during the pandemic. Work and school went virtual, and suddenly I was consuming more electricity and using electronic devices more than ever before. I didn't notice much back then, but the more I think about it, the more obvious it becomes to me that energy to drive those machines and keep us alive online has a carbon cost. That extra energy demand, usually derived from non-renewable energy, is only part of an even larger discussion about how exactly our online life affects the world.

As populations increase and become urbanized, it is natural that as city size increases so does resource utilization. More mouths mean more consumption—food, energy, goods—putting pressure on the planet. Cities must contend with waste, dirty air, and higher energy consumption, all stemming from daily life and consumption. As people move into urban areas in larger numbers, such issues exacerbate, so our consumption now directly relates to the health of the planet.

Ultimately, consumption is not simply buying things—it's understanding how those things are impacting society and the world. My own consumption has been shaped by city living and the pandemic, and is part of wider trends in society. As the cities expand and the populations swell, we must balance our usage against the need to preserve the planet. By doing a couple of extra things with greater consideration for the effects of our day-to-day activities, such as not wasting and shopping at environmentally friendly stores, we can all help the health of the planet.