

**Aims:**

Introduce the concept of conservation and environmental pressures and “fixes” in a fun and engaging tag style game.

You will need:

- Corner markers (cones, bags etc)
- Hats x6

Instructions:

1. Mark out a square roughly 10m x 10m using the corner markers.
2. Ask the group to identify some Scottish endangered species – **Red Squirrel, Scottish wildcat, Capercaillie, Water vole, Golden eagle, Atlantic salmon** are excellent examples to try to get included.
Each time ask why they are endangered, what *environmental threat(s)* is reducing their number, see notes (right).
3. Identify 6 players to be ‘*threats*’ and give them hats to identify them. The rest of the group are ‘*endangered species*’.
4. The endangered species players will run around their ‘habitat’ (the 10x10 square) with the threats tagging them. Once tagged they put both arms in the air and shout ‘*Going extinct..3..2..1*’ if they get to ‘1’ they are out and leave the square. They can be saved if **two** other endangered species ‘high five’ around the person counting down.

Round 1: With no prior coaching let the game run. It will end quickly as people won’t help each other and there are too many threats in too small a square. Roughly time it – “WOW you were all extinct in 20 seconds, that’s not great. Why so quick?”

Round 2: This time suggest that the group instead work together and really try to help the people with their arms in the air. If one person is trying to save someone who has been caught but is waiting for the second person to join them to ‘high five’ around the caught person – that first person is safe and cannot be tagged. Run the game again - it should last longer. “Well done 40 seconds this time – working together is like real life. The people trying to help the endangered species are like conservationists but you still all went extinct, what else can we do?”

Round 3: Reduce the threat – discuss briefly how we could remove or reduce the threats (see right).
Remove 2 or 3 threats (they join the main group) and make some threats walk or hop instead running. Make the square twice the size by ‘planting trees/improving habitat’ remind the class to work together.

The game will last much longer. Discuss why.

In the real world if we all work together to help and if we work to manage threats, we can make a big difference to endangered species.

Handy notes:**Environmental Threats**

Invasive non-native species: Grey squirrel, American mink (on water vole), Feral cats.

Habitat loss: Effects all endangered species to an extent, notably Capercaillie.

Global Warming: All to an extent, Atlantic salmon especially – as rivers warm their eggs and young are less able to survive.

Pollution: Water vole and salmon particularly.

Illegal activity: Eagles can be illegally poisoned, and Atlantic salmon poached.

Other human impacts: Roadkill (wildcats, squirrels). Fences - Capercaillie can fly into fences and be injured/killed.

Fixes

Invasive species – removal through; trapping, sterilizing etc.

Habitat loss – plant more trees, better farming practices, reinstate hedges, let grass grow etc.

Global Warming – very complicated, probably too late to stop but can slow it down by our individual actions.

Pollution – recycle, cleaner energy, no plastic, stricter laws, better farming practices.

Illegal activity – tougher prison sentences, better education etc.

Other human impacts – speed limits in sensitive areas, speed cameras, animal crossings, changes to fence design etc.