

# Ocean habitat 'musical chairs'

## You need:

- A large open space
- 30 sports cones
- 30 coloured dot stickers (3 colours)
- A whistle

The animals and plants in the ocean are linked together in a food web. Discover what can happen to the ocean habitat to put this food web, and the animals within it, in danger.



- 1** In advance, spread 30 (or one per child) sports cones out, scattered randomly across a large open space.
- 2** Give each child a coloured sticker, this will represent what kind of creature they are in the food web, for example green = plankton, yellow = fish, blue = whale. For a class of 30, aim for about 20 plankton, 8 fish and 2 whales.
- 3** Ask each child to stand by a cone. Each cone represents space to live safely in the habitat. When you blow the whistle, the children need to run (or "swim"!) around their habitat. When you blow the whistle again, they must find a cone to stand next to.
- 4** Read out the scenarios on the printable cards one at a time. Remove the number of cones indicated on the card. There is now not as much space for all the animals to live, and next time you blow the whistle, some children will be "out". There aren't as many of the animals at the top of the food chain. Did they manage to survive, or did they become extinct?
- 5** Invite all of the children who are "out" back into the game. Read out the three positive scenarios and add the number of cones back into the game. Can they all find a home again?

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## Printable scenario cards



There is an oil spill, polluting the water and surrounding beaches.

**Remove 3 habitat spots.**

A large fishing net is abandoned in the water.

**Remove 1 habitat spot.**

Tourists leave plastic litter from their picnics on the beach, which washes into the sea.

**Remove 1 habitat spot.**

A trawling fishing boat destroys the kelp forest.

**Remove 2 habitat spots.**



The Japanese Government votes to increase the number of whales they kill for scientific research.

**Remove 2 habitat spots.**

A group of school children organises a beach clean, picking up litter so it doesn't go into the sea.

**Add 2 habitat spots.**

Following a campaign by WDC, an area visited by dolphins is turned into a marine protected area.

**Add 3 habitat spots.**

The council bans the use of single-use plastics like straws and coffee cups.

**Add 2 habitat spots.**

Removing whales from the food web also reduces the number of plankton and fish in the habitat, because whale poo supports the bottom of the food web! Find out more in our **Food Chains** resources.