

## **Thema: Climate Trackers**

### **Sprechertexte**

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#### Alligator

I know I am scary, but I can't help it, it's the way I look! I'm an alligator. Here we are in my kingdom, the Rio Paraguay basin, the world's largest wetland area, covering more than 200,000 square kilometers across Brazil, Bolivia, and Paraguay. With the rising temperatures caused by climate change, something alarming is happening for us: in all reptiles, the offspring's sex is determined by the ambient temperature. For us alligators, if the average temperature continues to rise, there will soon be many more males than females born. A serious threat to our species. For us, it is more than time. Stuck in a traffic jam? Switch off your engine! Act now!

#### Arctic fox

Hi! I'm the Arctic fox. This grey-brown coat is my summer outfit. In winter, my fur will turn white so that I can blend in with the snowy landscapes in the Arctic regions. It's handy for hunting! I love the cold. I can withstand freezing temperatures! What's my favorite food? Small rodents. The trouble is, it's also my cousin's favorite food. He's a red fox, and he's bigger and stronger than I am. With global warming, he's been able to move further north, and little by little, he's invading my territory. He's not very keen on sharing, so I'm starting to feel threatened around here. For us, it is more than time. Use a laptop; it needs less energy than a desktop! Act now!

#### Bengal tiger

Here, in the Ganges delta, everything is immense. Me, the Bengal tiger. I like striding around this region made of land and water. It is my territory. I am a solitary animal and I need a lot of room to hunt my prey. On the menu: deer, wild boar, monkeys, and lizards. I know these mangrove swamp forests by heart, with their roots diving into the salt water. But now I am worried; the landscape is changing, islands are disappearing in this big delta, all this because of the rising sea levels, caused by climate change. 10,000 km<sup>2</sup> that are at risk of being partially submerged! For us, it is more than time. Turn down your thermostat by just one degree! Save energy!

#### Buffalo

Welcome to Tanzania! I am an African buffalo. Like the antelope and the gazelle, I belong to the bovid family. We're on the hefty side, and you'd be wise not to get on the wrong side of us... especially nowadays. Due to climate change the temperature's rising, drought is spreading, and all mammals are affected. The numbers of certain species of antelope, such as the black sable and the roan, are already dwindling. The normal routes of migratory species such as the gnu have been thrown into chaos. In short, it's a shambles. For us, it is more than time. Water is precious; don't leave the taps running! Act now!

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#### Capercaillie

Hello, I am a Capercaillie, or wood grouse if you prefer. If I may say so, I'm not unhappy with my looks. And you should see me during the bridal parades. Top of the class! The rest of the time, I lead a simple life in the heart of the magnificent landscapes of the Pyrenean forest. But with the climate change over these last years, my mountain is changing. The glaciers are melting and pretty soon there won't be any; the forest grows ever higher up the slopes, so that the high mountain flora is threatened, and this changes my habitat completely. I am starting to feel hemmed in... For us, it is more than time. Save energy, select low temperature washing programs. Act now!

#### Carrion crow

Hello! No, I'm not going to tell you that the crow is an endangered species. You'll find me everywhere, in the countryside of course, but also in cities. Bird of the fields, bird of the towns – even in the worst situations I can adapt... Ah, but these floods! I've been told that climate change has got something to do with them, and in Europe, there are two very different consequences for the water cycle. In the South, there's much less rain and drought is on the rise. In Northern, Central, and Eastern Europe it's raining more often and more heavily, with a growing risk of flash floods, which are particularly destructive and dangerous. For us, it is more than time. Only a short distance? Leave the car in the garage. Act now!

#### Cuckoo

Cuckoo! It's me. My "cuckooing" is part of your life, it echoes around the whole countryside, like here in Germany. They say my song announces the arrival of spring. But the countryside is changing. Especially in specific environments like this one, a peat bog. Take butterflies. Many typical species have disappeared! Why? Because the survival of butterflies depends on the presence of the plants on which the caterpillars feed. Deforestation, reclamation of wetlands, pesticides, and today, in addition, climate change, threaten these environments that are already so fragmented in Europe. For us, it is more than time. To switch off completely, use sockets with a switch. Act now!

#### Dragonfly

Here in Belgium, these swamps are called peat bogs. It's only here, in these very particular habitats, that you can come across me, the dragonfly, answering also to the strange name 'Leucorrhinia dubia'. We dragonflies have existed for millions of years, but today I feel threatened. Human beings do not stop spreading their hold, reclaiming peat bogs, thinning out our living space. Global warming is an additional threat for our habitats, which are already so fragile. If there is no other favorable site in the neighborhood, then what will happen to this flora and fauna? Where shall we go? For us, it is more than time. Only a short distance? Leave the car in the garage. Act now!

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#### European kingfisher

Hello there, my friends! I am a Kingfisher – just in case you didn't recognize me! Where are we? Oh somewhere in Belgium! Come with me... There's some fish around here, I know the place well. I dive, catch my prey, and swallow it, always the head first, so that the scales are in the right direction. If the fish is not correctly positioned, I throw it in the air to turn it around. Can you see all those plants by the river? They are Himalayan balsams! With climate change and rising temperatures, they could gain more ground. The big problem is that eventually they won't leave any room for the local flora. For us, it is more than time. Instead of a bath, take a shower! Act now!

#### European pond turtle

This is the story of a little freshwater turtle called a European pond turtle – me in fact. I used to live peacefully in the ponds, marshes, and lakes all around Europe, like here in the middle of France. I live for a long time, sometimes up to 100 years! But my life changed the day that "monster" appeared... the red-eared slider, an American cousin recognizable by its red cheeks. I don't know how it got here from the bottom of an American, but anyway, as the climate has warmed up; it is breeding more and has successfully made itself at home here. This hostile cousin of mine, with its voracious appetite, eats everything in its path, animals and plants alike. For us, it is more than time. Put a lid on your saucepans! Save energy! Act now!

#### Gentoo Penguin

Black at the back, white at the front! I'm the Gentoo penguin. Since the dawn of time, I've shared the Antarctic waters with other penguins, and there's plenty of room for all of us. Once a year the whole colony comes here to the Antarctic Peninsula to nest... I'm a bird, don't forget... And when the chicks are well-fed and strong enough, into the water we all go... It's our life cycle! Until the climate changed. Now things are getting out of hand: the sea ice is melting, there's less and less plankton and the whole food chain is out of kilter. I can't help wondering, what will be left for us to eat? For us, it is more than time. Use energy saving light bulbs! Energy is precious! Act now!

#### Green turtle

I was born here, in Malaysia, on this beach at the edge of the Indian Ocean. When the egg-laying season arrives I come back, and my descendants will do the same. They call me the green turtle. I live in warm seas, near coral reefs. For many years, we sea turtles have been the victims of fishing nets, pollution, and the theft of our eggs. We are hunted for our meat and our shells. But today there's another threat hanging over our shells. With global warming, the sea level is rising. Some islands are now under water, and our egg-laying sites are getting narrower and narrower, reduced to a thin strip of sand, which risks disappearing altogether. For us, it is more than time. Tap water is usually safe. Drink it! Act now!

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#### Grizzly bear

A grizzly bear's diet is very varied and as an omnivorous animal, it eats plants, roots, berries and such animals as bison, elk, squirrels, rodents and fish – in fact, the grizzly bear eats almost anything. The Pacific Coast grizzly bears are bigger than those living inland on the North American continent, due to the many salmon and trout that enrich their diet with proteins. However, global warming is putting the salmon populations in decline. Following 2 to 7 years in the oceans, they swim back up the cold rivers to return to their birthplace where they lay their eggs. The water in the rivers gradually heats up in summer and autumn, which adversely affects the salmon's health and its ability to swim. Furthermore, the heavy winter rains increase the quantity of water flowing down the rivers and wash away the eggs and the alevins, which were protected by the gravel on the riverbeds. If the global warming trend continues, salmon migration will no longer be possible, hence endangering the survival of the species.

#### Hawksbill turtle

Hello! They call me a "scaly turtle", because of my shell. Look at my scales; they overlap like the tiles on a roof. Since the dawn of time, I live in the clear waters of the Caribbean Sea, and only return on land when it's time to lay eggs. I feed on sponges that live in the coral reefs. But today all marine life is disrupted because of global warming. Look at how the corals are going white. The increase in water temperature may well be fatal for them. Not to mention the cyclones, which now rage more violently and frequently, devastating the fauna and the flora in the sea. For us, it is more than time. Choose public transport! Act now!

#### Hermann's tortoise

I am Hermann's tortoise. That's my name! Oh, I know, I am not a speed champion but few, on the other hand, can compete with me in longevity. I can live for a hundred years! You can find me in the Mediterranean scrublands and undergrowth, tanning my shell under the sun. I am very stay-at-home: where I am born is where I live! With climate change and the rising temperatures in this part of the globe, forest fires are more and more frequent and can become gigantic. If we aren't roasted on the spot and somehow survive, we find ourselves lost on devastated grounds. For us, it is more than time. Eat organic food! Act now!

#### Marmot

No, I don't sleep all the time, as you can see for yourself! But I am shy... and careful. We marmots are always on the lookout. Eagles and foxes are never far away, so at the slightest sign of danger we whistle to warn each other. Here in the Alpine massif, I live in the upper limits of the forest. I feast on meadow grass, along with the occasional spider or two and a few worms – delicious! The trouble is, things are changing round here with the rising temperatures: the forests are growing at higher altitudes, my beloved meadows are shrinking, and I will soon have less and less grass to eat. For us, it is more than time. Save energy, select low temperature washing programs. Act now!

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#### Orang-utan

I spend most of my time here, in the trees of the Indonesian forest, on the island of Borneo. I am an Orang-utan. My name comes from Malay and means "man of the forest ". I am afraid that my living space is more than ever in danger today. There are already many threats, but climate change isn't helping. The drought sometimes lasts for several years and forest fires become catastrophic. If it goes on like this, my trees will become scarce and then where will I live? Recently, an area of forests and peat bogs as big as half of Poland went up in smoke. The trees die, and we suffocate. Man's health is also in danger. For us, it is more than time. To switch off completely, use sockets with a switch. Act now!

#### Orca

I'm an orca. I belong to the same family as the dolphin. Here, in the open seas around Norway, we live in groups. Our fishing technique is second to none – deadly even for migratory fish. As long as there are fish around... There are several factors at play, but global warming certainly isn't helping: the food pyramid is out of balance. Plankton, which can't cope with rising sea temperatures, is getting scarcer and moving further north. The herrings that feed on plankton have had to follow, and are changing their normal migratory paths. And we orcas will have to follow too, willy or nilly. For us, it is more than time. To switch off completely, use sockets with a switch. Act now!

#### Oystercatcher

Excuse me! Sorry, I'm busy right now... just a little peck and I'll be with you! Hello! Let me introduce myself: I'm an oystercatcher. As you can see, there are plenty of us here on the Netherlands coast. For generations we have fed on mussels and other mollusks, just like this. There we go! Ah! It's a real skill! But... my lifestyle could change... With this disrupted climate, the acidity of the sea has increased on the surface, because of these infamous greenhouse gases. As a result, making a seashell is getting harder. This could cause real problems for all shellfish, and for my mussels! What a mess! For us, it is more than time. Where possible, don't use a tumble dryer, it needs a lot of energy! Act now!

#### Pied flycatcher

Me, I am a Pied Flycatcher and I like travelling, discovering other horizons. I like to spend the winter in Africa. But when spring arrives, I fly back to Europe. I like Europe and its beautiful forests of broad-leaved trees. People put up nesting boxes to protect me from stone martens. The forests are teeming with my favorite food: flies of course, but also beetles and caterpillars. Because of climate change, I have a big problem. Butterfly eggs hatch earlier than before, so that when I have to feed my young, the caterpillars have already become butterflies. Some chicks die and others are unable to make the trip to Africa. For us, it is more than time. Choose carpooling. Act now!

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#### Pied kingfisher

I'm the pied kingfisher, and I'm 25 cm tall. You'll find me in Asia and sub-Saharan Africa. I need water! I'm a fan of the African Great Lakes region. Did you see that? I'm a champion at hovering! Up in the air, motionless, I watch intently for fish, and quick as a flash... I dive! Bingo! But what I'm seeing with climate change is very worrying. The water temperature in the lakes is going up, especially at the surface. The result is less algae, less nutrients rising from the depths, and so there are fewer fish, which means starvation for fishing birds like us! For us, it is more than time. You're leaving the room? Switch off the lights! Act now!

#### Polar bear

Here in Spitsbergen, hardly anything grows, and everything is white, cold, icy. But if only you knew how I love my country, far from humans! I feel strong, mighty carnivore that I am. I can run faster than you can and I can swim much better than you can! But there is one thing against which I am completely powerless, and that's global warming! I can hardly recognize the landscape around here. I watch my sea ice getting a bit smaller every year. My preys – the seals, for example – also need the sea ice to live. Where will I go then to find something to eat? For us, it is more than time. Instead of a bath, take a shower! Act now!

#### Polar bear / Beaufort

With a good layer of fat and a thick fur, I'm well equipped to face the severe cold. Putting it simply, above 10°C I start to boil in the heat! Here in the icy waters of the Beaufort Sea, in the middle of the Arctic Ocean, I'm in my element! It's my hunting ground! Did you know that I can swim in the open sea, dozens of kilometers from the coast? And there's always a piece of floating sea ice for me to rest on. Well, there used to be, anyway... With global warming, the sea ice is melting, and I have to swim further and further to find food. It's exhausting! For us, it is more than time. Choose public transport Act now!

#### Puffin

Hello, I am a Puffin. My favorite place is the north Atlantic: Iceland, Scotland, Scandinavia and Brittany. An excellent fisherman, I spend a lot of time at sea, I dive to catch fish and mollusks. I can carry up to 50 fish in my beak at the same time. The problem is that climate change is beginning to have a serious impact on my everyday diet. Small fishes are less and less numerous because they are going further up North. Result: those we catch now are too big for our youngsters; it is impossible to swallow them, they choke and end up starving. For us, it is more than time. Choose carpooling. Act now!

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#### Ringed seal

The ice of the Arctic is my living space. Me, the ringed seal, I am a bit like a fluffy toy that you want to hold in your arms. I am the smallest of the seals. I share this white and majestic world with other species, such as the bearded seal here. I was born in a den, which my parents dug in the ice pack. The problem is climate warming which is making the ice pack and glaciers melt. Consequently, baby seals slide sooner and sooner from their dens to the icy water and find themselves left on their own much too soon. Some of them don't make it and die. For us, it is more than time. Hot water is precious! Insulate your water pipes! Act now!

#### Roe deer

I am a cervid, but which one? Short antlers, a red coat in summer, a grey one in winter, I'm fast... and graceful. Haven't you guessed? I am a roe deer! Maybe you will come across me one day, off the beaten track, or you will hear me braying far away. I hide, and I am afraid of you humans. But there's a small parasitic animal that's even more threatening, because it can transmit diseases that can be really serious for humans. It is the tick. Now, with global warming, there are more ticks than ever and their habitat is spreading. For us, it is more than time. Save paper, share your reading material! Act now!

#### Snow leopard

I am a snow leopard, a big cat from the high mountains in Central Asia. My white, spotted fur is very valuable and poachers still hunt me. So I hide. In winter I live alone in the Himalayan forests and in the summer I go up to the meadows at heights of up to 6000 m. From here, I can see how fast the glaciers are melting due to global warming. These glaciers form a huge reservoir of water. They supply countless rivers, which are essential to the lives of half a billion people. Very soon, if nothing changes, there will be no glaciers left in the Himalayas. For us, it is more than time. Put a lid on your saucepans! Save energy! Act now!

#### Wapiti

I'm a Wapiti, and that's a real scouts' totem name! The native Americans gave me the name. They admired my majestic bearing, the way I swim, and my running speed. I like to live on the edge of forests, such as here in the Canadian Rocky Mountains. I feed on grasses, leaves, and bark. With global warming, spring comes around earlier: all nature blossoms so early now! And yet, winter is really needed: it is part of the life cycle of plants; it allows water reserves to be built up again. It must not disappear! For us, it is more than time. You're leaving the room? Switch off the lights! Act now!

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#### Weddell seal

Like the penguins, we Weddell seals live along the Antarctic Peninsula. There are 800,000 of us today in the icy waters of the southern hemisphere, and we're champion divers: up to 700 meters deep! Life would be even better if it weren't for this awful global warming thing, which is really noticeable in the polar regions. The Antarctic Ocean is heating up, especially at the surface of course. The entire ecosystem is re-adjusting, and that's upset the whole food chain: less plankton means fewer fish, fewer mollusks, and that means we have less food. For us, it is more than time. Stuck in a traffic jam? Switch off your engine! Act now!

#### Wood warbler

What a beautiful forest. Allow me to introduce myself. I am a wood warbler, a migratory bird. In the autumn, I go to Africa, and in the spring, I come back here to nest. Ah, the great forests! The hills covered by old oaks, the forests of huge beeches, the undergrowth, the ground covered with a humus of dead leaves, aaah! I'm very particular about my habitat. I've tried a pine forest, but it definitely wasn't for me! And that's the problem. With the temperatures going up, the beech groves are dying. It starts with the twigs, then the branches, and in a few years the trees are dead. For us, it is more than time. Where possible, don't use a tumble dryer, it needs a lot of energy! Act now!