



# Our Dying Planet: An Ecologist's View of the Crisis We Face

By Peter Sale

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Coral reefs are on track to become the first ecosystem actually eliminated from the planet. So says leading ecologist Peter F. Sale in this crash course on the state of the planet. Sale draws from his own extensive work on coral reefs, and from recent research by other ecologists, to explore the many ways we are changing the earth and to explain why it matters. Weaving into the narrative his own firsthand field experiences around the world, Sale brings ecology alive while giving a solid understanding of the science at work behind today's pressing environmental issues. He delves into topics including overfishing, deforestation, biodiversity loss, use of fossil fuels, population growth, and climate change while discussing the real consequences of our growing ecological footprint. Most important, this passionately written book emphasizes that a gloom-and-doom scenario is not inevitable, and as Sale explores alternative paths, he considers the ways in which science can help us realize a better future.

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## **Our Dying Planet: An Ecologist's View of the Crisis We Face By Peter Sale Bibliography**

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## **Editorial Review**

### Review

“Sale brings ecology alive while giving a solid understanding of the science at work behind today's pressing environmental issues. . . . A must-read for those that care about the planet Earth.”

(Ian Paulsen *The Guardian / Birdbooker Report Blog* 2011-08-28)

“Sale provides a solid introduction to the study of ecology, simultaneously making readers comfortable with the science at hand and stressing the need to address collapsing ecosystems.”

(Robin K. Dillow *Library Journal* 2011-12-16)

“A deeply researched and clear-eyed call to arms.”

(Richard P. Grant *The Scientist* 2012-01-01)

“Sale provides much food for thought in this provocative look at a hotly debated subject.”

(*Kirkus Reviews* 2011-08-01)

Thorough, balanced and state of the art. . . . A Powerful, multifaceted, vivid analysis of human-induced environmental change. . . . A rewarding read.”

(Matthias Schaefer *Basic & Applied Ecology* 2012-10-12)

“[Sale's] prose and storytelling are engaging and flow well, and many complex concepts are well explained. . . . Instructive and intriguing.”

(Erle C. Ellis, University of Maryland *Qtdly Review Of Biology* 2013-03-22)

“Sale has a gift for accurately observing and communicating complex scientific concepts to nonscientists; any adult with a high school education can understand and appreciate this work. . . . Highly recommended.”

(D. Flasphohler *Choice* 2012-03-01)

“Full of nasty surprises. . . . an important book about the future of life on a warmer earth.”

(Jan McGirk *Huffington Post* 2012-03-24)

“There is a delicate balance between showing the true complexity of environmental problems and keeping the science of these fields accessible to non-scientists. It is a balance that Sale, for the most part, navigates deftly.”

(Ashley Titterton *Canadian Dimension* 2012-02-15)

### From the Inside Flap

“ *Our Dying Planet* is the most powerful statement on the future of life on earth I have ever read. Starting with the title, which I admire greatly, it delivers the sort of honest, accurate, no-punches-pulled assessment you would expect from a scientist who has seen the problems first hand. Coral reefs appear set to be the first major ecosystem to go extinct. Few people know more about this than Peter Sale. If every scientist were to speak as convincingly as Sale, the public might finally grasp the seriousness of the course on which we've set our planet.”—Randy Olson, author of *Don't Be Such a Scientist*

“Peter Sale's book shows us the exquisite sensitivity of ecosystems to the consequences of human activity. This is the anthropocene epoch, a time when human beings have become a force of nature, altering properties of the biosphere on a geological scale. Read this and you will know it is very late and we must act.” —David Suzuki, author of *The Sacred Balance* and *The Legacy*

“Disruptions such as overfishing, forest desecration, ocean acidification and pollution, and the wholesale destruction of coral reefs have already changed the earth disastrously. These problems will not fix themselves. For an articulate and crucial discussion of the mess we've made — and with some small hope for the future — you must read this book.” —Richard Ellis, author of *The Empty Ocean* and *The Great Sperm Whale*

“A bold and convincing explication of the forces inexorably leading to an environmental collapse, and sooner than most people think. Sale, a leading ecologist, tackles some sacred cows — including the implications of human population growth — and shows the many synergisms between impacts that would be devastating even if they acted alone — which they don't. No one will read *Our Dying Planet* and remain complacent, but Sale sketches some promising paths out of our dilemma.” —Daniel Simberloff, coeditor of *Encyclopedia of Biological Invasions*

#### About the Author

**Peter F. Sale** is Assistant Director, Institute for Water, Environment, and Health at United Nations University and University Professor Emeritus at the University of Windsor in Ontario, Canada. He is the author of *The Ecology of Fishes on Coral Reefs*, *Coral Reef Fishes*, and *Marine Metapopulations*.

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