

Leaf to you - completed

My name is Tree. My story is a long one. It is a story of happiness and friendship, but also of sadness.

Maybe you have never thought about how similar trees and humans are. Just like you I am very old, developing from the waters of our Earth over 3.8 million years ago. The beauty of the Earth we see all around us today is due to the miracle called **life**. We both have been a part of it, although each of us plays a different role in it. I, you and all other plants and animals exist only due to our environment – the sun, water, nutrients, air, **climate** and soil. Though we are not identical we **depend** on each other. The **Earth** remains our common and only home.

Nature has given us several special abilities. We have the ability to accommodate many plants and animals. We are a home and a hotel for them, a world they cannot exist without. Did you know that as many as 300 types of insect can live in one **beech** tree?

You have discovered many ways in which trees can help you. Our wood helps you to build houses and ships, forest fruits and wildlife provide food to eat. The most important treasure from trees is oxygen. Millions of years ago the Earth's air was not safe for man. It contained a large quantity of harmful carbon dioxide. Together with other green plants we learned to use this gas to create **oxygen**. We released oxygen into the atmosphere and enabled life to develop. We became the green lungs of the Earth.

With the growing number of people our lives with Man started to change. Energy from the sun was not enough for Man. He learned how to obtain more energy so as to light up the night time – **lighting**; to be warm in winter – **heating**; to have his table always full without effort – modern **farming**; to travel fast – **transport**. For his lifestyle he needs more and more energy which he obtains by burning coal, oil and **natural gas**. Thus he releases **carbon** into atmosphere and causes it to warm up.

My life is not what it used to be. The water that falls from the skies is no longer clean. The climate is getting warmer. My health is getting worse. I suffer from diseases. Damaged roots do not absorb water. Leaves have been falling too soon. Flowers do not ripen into fruits.

Man knows that he is a part of nature too. Everything he has changed in the natural world will impact on him. He has to make proper use of natural resources. Have a look, for example, at us Trees. We have to eat, drink and work all the time. However, we do not pollute the **environment** we are living in. What about you, have you thought about how you have been using natural resources? As a matter of fact, with this letter I wanted to tell you that my story is also your story. Its future is now in your hands.