

## Tragedy of the Commons

An essay written  
in 1968 by  
Garrett Harden



*Only the moai have the answers...*

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## 5 points of a collapse framework

1. **Damage Environment-** deforestation leads to erosion
2. **Climate Change-** drought cannot sustain increase in population

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## THE STORY OF EASTER ISLAND

- \* First occupied in 900 A.D., a subtropical forest of tall trees and woody bushes
- \* **Population of island reached @ 6,000 and 30,000**
- \* Society divided into chiefs and commoners
- \* **Extreme example of forest destruction; whole forests are gone leading to a loss of raw materials, wild-caught food, and decreased crop yields**
- \* This led to fierce competition
- \* **In the 1680's the chiefs and priests were overthrown and the society collapsed in an epidemic of civil war**
- \* When visited by the missionaries in 1864 the population was around 2,000 many more wiped out by small pox

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