

Copymaster 3.18 Environmental Change Cards

Environmental change 1: A huge meteor hits Earth, and dust from the resulting impact fills the atmosphere and blocks out the Sun for months. This event induces an ice age. Over a period of thousands of years, glaciers gradually grow from the poles to cover all but the equatorial landmasses. Tropical areas become much colder. Sea levels drop as water is taken up into glaciers. All shallow-water ocean habitat becomes exposed.

Environmental change 2: Two continental plates collide and cause a mountain range to form over a period of millions of years. Some habitats gain up to 1,524 m (5,000 ft) of elevation. Some forested areas become uninhabitable by trees. Other areas experience changes in rainfall, colder temperatures, and greater differences between seasons. Populations of small and slow-moving organisms become isolated on either side of the mountain range.

Environmental change 3: A large volcano erupts, destroying thousands of miles of habitat and covering everything in magma and ash. After a few years, some plant and animal species survive, but your critter's main food source does not.

Environmental change 4: The process of global warming induces a drought, causing all the freshwater streams to dry up. A few rivers remain, but they are very small and often dry up in the summer months.

Environmental change 5: A new predator that is very good at catching your critter migrates into the area.

Environmental change 6: Continental drift causes the peninsula that your critter is living on to become an island.

Environmental change 7: Humans discover your critter's habitat and decide to build a community there. Unfortunately, the humans have determined that the critter's primary food source is a weed and therefore is not desirable. All these plants and those similar to it in the area are destroyed by pesticides and weed eaters.

Environmental change 8: A new species of animal similar to your critter migrates into the area. This new species reproduces quickly and begins to use up all the food that your critter depends upon.

Environmental change 9: A gradual uplift due to colliding continental plates next to your critter's habitat has caused a mountain range to form about 160 km (100 miles) away. The mountains cause gradual change in weather patterns over thousands of years, increasing the rainfall in the area by 12–25 cm (5–10 in) per year.