

Tragedy of the Commons

Activity: Fishing for the Future
Reading/Discussion:
“Tragedy of the Commons”

“Tragedy of the Commons” by Garrett Hardin



“Tragedy of the Commons” Take Aways

When individuals, acting independently and rationally, will deplete a shared resource, even when doing so is not in their interest.

Each user receives a direct benefit of using the resource, but only bears a fraction of the cost of its exploitation.

“Tragedy of the Commons” Take Aways

Occurs when resources shared by everyone (or held in common) are used at a rate that exceeds the resources' sustainable limit.

Ultimately, as a population grows and consumption increases, the “commons” collapse.

John C. Sawhill

“In the end, our society will be defined not only by what we create, but by what we refuse to destroy.”

