

Vocabulary

- **Peril:** serious and immediate danger.
- **To give something or someone a “breather”:** a brief pause for rest.
- **Pristine:** in its original condition; unspoiled.
- **Archipelago:** a group of islands.
- **Interventions:** the action or process of intervening.
- **Mitigate:** make less severe, serious, or painful.
- **Vulnerable:** susceptible to physical or emotional attack or harm.
- **Traction:** the action of drawing or pulling something over a surface, especially a road or track.
- **Strategist:** a person skilled in planning action or policy, especially in war or politics.

Active readers can

1. summarise,
2. clarify,
3. Ask questions and
4. predict (*predicting could be optional depending on the material).

Should some of the world's endangered places be off-limits to tourists?



[Iceland](#)'s Fjaðrárgljúfur Canyon

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- Habitat loss, overtourism, and the consequences of climate change have put more and more travel destinations at peril, even as the pandemic's forced shutdowns gave once tourist-trampled places a breather.
- This prompted us (National Geographic) to ask our newsletter subscribers and Facebook followers the question: "Should there be places on Earth that are closed off to visitation? Should the wilderness be restricted in some way?"

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- Responses swamped our inbox, with most making arguments for limiting tourism. “The last few decades have taught us so much about what happens to wild places when people trample them,” wrote Margaret Cervarich, pointing to the trash pileup at Everest base camp.



- “Many pristine and protected areas should be off-limits to humans completely, in my opinion. And a carefully evaluated few should be allowed for scientific studies,” wrote Charlisa Cato. Several, including Alper Takci, felt the limitations need to go further: “We should seal the whole planet off to humans.”

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- Indeed, some places have closed to travelers temporarily, including [Iceland](#)'s Fjaðrárgljúfur Canyon—[made viral](#) in a Justin Bieber video. Maya Bay, in Thailand's Phi Phi archipelago, [was overrun](#) and its coral destroyed following the 2000 movie *The Beach* with Leonardo di Caprio. The beach, which has been closed since 2018, may soon reopen under stricter conditions. Other destinations have banned specific activities: In [Hawaii](#), a [new law](#) goes into effect on October 28 prohibiting swimming with spinner dolphins.



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- There are many cases where interventions have helped to mitigate overcrowding. Last July, [Italy banned large cruise ships](#) from entering [Venice](#)'s waters and declared the city's lagoon a national monument. [Bhutan](#) has for decades pursued a "[high-value, low-volume](#)" strategy, with prices only luxury travellers can afford, while investing in the preservation of nature and culture. Some destinations—including [Amsterdam](#)—have all but stopped actively marketing the city to tourists, switching objectives from "destination promotion" to "destination management" for the welfare of locals.

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- “We have many examples of visitor management systems that work to limit visitation in vulnerable places,” says Greg Klassen, a tourism strategist based in Vancouver. “For example, many national parks have areas open to visitors by first-come, first-served, lottery systems.”

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- Such measures have been gaining traction. In 2017, [Peru](#) limited access to [Machu Picchu](#) to two timed entries each day and restricted travelers to specific trails. Some of the new, stricter pandemic-era restrictions—visitors having to [buy tickets](#) for specific hours rather than half-day blocks, for example—will likely be permanent. In the U.S., [Rocky Mountain](#) and [Yosemite](#) National Parks [recently introduced](#) a timed-entry permit system to manage pandemic crowds. While temporary, they point to potential strategies for reducing congestion in the future.



What do you think?



Can you

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