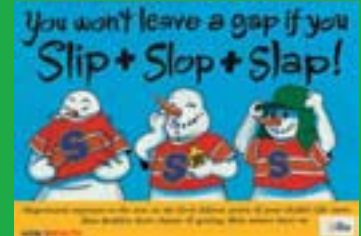


# Environmental Conservation

The natural environment was created over a long span of time as a result of plants, animals, and other living things coexisting. For instance, we are able to live on the earth because submerged aquatic vegetation carries out photosynthesis and discharges oxygen ( $O_2$ ), which becomes ozone ( $O_3$ ) in the upper atmosphere, creating a layer covering the whole earth. Before that, living things could not go on dry land because the UV rays from the sun were. It is said that it takes 100 years for the earth's surface to gain one centimeter of soil. Soil covers mountains, stores rainwater, and releases the stored water gradually. Mountains need forests to keep the soil in place, especially after it rains, for instance. The earth, the only planet where living things exist, is constantly developing and maintaining its natural ecosystem. Mankind has long pretended that it had forgotten it was a part of nature. To preserve a better natural environment for future generations, we must develop and recover the natural environment, change our lifestyles and social mechanisms, and restrict environmental impact to a point where the natural environment can recover by itself.



The mascot for a skin cancer prevention campaign. The slogan is "Slip (slip on a shirt), Slop (slop on some sunscreen), and Slap (slap on a hat)." Skin cancer is caused by sunlight directly shining on the earth through a depleted area in the ozone layer above the South Pole. (The right to use this picture is permitted by The Cancer Council Charity in New South Wales, Australia.)