



Someone's a fan of *Godzilla vs. Mothra*. Getting past this guy involves grappling your way to the top of a cliff while avoiding its wind-whipping wings.

# LOST PLANET: EXTREME CONDITION

Liking it is extremely conditional

PUBLISHER: Capcom DEVELOPER: Capcom GENRE: Third-Person Shooter AVAILABILITY: Retail, E-tail (www.steampowered.com) ESRB RATING: Teen MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS: Pentium 4 CPU, 512MB RAM (1GB for Windows Vista), 8GB hard drive space, 256MB videocard (gamepad recommended) MULTIPLAYER: 2-16 players VERSION REVIEWED: Final E-tail

## REVIEW

**Better than** stuffing your head in a freezer, Capcom's *Lost Planet: Extreme Condition* comes with all the frost(ing) and none of the freezer burn. If you want something that finally flaunts DirectX 10, here it is, pretty as a neon blizzard under glass, though the actual play's as dull as it ever was on the Xbox 360. Scratch that: Even more so, since the console version's cockeyed autoaim graduates to "you point, you hit" here, making combat less about tactics than picking bottles off a barrel. When I say "blew through the story in five hours on normal difficulty," I'm talking five without a reload.

I guess I should be grateful. It meant less time flicking rockets and Gatling rounds at giant bugs and snow pirates while slurping pools of orange goop to stay toasty. That's the game's shtick: It's so darned chilly, you have to ingest Thermal Energy (T-ENG) to keep from freezing. This manifests as a number relentlessly counting down to "you die," which you refill by rolling over piles of molten energy. How do you get T-ENG? By blowing up machinery, snuffing snow pirates, and shooting bugs in the butt (excuse me—*carapace posteriori*).

### LOST IN THE SNOW

You play an amnesiac named Wayne, living on a planet that humans failed to terraform. Some bugs called Akrid kicked the humans off, and somewhere in the muddle, your dad was killed...making you Rambo in a parka, with guns and a few exoskeletal Vital Suits (think "joyless *BattleTech* caricature"), in search of the killer. Between levels, your pals prattle on about aliens, pirates, corporate conspiracies, and a great bossy beast whose moniker is a color plus a body part, i.e., Green Eye (which—let's be honest—is a happy step up from Pink Toe or Purple Earlobe).

AS DULL AS IT EVER WAS ON THE XBOX 360.

Controlling Wayne with first- or third-person views, your only special move involves firing a grappling hook to tag out-of-reach areas or stop yourself from slipping off ledges. Mostly you just shoot across glare-lit snowfields or raid luminous caverns teeming with flying milipedes, pausing only to activate energy posts and boost your T-ENG for the inevitable boss fight. It's too bad combat hinges on such a dumb mechanic: Any time Wayne takes heavy damage, he falls down, pauses before rising, then falls down *again* if an enemy has a pattern going. It's tortuously inane, but does it make the game more difficult? Let's just say that, even with your face in the dirt, losing takes effort...and that's never a positive.

Things don't improve online. Deathmatch is...well, it's Deathmatch, and the other modes like "Post Grab" (tap a key really fast to trigger posts that replenish your T-ENG) and "Fugitive" (hunt the game session host on a timer) play like shadows of smarter online modes with only guns, rocket launchers, and grenades on your menu.

Talk about the old sound and fury saw—you'll finish *Lost Planet: Extreme Condition* too soon and won't go back for seconds. That's really the definition of why not to buy something, isn't it? **• Matt Peckham**



Assume the position, because it's the one you're in half the time.



Pick up Gatling guns or rocket launchers and stick up to two at a time on Vital Suits. In a pinch, you can slip them back off to be hauled around on foot.

### VERDICT

- It's really, really pretty.
- Very easy; your nickname is "super-klutz"; unimaginative multiplayer.

5/10

AVERAGE





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