

Almost a Third of Wildlife Species at Risk of Extinction

Rising Threats to Wildlife Reported by Red List as Global Biodiversity Negotiations Plod On in Montreal

By [Center For Biological Diversity](#)

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An [update](#) released today by the International Union for Conservation of Nature found that 28% of plants and animals around the globe are threatened with extinction. The new IUCN Red List identifies 42,108 species as threatened out of 150,388 species for which there is enough information to determine a conservation status.

The Red List update comes as governments from around the globe gather in Canada at COP15, the Convention on Biological Diversity, to negotiate a framework on biodiversity conservation objectives for the next decade.

"These horrific Red List numbers are yet another wake-up call to negotiators in Montreal that we have to do everything in our power to save biodiversity," said Tierra Curry, a senior scientist at the Center for Biological Diversity. "We can halt the suicidal march toward mass extinction if we take bold actions to save life on Earth."

Scientists are working to assess the status of all species. Today's update focuses on the dire situation of marine species threatened by illegal and unsustainable fishing, pollution, climate change and disease. Of the 54 global species of abalone, 20 were found to be threatened.

The pillar coral found throughout the Caribbean, including Florida, was downgraded from vulnerable to critically endangered after its population shrunk by more than 80% since 1990 because of bleaching from climate change and pollution.

"These updates feel soul-crushing, but they should be a catalyst for action," said Curry. "Nations have an opportunity to agree to halt extinctions now and build a framework to

reduce threats to life. Real change must come out of the negotiations in Montreal that benefit wildlife and vulnerable human communities.”

Every decade, global governments negotiate a framework to implement the Convention on Biological Diversity over the next 10 years. This framework, more formally known as “[the post-2020 global biodiversity framework](#),” is centered around the vision of living in harmony with nature by 2050.

Negotiators planned to adopt the agreement in 2020 but because of the pandemic, final negotiations are taking place now. Funding problems, controversies over sharing genetic resources and a lack of ambition have hamstrung the negotiations. The United States and the Vatican are the only countries not party to the Convention.

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