

Biodiversity is all the different kinds of life you'll find in one area—the variety of animals, plants, fungi, and even microorganisms like bacteria that make up our natural world. Each of these species and organisms work together in ecosystems, like an intricate web, to maintain balance and support life. Biodiversity supports everything in nature that we need to survive: food, clean water, medicine, and shelter.

But as humans put increasing pressure on the planet, using and consuming more resources than ever before, we risk upsetting the balance of ecosystems and losing biodiversity. [WWF's 2022 Living Planet Report](#) found an average 69% decline in global populations of mammals, fish, birds, reptiles, and amphibians since 1970. The 2019 landmark [Global Assessment Report](#) by the Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services reported 1 million animal and plant species are now threatened with extinction—the highest number in human history.

Three-quarters of the land-based environment and roughly 66% of the ocean environment have been significantly altered. More than a third of the world's land surface and nearly 75% of freshwater resources are now devoted to crop or livestock production. Climate change worsens the impact of other stressors on nature and our well-being. Humans have overfished the oceans, cleared forests, polluted our water sources, and created a climate crisis. These actions are impacting biodiversity around the world, from the most remote locales to our own backyards.

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Pledge for our planet

Our planet is facing major conservation challenges from threats like climate change, deforestation, overfishing, and illegal wildlife trade. But protecting our planet and keeping planetary warming below 1.5C (2.7° F) is not impossible and none of us need to do it alone. Our impact on the planet primarily comes from what we eat, what we buy, how we power our homes, and how we travel from place to place. Of course, governmental policies and protections also play an important role.

Together, we can take action to create lasting solutions and protect the future of nature.

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Even the most important biodiversity hubs around the world are not immune from human pressures. Borneo, a massive island in southeast Asia, is home to more than 1,400 different animal species, and at least 15,000 plant species. Iconic wildlife like orangutans, pygmy elephants, clouded leopards, rhinos, and proboscis monkeys share the landscape with the world's tallest tropical trees. You'll also find more than 50 species of carnivorous pitcher plants that trap and consume insects and small animals. There are up to 3,000 species of orchids; flying, color-changing frogs; and slugs that shoot darts at their mates.

But Borneo's vast wealth of natural resources has attracted more than nature lovers. For decades, large-scale, international interests have worked to extract as much as they can from the island— hardwood trees; coal; rubber; and gold, diamonds, and other metals and minerals. Forests are decimated to make way for profitable palm oil plantations. Even the plants and animals that make Borneo so special are hunted, harvested, and sold on the black market.

All this pressure adds up to a landscape that is quickly changing, with nature struggling to keep up. Thirty percent of Borneo's forests have been wiped out in only 40 years. We've lost half of all critically endangered Bornean orangutans in just the past 20 years. Even the nepenthes rajah, the largest known carnivorous pitcher plant, is endangered. We're plucking threads from the biodiversity web and it's starting to collapse.

But one of the most beautiful things about biodiversity is its resilience. Ease up on the pressure, manage resources well, give it time, and the ecosystem will adapt. Nature and biodiversity will recover. That's exactly what WWF is working to do in Borneo. We've identified the threats and are addressing them: engaging both local communities and international governments to set aside protected lands and end illegal deforestation; working with companies to ensure the paper, lumber, and food products you use every day are sourced responsibly; and leading global efforts to stop wildlife crime.

We're using these same tactics to combat biodiversity loss worldwide—analyzing the unique threats and finding innovative solutions. To protect the iconic wildlife we all love, we must rebuild the web of biodiversity that supports it. We do this by rethinking how we're using natural resources, easing the pressure, and allowing ecosystems to recover. In the process, all life benefits: plants, insects, fish, birds, mammals, and even people.