

Global Action for Species

- Conserving species and ensuring their equitable and sustainable use is essential to life on this planet
- Parties to the Biodiversity Convention (CBD) are urged to support species conservation through a clear and ambitious species goal for 2050 and specific targets on species for 2030 in the on the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework
- The Global Species Action Plan (GSAP) offers implementation support to assist governments and other stakeholders take all the actions needed to prevent extinctions and improve the status of wild species.

What is the issue?

The 2019 [IPBES Global Assessment](#) revealed that around 25% of species of animals and plants assessed on [The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species](#)TM are threatened, suggesting that one million species may face extinction.

In 2010, governments agreed a global target: to bring about the sustained recovery of known threatened species by 2020. Far from being achieved, current extinction rates have increased. Without immediate action, there will be further extirpation and acceleration of species extinction risk.

The good news is that the number of extinctions would likely have been higher without conservation actions over the past decade. Many species have been saved from extinction or had their status improved through conservation actions; habitats have been restored and re-wilded.

Drivers of species decline have not been addressed at the required scale and the conservation of species and their habitats is not well integrated into economic and development policies of many government departments.

To support governments and other stakeholders, IUCN, with its Species Survival Commission, Members and partners are developing a [Global Species Action Plan](#). This will map to the global biodiversity framework, outlining all the existing species conservation actions and resources available to support its implementation.

What should be done?

IUCN calls for a Post-2020 Framework that prevents extinctions, reduces extinction risk of species, maintains abundance of non-threatened species and brings about the sustained recovery of wild species. It should facilitate:

- **An enormous scaling up of species conservation** through an ambitious species goal for 2050 and specific targets on species for 2030;
- **Conservation action ‘on-the-ground’** to alleviate threats, halt declines in species to improve the status of all species; and
- **Ensure that any use of species is legal and sustainable** and that their benefits are equitably shared;
- **Mainstream species conservation** across all policy and development sectors;
- **Consider establishing a programme of work for species conservation**, using the **Global Species Action Plan**, as an implementation support mechanism to achieve species related goal and targets of the GBF.



*Thanks to conservation, the European bison (*Bison bonasus*) has improved status from Vulnerable to Near Threatened in the IUCN Red List of Threatened SpeciesTM © Rafał Kowalczyk*

Why is this important?

Millions of species on land, in freshwater, and in the ocean form the web of life on this planet. Actions to conserve them are integral to securing our life support system:

- Species and their interactions are the fundamental building blocks of ecosystems in all realms;
- Species act as indicators for the intactness, functionality, connectivity, and health of ecosystems;
- Keystone species, such as pollinators and predators, are essential to ecosystem function;
- Livelihoods and well-being of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities depend on healthy populations of species and their sustainable use;
- Wild species are the basis of fishing and forestry;
- The wild relatives of crops and domestic livestock are a repository of irreplaceable genetic material for food security;
- Protected areas play a vital role in conserving ecosystems and ecosystem services that depends on their species composition remaining intact;
- Assessments of species vulnerability to climate change inform future adaptation measures.
- Species make nature accessible to people.



*The Mountain Gorilla (*Gorilla beringei beringei*), which has improved in status from Critically Endangered to Endangered thanks to collaborative conservation efforts across country boundaries with engagement from communities living around Mountain Gorilla habitat. Photo: Ludovic Hirlimann (CC BY 2.0)*

The right global tools and events

[The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species™](#) is the world's most comprehensive information source on the global conservation status of animal, fungi and plant species.

Key Biodiversity Areas: are 'sites contributing significantly to the global persistence of biodiversity', in terrestrial, freshwater and marine ecosystems. [The Global Standard for the Identification of Key Biodiversity Areas](#) sets out globally agreed criteria for the identification of KBAs worldwide.

The Resumed SBSTTA-24, SBI-3 and WG2020-3 meetings GSAP side-event: [How can we target and scale up conservation action to enable all species-related goals and targets of the Global Biodiversity Framework to be achieved?](#)

Additional Information

A global species action plan: supporting implementation of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework Information paper for WG2020-3: <https://www.cbd.int/doc/c/fb33/0c69/857923de897e8fe27c400ca6/gsap-oweg3-en.pdf>

GSAP webpage:

<https://www.iucn.org/theme/species/our-work/influencing-policy/global-species-action-plan>

https://www.iucn.org/sites/dev/files/global_species_action_plan_2_pager_final.pdf

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Sources

1. IPBES. 2019. [Global assessment report on biodiversity and ecosystem services of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services](#) (Version 1).
2. Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity. 2020. [Global Biodiversity Outlook 5](#). Montreal, Canada.