



GLOBAL GREENS
Biodiversity Working Group Launch
International Day for Biological Diversity Statement
Biodiversity Working Group
22/5/2024

*This **International Day for Biological Diversity** comes as the climate and biodiversity crises reach critical junctures. Warming temperatures, habitat loss, overconsumption, land clearance and pollution are devastating biodiversity across the planet. Now is the time for collective action at every level, from the individual to the global, to be part of the plan to reverse the decline of biodiversity once and for all.*

***Today the Global Greens, launches our Global Biodiversity Working Group** that unites Greens around the world to coordinate and collaborate to protect and enhance nature. We draw the world's attention to this year's Biodiversity COP16 in Colombia in October as a critical multilateral mechanism for action.*

Together, we must all be 'part of the plan'. Time and action is of the essence.

Biodiversity

Biodiversity is of intrinsic value to the planet and humanity. Healthy ecosystems regulate natural processes that affect everything from the air we breathe, to the food we grow, to the natural resources we extract, to the beauty of our natural environment.

Our impact on natural spaces threatens millions of species with habitat loss which not only reduces the living space of species, but frequently results in habitat fracturing, making them even more susceptible to environmental challenges - a negative feedback loop. It is important, when protecting biodiversity, not only to preserve the variety of species, but the genetic diversity within them as well as a habitat they can continue to thrive in. Biodiversity loss threatens our health directly too as strained wild habitats, as well as intensive agriculture, can increase the risk and frequency of animal-human transfer of diseases. It is in all our interests Policy, action and our ways of life must put biodiversity front and centre.

Threats

Today, it is understood that humanity is overseeing the sixth mass extinction across the planet. Extinctions are occurring today at 1000 times the frequency than in the 60 million years prior. 1 million species are at risk of extinction. According to the Living Planet Index,

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Rue du Taciturne 34, 1000 Brussels, Belgium
e. secretary@globalgreens.org



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wildlife animal populations have declined an average of 69% since 1970, including 55% in the Asia Pacific, 66% in Africa and a staggering 94% in South America. Climate change further threatens global biodiversity, as temperatures become more extreme and unpredictable, straining countless species' abilities to adapt to the pressures.

Currently, 10 million hectares of forest are cut down each year, heavily concentrated in biodiverse hotspots such as the Amazon, Central Africa, and South-East Asia. 46% of the land once covered in forests and wild grassland is now agriculture. 70% of that total is used for livestock grazing, and a significant amount of crop production is used to feed those animals. A gross inefficiency for planetary and human health with intersectional devastating impacts.

Those at the forefront of the fight to protect delicate ecosystems - forest and ocean defenders - have faced increasingly targeted violence in clashes with illegal loggers, grazers, miners, fishers, and poachers. According to the Environmental Defence Fund, over 1,700 defenders were killed between 2000 and 2019, with only about 10% of the killers brought to justice. This plight especially impacts indigenous communities as they fight to stop forceful, often illegal, incursions onto their land. They are a disproportionate percentage of those killed: 30-40%. Biodiversity is a social justice issue too.

Action

This International Day for Biological Diversity, we call on all peoples and governments to take decisive action to protect terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems now and well into the future. We all have a part to play, from individual changes, to industry, to ensuring binding international agreements are delivered. We call on the world's governments to come together to deliver national targets in line with the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework 2022, and to exceed them.

These goals include:

- **Ensure 30% of the world's land and marine are protected areas by 2030.**
Because of the necessity of the moment, the Global Greens urge this goal be taken further with the aim of reaching 50%. We recognise in some areas such as the Amazon the call is for 80% protection.
- **Increase the regrowth of natural ecosystems by up to 30%, especially in biodiverse hotspots, by 2050.**

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- **Reduce global food waste by half** - which contributes to less pressure on arable land.
- **Halt the spread and mitigate the impact of invasive species** as a key driver in species extinction.
- **Reduce government subsidies to the leading industries threatening biodiversity** by \$500 billion, these include wasteful subsidies to oil, mining, logging, animal agriculture, and fishing.
- **Invest \$200 billion globally** (equivalent to less than 2% of world GDP) into strategies to environmentally safeguard the world economy, promote sustainable production and extraction, and invest in strategies to enhance global biodiversity.
- **Legislate protection and legal recourse for nature**, and forest and ocean defenders. Increase enforcement efforts to prevent incursions onto protected land.
- **Formally recognise the rights and roles indigenous people** play a key role in preserving biodiversity - 80% of the world's remaining biodiversity is concentrated in indigenous territories.

Next

At COP16 in Colombia this October, we, the Global Greens, call on all governments to meet and exceed these goals in step with the true urgency of the biodiversity crisis with concrete national implementation plans by all signatures to the CBD. We call on governments who have not yet ratified the CBD to do so. The Global Greens pledges to work nationally, regionally, and globally to protect key areas of biodiversity and to highlight the outstanding loss of biodiversity and the threat that this poses. We will continue to pressure governments to take action to meet and exceed the targets set out in Montreal and to hold them to account to existing commitments and milestones. It is one of the most pressing issues we face for the future of the planet and humanity.

Nature is us, and we are nature. We are in this together. Now is the time for action.

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