



IUCN Red List

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The latest update to the International Union for Conservation of Nature (**IUCN**) **Red List** of Threatened Species shows that more and more species assessed are being threatened with extinction.

- The list assessed 1,05,732 species - the **largest such assessment** of species, out of which 28,338 species are threatened with extinction.
- The updated list brings out an alarming rate of decline of freshwater and deep sea species. For example, over 50 % of Japan's endemic freshwater fishes are under the threat of extinction.
 - Wedgefishes and giant guitarfishes, collectively known as Rhino Rays because of their elongated snouts, have been listed as the 'most imperilled marine fish families in the world'.
 - The main drivers of this decline are the loss of free flowing rivers and increasing agricultural and urban pollution.
- Close to 50% of the species assessed by IUCN have been put under the 'Least Concern' category. It means the rest 50% are under various degrees of decline.
- Of the total assessed, 873 are already extinct while 6,127 are critically endangered.
- This Red List update **confirms the findings** of the **IPBES Global Biodiversity Assessment**.
- The list clearly indicates that humans are overexploiting wildlife.
- According to the **global Strategic Plan for Biodiversity (2011-2020)'s Target 12**, the extinction of known threatened species has to be 'prevented' by 2020. The target also includes an improvement in the conservation status of species.

The International Union for Conservation of Nature

- IUCN is a membership union uniquely composed of both government and civil society organisations.
- Created in **1948**, it is the global authority on the status of the natural world and the measures needed to safeguard it.

- It is headquartered in **Switzerland**.
- The **IUCN Red List** of Threatened Species, is the world's most comprehensive inventory of the global conservation status of plant and animal species.
 - It uses a set of quantitative criteria to evaluate the extinction risk of species. These criteria are relevant to most species and all regions of the world.
 - The IUCN Red List Categories define the extinction risk of species assessed. **Nine categories** extend from NE (*Not Evaluated*) to EX (*Extinct*). Critically Endangered (CR), Endangered (EN) and Vulnerable (VU) species are considered to be threatened with extinction.
 - It is recognized as the most authoritative guide to the status of biological diversity.
 - It is also a key indicator for the **SDGs** and Aichi Targets.

