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## Madagascar's Indigenous Species

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Around 20 indigenous animal species of Madagascar are under threat.▫

- Among the species under threat, the **majority belongs to the primate group**. The group contains all the species commonly related to lemurs, monkey, apes, and humans. Lemurs are among the unique to Madagascar.
- According to the International Union for Conservation of Nature(IUCN) Red List of Threatened Species, **of the 111 lemur species, 24 are currently listed as Critically Endangered, 49 are Endangered and 20 are Vulnerable**.
- All species are listed by **CITES on Appendix I**, which prohibits the trade of specimens or parts, except for scientific purposes.
  - **Indri**, the **largest of all lemurs and a species** with such symbolic value for Madagascar that it is often compared to the giant panda in China, is among the species of lemurs that would be uplisted from endangered to critically endangered.
  - **Madame Berthe's mouse lemur**, the world's **smallest primate**, would also be up-listed endangered.
  - **Silky sifaka** (*Propithecus candidus*) also known as "**angel of the forest**"—refers to its white fur. It is one of the rarest mammals on Earth and is listed by IUCN the as one of the world's 25 most critically endangered primates.
- There are a number of threats to lemurs' survival in Madagascar, chief among them are
  - **Widespread destruction** of their tropical forest habitat.
  - Illegal **logging**
  - **Deforestation** driven by slash-and-burn agriculture.
  - **Charcoal production**.
  - **Mining**
  - **Hunting of lemurs** for food and for the pet trade as an emerging but serious threat.

**Madagascar**

- The island nation of Madagascar has developed its own distinct ecosystems and extraordinary wildlife since it split from the African continent an estimated 160 million years ago.
- It's more than 3,000 miles of coastline and over 250 islands are home to some of the world's largest coral reef systems and most extensive mangrove areas in the Western Indian Ocean.

World Lemur Day is observed every year on 30 October by IUCN.