

CLEIMUN20

“Diplomacy in a Challenging Global Environment”

A Research Report

COMMITTEE: Ecology and Environment Committee (ECOE)

QUESTION OF: Protecting Endangered Species and Biodiversity Loss

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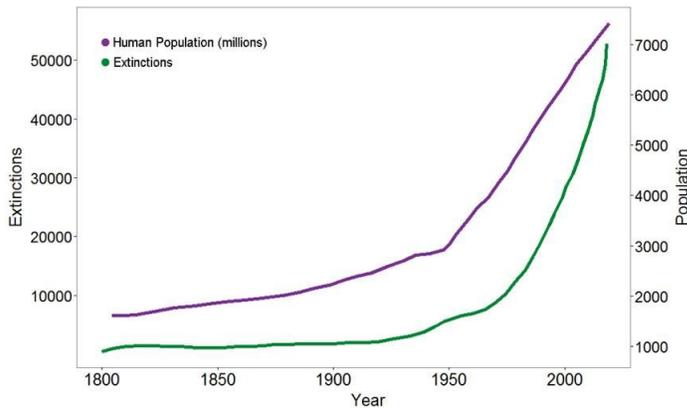
Introduction & Background

Biodiversity loss and the protection of endangered species have been prevalent issues in the past and present, that has been growing dramatically over the past several years, and continue to grow day-by-day. The endangerment of species results in great biodiversity loss, with the International Union for Conservation of Nature (ICUN) recording that there are over twenty-seven thousand endangered species, after only 98,500 species had been evaluated by experts. Based on a review of about 15,000 scientific and government sources and compiled by 145 expert authors from 50 countries, the United Nations report that one million species are at risk of extinction globally. Such loss in biodiversity has threatened the food security of not only people world wide, but other animal species as well. The United Nations concluded that more than nine percent of all domesticated breeds of mammals used for food and agriculture had become extinct by 2016. Biodiversity loss has many causes, the most well-known being poaching, but the furthered endangerment of species and the increase in biodiversity loss across the globe have many more causes. Deforestation, overfishing, bushmeat hunting, trophy hunting, pollution, emersion of

invasive species, and illicit wildlife trade may also cause the previously described phenomena.

In addition to the formerly addressed causes, habitat loss and fragmentation, overexploitation for

Humans & The Extinction Crisis



Data source: Scott, J.M. 2008. *Threats to Biological Diversity: Global, Continental, Local*. U.S. Geological Survey, Idaho Cooperative Fish and Wildlife, Research Unit, University Of Idaho.

commercialization, population growth, and overconsumption have also been relatively commonly known to cause these issues worldwide. Some people within many nations, such as the USA and Canada, even believe that large scale corporations and industrial farms are to blame for

the loss of biodiversity and endangerment of species, but no individual nation has taken a firm stance that either disagrees or agrees with that claim. Nevertheless, the United Nations have concluded that the issues of biodiversity loss and the protection of endangered species are issues of great international importance.

How do the Given Issues Impact Large-scale Corporations and the Overall Agricultural Industry?

Biodiversity loss is putting a large dent in the agricultural industry. The United Nations found that land degradation has reduced the productivity of 23% of the global land surface. With land being less fertile, it is more difficult to profit with any agricultural business, due to the fact that less crops will be able to be grown. The United Nations also gathered that up to 577 billion USD in annual global crops are at risk from pollinator loss. Without pollinators, bees being the most

common of the sort, no crops could grow. Bees, however, are currently on the ICUN's Red List for endangered species, and if action is not taken soon, the global ecosystem can lose one of its most important species. Furthermore, with this reduced productivity of agriculture, people that operate this industry are seeing less of a profit within their sector, resulting in an overall increase in costs for the agricultural goods, making it more difficult for people to be able to afford to eat.

How do These Issues Impact Global Human Life?

The reversal of biodiversity loss and the protection of endangered species are essential in keeping the human race prosperous. With a loss of biodiversity and endangered, food scarcity becomes much more apparent. Biodiversity loss does not only pertain to animals, but also plants, therefore, the loss of biodiversity can result in a lack of plant-based food options, as well as animal based food options. The issues presented may also result in the spread of infectious disease among plants, animals, and humans, as well as the disruption of individual food webs. Without the presence of high biodiversity, arable land for agricultural production, healthy water systems to support diverse marine life, and clean air to breathe would not be viable, all of which are necessary to people. Furthermore, the UN determined that 100-300 million people are at increased risk of floods and hurricanes worldwide because of loss of coastal habitats and protection. Many people that live at or below their nation's poverty line are seen to be most severely impacted by this biodiversity loss, as they are losing food sources as a result of it. Additionally, costs for food items may increase, resulting in many underprivileged households not being able to afford food.

What are Individual Nations Doing to Combat the Issue?

Most nations within the United Nations are only taking small steps to curb the issue. Some member states of the UN, such as India and Nepal, believe that more can be done by all countries. Studies conducted by the UN have shown that pollution can cost between four and five percent of a country's gross domestic product. Some nations believe that this is a huge detriment to both the global economy and environment. It is also believed by some nations that an improvement in their national pollution monitoring systems and using CEAs more broadly, as well as the prohibition of animal poaching and illicit wildlife trade can halt biodiversity loss. Nonetheless, it is under a nation's own discretion to take steps to solve the issue, but if the issue is to be solved, more must be done.

Why is it Important to Protect Endangered Species?

Biodiversity is key to a prosperous environment and world. Without an increased presence of species that are currently endangered and biodiversity, a well-balanced ecosystem that creates a stable and balanced environment could not be attained. When ecosystems fail, human, plant, and animal health is at risk due to a loss of food sources or an emergence of invasive species. The presence of endangered species provides a source of food for not only humans but also other animals. It also creates a balance in many ecosystems and food chains, as many endangered species are technically at the tops of their food chains. Endangered species must be protected because a global ecological balance is only attainable if all species are protected.

Past Efforts to Solve the Problem

Many efforts have been taken globally to solve the issues at hand. Protecting endangered species and the biodiversity of ecosystems on half the planet has been attempted. Protecting half of the planet by 2050, with a transitional target of 30 percent by 2030, is, according to many ecologists that work closely with the UN, the only way to meet the Paris climate targets or achieve the UN's Sustainable Development Goals globally. Ocean clean-up projects have also been adopted in order to preserve marine life and to lessen the pollution that is causing biodiversity loss. The United Nations has also attempted to raise awareness for the issues. The UN Secretary-General, António Guterres, even recommended for an International Day for Biological Diversity to be created in UN Resolution 61/203. Additionally, Resolution 65/161 created an international biodiversity decade, lasting from 2011 to 2020. Furthermore, the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) has taken every measure it can to prevent illegal poaching and illicit wildlife trade. One of such measures includes the "adoption" of an animal that is endangered for a monthly fee that contributes to critical care for the animal along with necessary steps to prevent its extinction. Individual nations have also begun to ban poaching in an attempt to protect the rare and endangered species on the planet. Some nations, however, such as Namibia and South Africa, have developed sustainable poaching laws, that prevent damage to the global ecosystem. Many attempts have been made to curve the loss of biodiversity and endangered species, but none have been completely effective.

Possible Solutions

As of right now, there are little international regulations that control the facets of this issue that are man-made. Delegates must work to solidify the preservation of endangered species and biodiversity. Creating a widespread knowledge of the lasting effects of these issues is also critical, as it will raise awareness to those that may not be as aware of the issues themselves. Banning poaching worldwide, encouraging recycling of goods, and addressing indoor air pollution though voluntary programs are all possible adoptable solutions, however, a compromise must be reached because the economies of many nations thrive off of controlled, sustainable poaching and industry. Reducing toxic emissions from industrial sources by creating new stringent emission standards and cleaner burning gasoline, adopting laws to regulate gas emissions and coming up with ways to filter emissions out of the air is essential in solving this issue as well, as large-scale industries are thought of by certain countries to be one of the main problems that are causing the issues at hand. It must also be considered that numerous developing nations lack the proper infrastructure to carry out some solutions, so an economically sustainable solution would be most beneficial to solving this issue. Many nations within the United Nations that have previously taken great actions to solve the issue at hand, such as India and Nepal, believe that this issue should be solved in a timely manner due to the urgency and the severity of it. As a result of the time constraints and urgency of this issue, there is no room left for exclusively long-term approaches to be completely effective due to the pace of the depletion of biodiversity and endangered species.

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