

69% DECLINE IN WILDLIFE POPULATIONS WORLDWIDE SINCE 1970: WWF REPORT

Relevant for: Environment | Topic: Biodiversity, Ecology, and Wildlife Related Issues

This picture taken on March 7, 2022, shows the current condition of the coral on the Great Barrier Reef, off the coast of the Australian state of Queensland. The IUCN Red List shows corals are declining the fastest owing to habitat loss and barriers to migration routes. | Photo Credit: AFP

Wildlife populations monitored across the globe have declined by a massive 69% between 1970 and 2018, according to the WWF's Living Planet Report (LPR) 2022.

Featuring almost 32,000 populations of 5,230 species, the Living Planet Index (LPI) provided in the report shows it is within tropical regions that monitored vertebrate wildlife populations are plummeting at a staggering rate.

"Latin America and the Caribbean regions have seen the largest decline of monitored wildlife populations globally-- an average decline of 94% during the period," the report said.

Wildlife populations have dipped by 66% in Africa and 55% in the Asia Pacific. Freshwater populations have declined by 83% on average compared to other species groups, according to the report.

The IUCN Red List shows cycads are the most threatened species, while corals are declining the fastest, followed by amphibians.

Habitat loss and barriers to migration routes are responsible for about half of the threats to monitored migratory fish species, the WWF said.

The report said the main drivers of wildlife population decline are habitat degradation and loss, exploitation, introduction of invasive species, pollution, climate change and disease.

Marco Lambertini, Director General of WWF International, said: "We face the double emergencies of human-induced climate change and biodiversity loss, threatening the well-being of current and future generations.

"WWF is extremely worried by this new data showing a devastating fall in wildlife populations, in particular in tropical regions that are home to some of the most biodiverse landscapes in the world."

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