

## **Executive Order on Halting the Global Extinction Crisis and Restoring Wildlife**

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, it is hereby ordered as follows:

**Section 1. Policy.** The world is in the midst of an extinction crisis. Wildlife and plant populations are crashing around the world, with one million species facing extinction in the coming decades due to threats of habitat loss, climate change, wildlife exploitation, pollution and other human activities. More than 1,800 species are now protected in the United States under the Endangered Species Act, and thousands more are likely to need protection if action is not taken to address these threats.

The global extinction crisis represents a fundamental threat to humanity, which depends on the services and processes that the natural world provides. The unsustainable exploitation of wildlife can have profound consequences, as evidenced by the COVID-19 pandemic, which almost certainly came about due to the trade in wildlife. Accordingly it is the policy of the Biden administration to prioritize the protection of biodiversity, stem the extinction crisis and restore abundant wildlife and plant populations both in the United States and around the world.

**Sec. 2. Declaration of a National Emergency with Respect to the Global Extinction Crisis.** I, JOSEPH BIDEN, President of the United States of America, find that the global extinction crisis and the destruction of the planet's natural life-support systems constitute an extraordinary threat to humanity and an emergency of the highest order. Each extinction brings closer the unraveling of our planetary life-support systems, including pollination, water purification, oxygen production and disease regulation. Therefore, by virtue of the authority vested in me under the National Emergencies Act, 50 U.S.C. § 1601 *et seq.*, I hereby declare a national emergency with respect to the global extinction crisis.

**Sec. 3. Protection of 30% of America's Lands and Waters by 2030.** Habitat loss and degradation remain the largest drivers of extinction both globally and in the United States. To confront the rapid loss of America's natural heritage, it is in the national interest to protect 30% of U.S. terrestrial, freshwater and marine ecosystems by 2030 and to protect 50% by 2050. Accordingly the Secretary of the Interior, Secretary of Agriculture, Secretary of Commerce and Secretary of Defense shall prioritize the establishment of new protected areas, the expansion of existing protected areas, and increased connectivity between protected areas to preserve biodiversity hotspots in the United States, the habitat of critically endangered species, and the diversity of habitats found across the nation.

To make significant progress toward achieving this national goal, the Secretary of the Interior, Secretary of Agriculture and Secretary of Defense are each ordered to identify by December 2023 at least 25 iconic, important areas containing objects of scientific interest within lands under their respective jurisdiction for elevation to the status of National Monuments, pursuant to the authority granted under the Antiquities Act, 54 U.S.C. §§ 320301-320303.

Furthermore the Secretary of the Interior, through the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, is ordered to establish 50 new national wildlife refuges by December 2024, pursuant to the authority

granted in the National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act of 1997, Pub. L. No. 105-57. These national wildlife refuges should prioritize the protection of habitats and biodiversity that are underrepresented within existing public lands.

The Secretary of Commerce, through the National Marine Fisheries Service, is ordered to identify and propose for protection at least 50 new marine protected areas through either the designation of marine national monuments pursuant to the authority granted under the Antiquities Act, 54 U.S.C. §§ 320301-320303, or national marine sanctuaries under the authority granted in the National Marine Sanctuary Act, 16 U.S.C. § 1431 *et seq.*

**Sec. 4. Recovering Endangered Species and Rebuilding Wildlife Populations.** The Secretary of the Interior, through the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, is ordered to expeditiously assess species found in the United States that have already been identified by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature as critically endangered, endangered or vulnerable, or by NatureServe as critically imperiled or imperiled to determine if they need protection under the Endangered Species Act. The Secretary shall use their emergency authority to protect any native species at risk of imminent extinction and to otherwise propose and finalize protections for all other species that warrant protection under the Endangered Species Act no later than Dec. 31, 2023.

The Secretary of the Interior, Secretary of Agriculture and Secretary of Defense are ordered within 12 months to identify and temporarily protect all potential critical habitat on their lands and manage those lands primarily for the recovery of endangered species. Upon identification of all potential critical habitat, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and National Marine Fisheries Service are ordered to evaluate and formally designate all such lands that meet the statutory requirements as critical habitat no later than Dec. 31, 2023. For all areas within their jurisdiction, the Secretaries are ordered to propose and finalize regulations no later than Dec. 31, 2023 that reform management practices to ensure that all public lands elevate and prioritize the protection of wildlife and plants, as well as minimizing greenhouse gas emissions, as the highest priority for public lands.

All federal agencies are ordered to prioritize the recovery of endangered species and rebuild healthy wildlife and plant populations. Within 180 days each federal agency shall undertake a comprehensive review of its programs, activities and actions to determine the extent to which they have the potential to harm endangered species or reduce wildlife and plant abundance. Within one year all federal agencies shall finalize proactive conservation programs pursuant to Section 7(a)(1) of the Endangered Species Act, 16 U.S.C. § 1536(a)(1), that advance the conservation of endangered species and help to restore declining wildlife and plants.

The Secretary of the Interior and Secretary of Commerce are ordered to fully integrate climate change into the conservation and recovery of endangered species. The Secretaries are ordered to develop and propose regulations that require science-based, programmatic consultations on the actions of every federal agency under Section 7(a)(2) of the Endangered Species Act, 16 U.S.C. § 1536(a)(2), to determine how those agencies' actions that increase greenhouse gases affect any listed species, including Arctic and other climate-change imperiled species, that are geographically remote from the agency action. The Secretaries are ordered to develop

regulations and guidance to avoid, minimize and mitigate climate-driven impacts on listed species and update or develop recovery plans that integrate greenhouse gas emissions reductions to avoid species extinctions.

**Sec. 5. Wildlife Trade.** Wildlife exploitation is the second leading driver of extinction, and the global wildlife trade — both legal and illegal — continues to push thousands of species closer to extinction each year. Wildlife trafficking remains one of the world’s most lucrative criminal enterprises and a source of funds for terrorists.

Therefore I direct the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Commerce, under the authority granted in Section 8 of the Pelly Amendment to the Fishermen’s Protective Act, 22 U.S.C. § 1978, to conduct an expedited review of each nation’s compliance with the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) and all other international wildlife programs, to be concluded within one year of this Order and every two years thereafter, and publish the reviews in the Federal Register. Immediate sanctions will be imposed on any nation found to be diminishing the effectiveness of such programs, particularly nations failing to adequately address illegal wildlife trade or deforestation.

**Sec. 6. General Provisions.** Nothing in this order shall be construed to impair or otherwise affect the authority granted by law to an executive department or agency or the head thereof. This order shall be implemented consistently with applicable law and subject to the availability of appropriations. This order is not intended to, and does not, create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or in equity by any party against the United States, its departments, agencies, or entities, its officers, employees or agents, or any other person.

*Endorsed by:*

Center for Biological Diversity  
350 Massachusetts for a Better Future  
350Mass.  
All-Creatures.org  
Allamakee County Protectors  
American Horse Protection Society  
Animal Legal Defense Fund  
Animal Protection League of New Jersey  
Animal Welfare Institute  
Animal Wellness Action  
Animal Wellness Foundation  
Animals Are Sentient Beings, Inc.  
Animas Valley Institute  
Appalachian Trail Conservancy  
Athens County's Future Action Network (acfan.org) - SE Ohio  
Audubon Society of Central Arkansas  
Battle Creek Alliance/Defiance Canyon Raptor Rescue  
Berkshire Environmental Action Team (BEAT)  
Beyond Pesticides

Bird Conservation Network  
Black Warrior Riverkeeper  
Blue Mountains Biodiversity Project  
Boulder Rights of Nature, Inc.  
Bucks Environmental Action  
Cahaba River Society  
California Wildlife Foundation  
Center for a Humane Economy  
Christian Council of Delmarva  
Ciudadanos Del Karso  
Clean Energy Action - Colorado  
Climate Health Now  
Coalition on the Environment and Jewish Life  
Coastal Plains Institute  
Colorado Riverkeeper  
Committee to Abolish Sport Hunting  
Concerned on Burrows Road  
Conservation Council For Hawaii  
Delaware-Otsego Audubon Society  
Don't Waste Arizona  
Earth Action, Inc.  
Earth Path Sanctuary  
Earthkeeper Health Resources  
Eastern Coyote/Coywolf Research  
Eco-Eating  
Endangered small animal Conservation fund  
Endangered Species Coalition  
Environmental Protection Information Center  
Fairbanks Climate Action Coalition  
Friends of the Inyo  
FRIENDS OF WI Wolf and Wildlife  
Fuerza Mundial Global, Continuum  
Gaviota Coast Conservancy  
Gila Resources Information Project  
Golden Egg Permaculture  
Grays Harbor Audubon Society  
Great Lakes Wildlife Alliance  
Great Old Broads for Wilderness  
Green Country Sierra Club group  
Green River Action Network  
GreenFaith  
Healthy Gulf  
Hoosier Environmental Council  
Howling For Wolves  
In Defense of Animals  
In the Shadow of the Wolf

Information Network for Responsible Mining  
Inland Ocean Coalition  
International Marine Mammal Project of Earth Island Institute  
Iowa Environmental Council  
Jewish Climate Action Network - MA  
John Muir Project of Earth Island Institute  
Justice for Wolves  
Kentucky Heartwood  
Klamath Forest Alliance  
League of Humane Voters® of New York  
Living Rivers  
Long Beach Alliance for Clean Energy  
Los Padres ForestWatch  
Malama Makua  
Maryland Ornithological Society  
Massachusetts Forest Watch  
Missouri Coalition for the Environment  
Native Plant Conservation Campaign  
NH Audubon  
North Country NYPAN  
Northeast Oregon Ecosystems  
Northern Jaguar Project  
Northwest Center for Alternatives to Pesticides  
Northwest Environmental Advocates  
Oasis Earth  
Ocean Conservation Research  
Oceanic Preservation Society  
Oregon Natural Desert Association  
Our Santa Fe River  
Physicians for Social Responsibility, AZ  
Portland Raging Grannies  
POWAZ  
Preserve Monroe  
Project Eleven Hundred  
Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility  
Public Lands Project  
Raptors Are The Solution  
Resource Renewal Institute  
RESTORE: The North Woods  
Rocky Mountain Wild  
San Bernardino Valley Audubon Society  
San Diego Coastkeeper  
Santa Barbara Standing Rock Coalition  
Save The Colorado  
SAVE THE FROGS!  
Save the Manatee Club

Sequoia ForestKeeper®  
ShoreRivers Inc.  
South Asian Fund For Education, Scholarship and Training (SAFEST)  
South Florida Wildlands Association  
Spokane Riverkeeper  
Stop the Algonquin Pipeline Expansion  
Sullivan Alliance for Sustainable Development  
Sunrise Movement, Fairview High School  
Sustainable Arizona  
The Lands Council  
Trap Free Montana  
Trap Free Montana Public Lands  
Turner Endangered Species Fund  
Turtle Island Restoration Network  
Unexpected Wildlife Refuge  
Upper Green River Alliance  
Volusia Climate Action  
Vote-Climate  
Washington Physicians for Social Responsibility  
WESPAC Foundation, Inc.  
Western Watersheds Project  
Wild Fish Conservancy  
Wild Nature Institute  
Wildcoast  
WildEarth Guardians  
Wolf Conservation Center  
Women's March Santa Barbara  
Zero Hour