

## Updated IUCN Red List

By IASToppers | 2023-12-14 15:50:00



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The **IUCN Red List** was updated recently at **COP28** revealing climate change impacts on species, including **25% of freshwater fish** facing extinction.



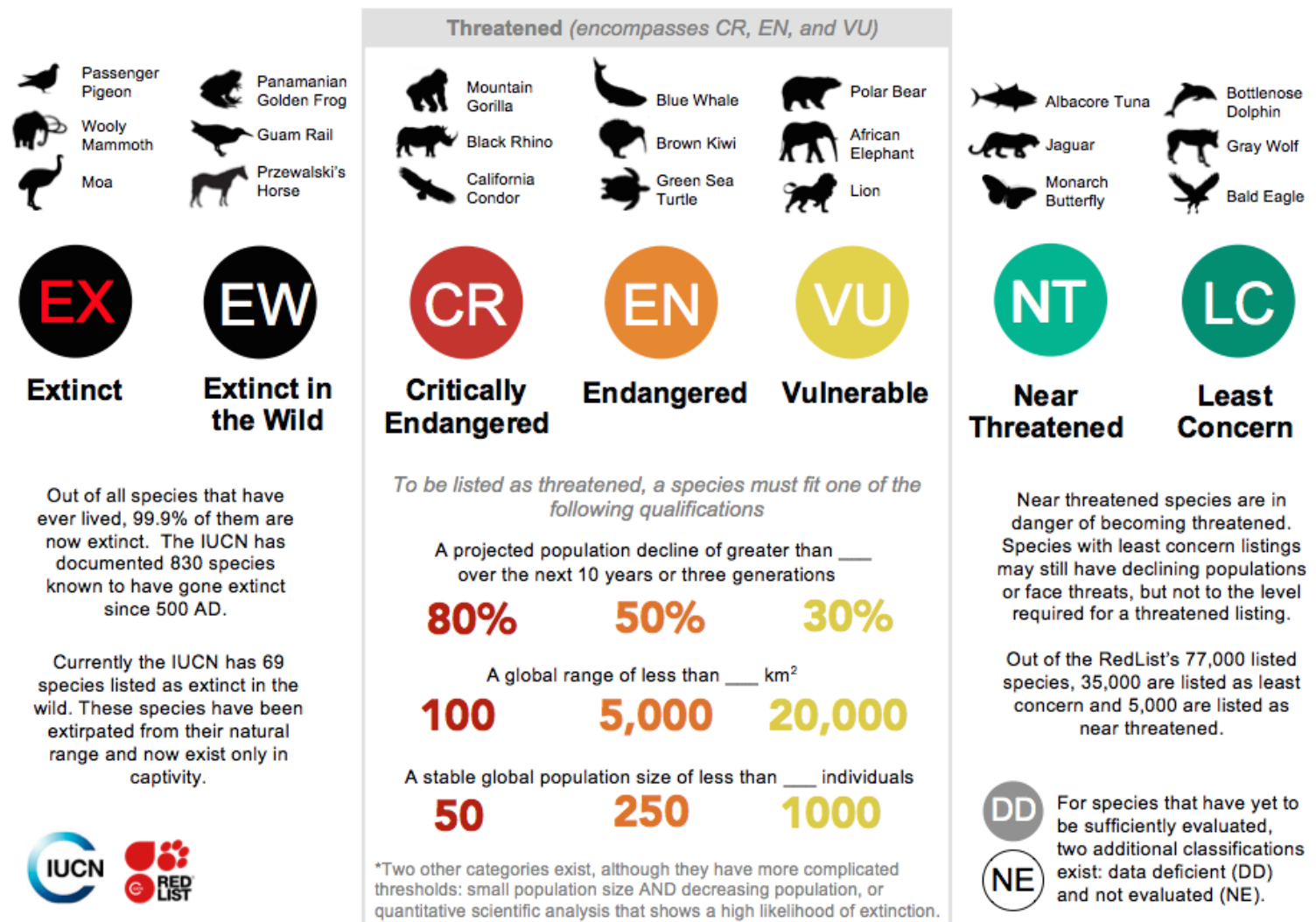
[Ref- IUCN]

### **About IUCN Red List of Threatened Species:**

- It was established by the **International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)** in **1964**.
- It is the world's most comprehensive **information source** on the global extinction **risk status** of animal, fungus, and plant species.
- Red List is a **critical indicator of global biodiversity health** and a powerful tool to inform and catalyze action for biodiversity conservation and policy change.
- **Information** about range, population size, habitat and ecology, use and/or trade, threats, and actions important for conservation decisions are provided.
- **Structure:** IUCN Biodiversity Assessment and Knowledge Team, partner organizations and experts in the IUCN Species Survival Commission, and networks for compilation.

### **Three Categories in the Red List:**





[Ref- Think Wildlife]

## Key Changes in the IUCN Red List:

- This update highlights the strong links between the **climate and biodiversity crises**, which must be tackled by joint action.
- The IUCN Red List now includes **157,190 species**, of which 44,016 are threatened with extinction.
- It includes the **first global freshwater fish assessment** and highlights the impact of illegal logging and trade on mahogany.
- **Species decline** reflects the destructive impact of climate change, a crisis to be mitigated with immediate, bold efforts to limit warming to **1.5 degrees Celsius**.
- The critical role of **well-managed freshwater ecosystems** for food security, livelihoods, and economies in a climate-resilient world is essential against biodiversity loss.
- Conservation efforts have successfully brought **two antelope species** back from the brink of extinction, but **changing climatic conditions** could undermine their future.
- **Positive outcomes:** There is progress in assessing **Ethiopia's endemic plant species**, including endangered ones, emphasizing the role of museums and taxonomists.
  - **Reintroduction** of scimitar-horned oryx in Chad showcases the impact of **international conservation efforts and community support**.

### State of the world's freshwater fish species:

- Freshwater fishes make up **more than half** of the world's known **fish species**, but freshwater ecosystems comprise only **1% of aquatic habitat**.
- About **25% of freshwater fish** (3,086 out of 14,898 assessed species) are at **risk of extinction**, and at least **17% of threatened freshwater fish species** are affected by climate change.
- This is due to **decreasing water levels**, rising **sea levels** causing seawater to move up rivers, and shifting seasons.
- Threats putting freshwater fish species at risk of extinction include **Pollution** (57%), dams and **water extraction** (45%), **overfishing** (25%), and **invasive species** and disease harm 33%.
- To prevent species decline and ensure resilience to climate change, freshwater ecosystems need **effective management, sufficient water flow, and quality**.

### Change in status of key species:

Species	Change in status	Reasons for change in Status	Geographical distribution
Atlantic Salmon (fresh and saltwater fish)	Least Concerned to Near Threatened	Life cycle disruption due to Climate change, reduced prey availability, barriers, pollution, weak adaptation due to escaped salmon breeding, Salmon lice, and invasive species like Pacific Pink salmon.	Northern Europe to North America, especially Hudson River, and Gulf of Maine
Green sea turtles	Central South: Endangered,  East Pacific: Vulnerable	High temperature affects hatching and breeding, rising sea levels, changes in currents impact green grass for food, bycatch, and commercial harvesting.	Tropical coastline of Australia and the South Pacific Islands, Africa, India, and South East Asia.
Scimitar-horned oryx (4th large mammal re-introduced in last 100 years)	Extinct in wild to Endangered	Decreased Poaching, community awareness & participation	Ouadi Rimé-Ouadi Achik Faunal Reserve in Chad
Saiga Antelope	Critically Endangered to Near Threatened	anti-poaching measures, training of customs and border officials, and action against illegal sales in consumer countries.	Kazakhstan (98%), Mongolia, Russia and Uzbekistan  (but faces threat of disease outbreaks and mass mortality events)
Big-leaf mahogany (most commercial timber tree)	Vulnerable to Endangered	Ornamental furniture and musical instruments, illegal logging, habitat	Central and South America

large-toothed Lake  
Turkana robber (fish)

Least Concern to  
Vulnerable

degradation  
overfishing, habitat  
degradation, and reduced  
inflow of water due to  
dams.

Endemic to Kenya