

## One Million Species Under Threat

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More than a million species of plants and animals, representing a quarter of all life on land, are at risk of extinction within 50 years, according to a new scientific study. The study has revealed the main culprit of the biodiversity threat is the production of greenhouse gases, such as carbon dioxide, by cars and industry that effectively trap heat in the Earth's atmosphere, causing global warming.

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## One Million Species Under Threat

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More than a million species of plants and animals, representing a quarter of all life on land, are at risk of extinction within 50 years, according to a new scientific study.

The study has revealed the main culprit of the biodiversity threat is the production of greenhouse gases, such as carbon dioxide, by cars and industry that effectively trap heat in the Earth's atmosphere, causing global warming.

The conclusions were drawn from the combined research of more than 2,000 scientists working on the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change that advises governments on global warming through the United Nations.

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A total of six biodiversity-rich regions, including Brazil, Costa Rica, Mexico, Europe, Australia and South Africa, were selected for the testing of over 1,000 species using computer simulations of climate change to determine their chances of survival.

A minimal change of a rise in the Earth's average temperature of 0.8 to 1.7 degrees Celsius by 2050, would result in 18 percent of species being lost.

The maximum expected change, an increase of more than two degrees, would cause the extinction of 35 percent of species.

The study's authors said the indirect consequences of climate change, which could not be calculated, were likely to have the most severe impact on species destruction.

These additional problems related to global warming include habitat fragmentation and loss, as well as competition from new invasive species.

The extinctions would also put at risk billions of people who rely on the natural environment for food, shelter and medicine.

"If one million species become extinct ? it is not just the plant and animal kingdoms and the beauty of the planet that will suffer," said the head of the UN Environment Program, Dr Klaus Toepfer.

Dr Toepfer called the study an alarm which "underlines again to the world the importance of bringing into force the Kyoto Protocol", the international agreement to reduce greenhouse gas emissions which the United States has refused to adhere to.

SOURCE: World News