



Quick guide to the Aichi Biodiversity Targets Extinction prevented

By 2020, the extinction of known threatened species has been prevented and their conservation status, particularly of those most in decline, has been improved and sustained.

Though some extinctions are the result of natural processes, human action have greatly increased current extinction rates. Reducing the threat of human-induced extinction requires action to address the direct and indirect drivers of change (see the Aichi Targets under Goals A and B of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020) and can be long term processes. However, imminent extinctions of known threatened species can in many cases be prevented by protecting important habitats (such as Alliance for Zero Extinction sites) or by addressing the specific direct causes of the decline of these species (such as overexploitation, invasive alien species, pollution and disease).

Explanation of the Target

This target relates specifically to known threatened species. IUCN's Red List of Threatened Species currently lists more than 19,000 species as being threatened globally. Threatened species include those species which are classified as vulnerable, endangered, or critically endangered. Other categories used by IUCN to describe the conservation status of species include near threatened, least concern, extinct in the wild, extinct or data deficient. In addition many countries may have their own lists of threatened species.

This target has two components:

- **Preventing extinction** – Preventing further extinction entails that those species which are currently threatened do not move into the extinct category. Of the more 19,000 species known to be threatened globally, more than 3,900 are classified as critically endangered. Critically endangered species are considered to be facing an extremely high risk of extinction in the wild.
- **Improving the conservation status of threatened species** - An improvement in conservation status would entail a species increasing in population to a point where it moves into a lower threat status. Using the IUCN criteria a species would no longer be considered as threatened once it moved into the near threatened category.

Implications for setting national targets

A first step in setting a national target is to prepare a list of currently threatened species and their locations. If national list of threatened species are not available countries may use global lists, such as the one maintained by IUCN. Since the focus of this target is on those species which are known to be threatened, it is not necessary to address all species within a country. Countries may choose to initially focus on those species which have relatively small populations remaining and on those species which are declining the quickest.

Progress towards this target would help to reach several of the other targets contained in the Strategic Plan, including Target 13. Conversely actions to reach other targets of the Strategic Plan, such as those under Strategic Goal B and Target 11, would also help to reach this target.

Guiding questions for setting national targets

- **What species are threatened in my country?** Which species are near threatened? Which species are likely to go extinct without urgent action? Which species are increasing in population? Which species are decreasing in population?
- **Where are threatened species located in my county?** How does this relate to the location of any biodiversity hotspots, Alliance for Zero Extinction sites, Important Bird Areas or similar classifications?



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- **What are the main threats to the threatened species?** Which can be addressed through direct conservation actions and which require broader approaches?
- **What are the opportunities and constraints in preventing species from becoming extinct?** Consider potential ecological, economic, and social costs and benefits of preventing the extinction of certain species. How may these justify higher or lower figures for a national target than for the global target?
- **Who are the stakeholders that may be affected?** How can they be involved and their needs addressed? What are the trade-offs to consider?
- **What additional resources (financial, human and technical) will be required to reach the national target that is set?** How can additional funds be raised? What are possible funding sources?

Note that, given the particular national circumstances, national targets may be more specific and more precise than the global target. Further national targets should be ambitious but realistic and be supportive of the Strategic Plan by moving beyond business as usual.

Actions and milestones

This target is relevant to most of the Convention's programme of work. However the programme of work on protected areas as well as the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation and the Global Taxonomy Initiative are particularly relevant.

Numerous types of actions can be taken to implement this target and include both direct and indirect conservation actions. What actions are best suited will depend largely on the species concerned, the causes of its decline, its life history and characteristics and national circumstances. In situations where habitat loss is the main cause of a species decline possible actions include protecting sites important for biodiversity, such as biodiversity hotspots or sites identified by the Alliance for Zero Extinction. In situations where species are being threatened by other pressures, such as overexploitation or invasive alien species, actions designed to address these specific threats may need to be used. More generally actions directly focusing on a species, such as the implementation of species recovery and conservation programmes, could be used to prevent species from going extinct. In cases where species have already gone extinct in the wild, re-introduction programmes and other ex situ conservation measures could be used to reestablish species in the areas from which they have been extirpated.

Possible indicators

- Trends in abundance of selected species
- Trends in extinction risk of species
- Trends in distribution of selected species

Resources

- Addis Ababa Principles and Guidelines - www.cbd.int/doc/publications/addis-gdl-en.pdf
- Global Strategy for Plant Conservation - www.cbd.int/gspc/
- Global Taxonomy Initiative - www.cbd.int/gti/
- Programme of Work on Protected areas - www.cbd.int/protected/
- IUCN Red List: www.iucnredlist.org/
- Alliance for Zero Extinction: www.zeroextinction.org/
- BirdLife International: www.birdlife.org/action/science/sites/index.html
- Conservation International: www.biodiversityhotspots.org/Pages/default.aspx

