

UPSC 2021 Preparation Living Planet Report 2020

Living Planet Report is published by the World Wildlife Fund for Nature (WWF) in collaboration with the Zoological Society of London (ZSL.) It is a biennial report (published every two years.) ZSL manages the living planet index (LPI) that too is released along with the report. This article is important for the [IAS Exam](#) preparation as the report brings out key findings related to biodiversity, challenges to nature and suggestions to heal nature. All these are important topics under GS 3 of UPSC Mains.

This article will provide you with the latest information published in Living Planet Report 2020.

Important Facts related to Living Planet Report

Who published the living planet report?	WWF publishes the report in partnership with ZSL
When is the report released?	It is a biennial publication, hence it is published once in every two years.
The latest report	Living Planet Report 2020

The report 'Living Planet Report' is one of the important [international organizations' reports](#). There are similar other important reports that are a must-read for UPSC examination:

1. [Global Environment Outlook](#)
2. [World Happiness Report](#)
3. [Human Development Report](#)
4. [World Economic Outlook Report](#)
5. [Global Wage Report](#)
6. [Global Financial Stability Report](#)
7. [World Investment Report](#)
8. [Global Competitiveness Report](#)

Key Findings of the Living Planet Report 2020

What is the Living Planet Index?

It works as an indicator of biodiversity health. It measures the state of the world's biological diversity based on the population trends of **vertebrate species**. (Animals having backbones or vertical columns.)

- It tracks almost 21000 populations of vertebrates.
- [UN Convention on Biological Diversity \(CBD\)](#) has adopted LPI as the indicator of progress towards the convention's 2011-12 target to take actions to halt biodiversity loss.
- Institute of Zoology (ZSL) manages the Living Planet Index.

- ZSL was founded in 1826 and is an international conservation charity.

What is not tracked by the Living Planet Index?

- The numbers of species lost or extinct
- Percentage of species declining
- Percentage of populations or individuals lost

1. **Living Planet Index is declining** – Between 1970 and 2016, an average 68 percent decrease is reported in population sizes of mammals, birds, amphibians, reptiles and fishes.
2. **World's largest fall in the Living Planet Index** is witnessed in **subregions of America** – 94 percent decline in LPI.
3. **Biodiversity on the brink:**
 1. Rise in Ocean Pollution – Most of the oceans are polluted
 2. Alteration of landmasses – 75 percent of the ice-free land surface has been altered
 3. Loss of wetlands – 85 percent of the wetland areas have been lost
4. **Threatened with Extinction species** – 1 million species (10 lakhs animals, plants and insects) are threatened with extinction.
5. Freshwater living planet index – **One in three freshwater species is threatened with extinction.**
 1. 4 percent decline per year since 1970 is witnessed in the population of freshwater species.
 2. Megafauna species exposed to anthropogenic threats
6. Since 1970, human ecological footprints have exceeded the earth's biocapacity.
7. **Loss in terrestrial habitats due to:**
 1. Change in land-uses
 2. Conversion of pristine native habitats like forests, mangroves and grasslands into agricultural systems.
 3. Doubling of world human population
 4. Trade increase
8. The report is a **reminder of the Paris Agreement** which pledges to limit human-induced climate change. The living planet report mentions global emissions of greenhouse gases to be the same in the 2030s.
9. A **rise of 3-4 degrees celsius** projected against the 1.5-degree celsius aspirant target.
10. **Biodiversity** is declining at different rates in different places. The reports mentioned the following as threats to the biodiversity:
 1. Changes in land and sea use, including habitat loss and degradation
 2. Species overexploitation
 3. **Invasive species** and diseases
 4. Pollution
 5. **Climate Change**
11. Catastrophic events that led to biodiversity loss in India – In 2019, exceptionally hot and long **heatwaves** led to extreme droughts.

Suggestions Tabled by Living Planet Report 2020

1. **Need for a transformational change:**
 1. Increased conservation efforts
 2. Change in ways of production and consumption of food and energy

3. Collective efforts at all levels – government, citizens, business leaders collectively step ahead to reverse climate change.
2. **Making connections from land to sea** – Scaling up assessments of the environmental impacts of food systems 43, by mapping synergies and trade-offs of biodiversity protection on human well-being, could help us to better understand the influence of feedbacks on sustainability pathways
3. **Climate mitigation and reduction of human stressors** to reverse negative changes in the sea systems:
 1. Plastic pollution to be curtailed
 2. Overfishing to be prohibited
4. **Dietary changes and restrictions on land conversion** can make reversing biodiversity decline possible after 2020.
5. **New deal for nature and people** – Set of new goals and target to see us on the path to recovery by 2030.
6. A fight against the novel coronavirus disease will guide the world in times ahead as the disease is one of the major connections between people’ health and the planet.
7. Efforts to meet the [Sustainable Development Goals \(SDGs\)](#) can help reverse biodiversity loss.

Some important facts from Living Planet Report 2018 for comparison:

1. 60 percent of loss in population sizes of vertebrates
2. 80 percent of loss in population size of freshwater species
3. Latin America was reported to be the worst-hit region with 90 percent loss in wildlife.
4. Accelerating fall in birds, mammals, amphibians, corals and an ancient family of plants.
5. Rate of extinction of species 100-1000 times greater than the natural rate of extinction
6. Nearly 20 percent of Amazon Forest disappeared in the last 50 years.

Candidates preparing for IAS 2021 can check the related links for preparation:

UPSC Eligibility Criteria	Environment & Ecology Notes for UPSC
Environment Questions from UPSC Mains GS 3	NCERT Notes for UPSC
UPSC Notes PDF	List of Important Environment Conventions and Protocols