**First session**
  Agenda item
  20 March 2021

  **Synopsis for the Rehabilitation**
**of Endangered Species**

# Synopsis for The Rehabilitation of Endangered Species

**Note by the Secretary-General**

The Secretary-General has the honour to transmit to the members of the United Nations Environmental Programme the topic synopsis entitled "The Rehabilitation of Endangered Species." (UNEP/SYN/IIC/00.3).

# The Rehabilitation of Endangered Species
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## Section I—Introduction

The United Nations Environmental Programme is the UN's primary body for matters regarding ecology, conservation, and environmental sustenance. It works to promote the widespread sustainable development of the environment.

## Section II—Topic Background

The extinction of species has been a long term problem caused by many factors in the modern world.  It is mainly rooted in human actions such as global climate change, pollution, overharvesting, habitat loss, and invasive species.  Though many countries have taken action to prevent these issues from developing further, the danger of extinction persists. A report released by the UN states that "around 1 million animal and plant species are now threatened with extinction… more than ever before in human history" and will continue to do so if no action is taken.

The rapid industrialization and urbanization of countries has had serious consequences on the natural environment around it, as many do not focus on conservation.  Though these developments proved beneficial to the citizens of these countries, it has led to the endangerment of species unique to those areas. The UN has intervened in the past and created programs such as the SPAW (Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife)  Protocol to help rehabilitate and conserve wildlife in the Caribbean. However, in many other regions, countries continue to overlook the needs of wildlife in favor of economic and political interests.

The rehabilitation of endangered species plays a major role in wildlife preservation. Rehabilitating endangered species has many benefits ranging from medical developments to safer agricultural products.  Preserving these unique species and helping them recover has positive effects on the environment and should be considered priorities to nations across the globe.

## Section III—Possible Solutions

Rehabilitating species has proven to be a long and tedious task. However, the creation of protected areas to help recover animal and plant species in native habitats have been effective.  In developing countries, the over exploitation of natural resources through the intensification of agriculture remains a source of many environmental issues. Starting with small protected areas in regions that are rapidly industrializing and gradually increasing them may be a good approach to developing countries.

Establishing programs that allow a country to industrialize and develop while avoiding overharvesting and habitat loss may be complicated. Government action needs to be taken in order to prevent serious problems like these from occurring. This may include enacting laws to make hunting of certain species illegal or prohibited in certain areas. Governments should also choose to pursue programs that allow endangered species to fully recover in their native habitats.

## Section IV—Bloc Positions

African Bloc:  Africa is home to various important species that are facing extinction. Tourism in the region relies heavily on the draw wildlife offers. Certain measures are being taken to protect wildlife, such as the training of rangers and using dogs to prevent wildlife hunters.

Asian Bloc:  These countries have the highest amount of endangered species in their areas. Southeast Asia is one of the largest hunting hotspots in the world currently with 100+ different species being impacted.

Latin American Bloc: These countries have an extremely large amount of endangered species (second to the Asian bloc). Many of these countries that have some of the highest amounts of endangered species are generally in north/central South America.

Middle Eastern Bloc:  Countries within the Middle Eastern bloc have an average to low amount of endangered species in comparison to Africa or Latin America.

Western Bloc: North American and European countries have generally low amounts of endangered species, as they have set aside regions for conservation and protection of wildlife. Countries such as Australia have multiple species that will need to be rehabilitated as a result of the recent wildfires that have burned a large portion of these animals' habitats.

## Section V—Questions That Should Be Taken Into Consideration

How do developing countries approach protecting the environment as well as the species that inhabit it?

What areas in a country have the most endangered species and why?

What inhibits a country from taking action to support endangered species?

How does the rehabilitation of endangered species affect issues beyond the environment?

## Section VI—Helpful Sites and Resources

Article—United Nations Environmental Programme—Combatting Species Loss Using Nature

    bit.ly/2uYcFxb (Shortened URL from www.unenvironment.org)

Article—Wild Conservation Society (WCS)—Solutions: Protected Areas

    bit.ly/2ujK5FV (Shortened URL from www.wcs.org)

Press Release—United Nations Environmental Programme—Nature's Dangerous Decline
'Unprecedented' Species Extinction Rates 'Accelerating'

    bit.ly/2SQarZN (Shortened URL from www.unenvironment.org)

Article—African Wildlife Foundation—Wildlife Conservation

    bit.ly/3bVQtUN (shortened URL from www.awf.org)

Potential Search Terms— endangered species, wildlife conservation, protected areas, habitat loss, overharvesting, invasive species