

ENDANGERED SPECIES IN EUROPEAN FORESTS

Among Europe's 1,000 species of native mammals, birds, reptiles and amphibians, 155 are classified as threatened. The main cause of the loss of biodiversity can be attributed to the influence of human beings on the world's ecosystems. Human beings have modified the territory, exploiting the species directly, for example by fishing and hunting, changing the biogeochemical cycles and transferring species from one area to another of the Planet.



The main reasons of biodiversity loss are:

- Alteration and loss of the habitats
- Introduction of exotic species and genetically modified organisms
- Pollution
- Climate change
- Overexploitation of resources

Examples of endangered species in European forests:

European bison



European bison were hunted to extinction in the wild, with the last wild animals being shot in the Białowieża forest. They have since been reintroduced from captivity into several countries in Europe, all descendants of the Białowieża or lowland European bison. The IUCN 2004 Action Plan recommends the following:

- Continue captive breeding
- Establish a Gene Resource Bank
- Continue reintroductions into forests and other ecosystems

Iberian lynx



The Iberian lynx (*Lynx pardinus*), the largest of Europe's endangered temperate deciduous forest mammals, lives only in southwestern Spain and is likely extinct in Portugal. It is threatened by poaching, road kills, habitat loss, lack of prey following series of diseases outbreaks in the rabbit populations. A conservation strategy aims extra secure and manage a belt of land across southern Spain and Portugal that will provide a corridor of suitable habitat large enough to support a viable population of this threatened cat.

Saiga



The Saiga is a goat-like antelope with a unique nose that looks like an elephant's trunk. There were once large numbers of Saiga, but their numbers have declined recently. The main threat to the Saiga is poaching. Also, the lack of public awareness contributes to the persistence of Saiga poaching. A conservation strategy is to raise the public awareness. Actions with a particular focus on children activities such as a Saiga Festival, artistic and theatrical events in schools are executed. Furthermore promotional events representing ecological field visits and showing Saiga videos are done.

A Approach to Endangered Species Protection Includes:

- Defending and strengthening the Endangered Species Act
- Holding federal agencies and others accountable
- Advocating for increased funding
- Protecting and restoring the habitats
- Reducing threats to wildlife

Our personal opinion:

We recognize that the situation of endangered species is a result of the human unconsciousness. We should immediately take actions to establish organizations which protect the threatened species and help threatened animals survive by protecting their habitats permanently in national parks, nature reserves or wilderness areas. There they can live without too much interference from humans. It's also important to protect habitats outside reserves such as on farms and along roadsides. A sustainable use of the land is essential.

Banning the poaching is a good idea to protect the animals who are in jeopardy

Planting trees

Leaving the car at home more often and saving energy also contributes to species protection.

Some solutions in order to face the loss of species in European forests

Buying products without no or very little packaging helps save natural resources such as wood.

Sustainability labels such as the FSC (Forest Stewardship Council) label for timber products.

Recycle, reduce and reuse. Start an initiative to share specially tools and seldom-used household appliances among neighbours.

Using low quantities of detergents for cleaning, being economical with Washing detergent, and not using fabric softener helps conserve water habitats.