Biodiversity and conservation

International Baccalaureate · IB Diploma · Environmental Systems and Societies · HL · Vocabulary in context

Word	Example
biodiversity /ˌbaɪəʊdaɪˈvɜːsɪti/	A rainforest has high **biodiversity**.
genetic diversity /dʒɪˈnetɪk daɪˈvɜːsɪti/	**Genetic diversity** helps a population cope with new diseases.
species diversity	**Species diversity** depends on how many species there are and how even their numbers are.
species richness /ˈspiːsiːz ˈrɪtʃnəs/	A forest with ten kinds of tree has higher **species richness** than one with six.
evenness /ˈiːvənnəs/	A field with almost only grass has low **evenness**.
habitat diversity	Rivers, forests and marshes give the park high **habitat diversity**.
evolution /ɪvəˈluːʃn/	Darwin explained **evolution** by natural selection.
natural selection /ˈnætʃərəl sɪˈlekʃn/	**Natural selection** means the best-suited animals survive and have young.
speciation /ˌspiːʃiˈeɪʃn/	**Speciation** is the forming of a new species.
geographical isolation	A new river can cause **geographical isolation** between populations.
tectonic plate /tekˈtɒnɪk pleɪt/	A **tectonic plate** moves slowly across Earth's surface.
background extinction rate	The **background extinction rate** is the normal rate at which species die out.

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mass extinction	A **mass extinction** removes many species in a short geological time.
habitat loss /ˈhæbɪtæt lɒs/	Clearing forests causes **habitat loss** for birds.
fragmentation /ˌfrægmənˈteɪʃn/	Roads cause **fragmentation**: the forest is split into small pieces.
invasive species /ɪnˈveɪsɪv ˈspiːsiːz/	Rabbits became an **invasive species** in Australia.
pollution /pəˈluːʃn/	Smoke from factories causes **pollution**.
overharvesting /ˌəʊvəˈhɑːvɪstɪŋ/	**Overharvesting** of cod has made it rare.
climate change /ˈklaɪmət tʃeɪndʒ/	**Climate change** makes some places hotter and drier.
edge effect	The **edge effect** means the border of a habitat has different conditions from its centre.
Red List	The **Red List** records species' risk of extinction.
Data Deficient	A species is **Data Deficient** when there is not enough information to judge its risk.
biodiversity hotspot	A **biodiversity hotspot** has many rare species and is under threat.
endemic species	An **endemic species** lives naturally in only one region.
intrinsic value /ɪnˈtrɪnsɪk ˈvælju:/	Wildlife has **intrinsic value**: it matters even if people never use it.

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instrumental value	A forest has **instrumental value** because it gives us wood.
sweet wormwood	**Sweet wormwood** gives a medicine used to treat malaria.
Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species	The **Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species** controls trade in rare animals and plants.
captive breeding /ˈkæptɪv ˈbriːdɪŋ/	**Captive breeding** in zoos helps save rare animals.
reintroduction	**Reintroduction** returns a species to part of its former range.
seed bank /siːd bæŋk/	A **seed bank** stores seeds in the cold for many years.
flagship species	A panda is a **flagship species** that attracts conservation support.
protected area	Hunting may be restricted in a **protected area**.
ecological restoration	Planting native trees helps **ecological restoration**.
rewilding	**Rewilding** lets nature take over again, sometimes by bringing back lost animals.
corridor	A forest **corridor** lets animals move between protected patches.
buffer zone	A **buffer zone** around a reserve protects its centre.