

## The Sixth Extinction & Setting Conservation Priorities — Homework

### Learning Goals:

In this activity, you will continue to explore the current “Sixth Extinction” and biodiversity conservation.

By the end, you should be able to:

1. Explain the impacts of humans on biological diversity.
2. Compare and contrast the causes and rates of the sixth extinction with previous mass extinctions from the fossil record.
3. Evaluate criteria for setting species conservation priorities.
4. Distinguish between ex situ and in situ conservation approaches. (Optional)

### Assignment: Communicate your results

Part of being a scientist, a member of a conservation organization, or a concerned citizen is being able to communicate to the general public. As a board member of Conservation World, your task is to write a letter that you can mail to potential donors. You want to convince them to donate funds to support your new conservation project. To do this, you need to explain the problem of biodiversity loss and the importance of your proposed project. In your letter, address each of the following in separate paragraphs:

1. Explain how humans are contributing to the loss of biological diversity. Your answer should include multiple factors. You should also discuss how factors can interact and give an example of this.
2. Discuss the potential impacts of the loss of biological diversity on society. I.e., why should we be concerned about biodiversity loss?
3. Compare the current biological diversity losses to past mass extinctions in terms of causes and rates.
4. Give your recommendation for a new conservation project (Use one of the potential projects discussed in class. Your choice can be different from your group’s recommendation if you think another project is better). Include the criteria used to make the decision so donors know why they should support this particular project.

Your letter should be no more than ~one page in length. See rubric for grading criteria.