

# To what extent does preserving endangered species benefit us?

[Environment](#), [Ecology](#)



The topic of preserving endangered species may be different in every country, however, it's clear that the benefits we gain from protecting those species will be greater than leaving them for extinction. As an example, poverty can be greatly reduced if conservation and good protection of the species and their habitats can be maintained. Ginette Hemley, vice president for species conservation, World Wildlife Fund, said that "Problems that threaten species like the destruction of habitats and natural resources often contribute to poverty."

Also, by examining six projects in Africa, Latin America and Asia, the new report shows that WWF's work to save endangered wildlife helps eradicate poverty and hunger, as well as promote sustainable and fair development in rural areas ("Protecting endangered species"). Therefore, preserving the species and their environment will prosper the local economies, if not, it will at the very least provide some support for the economy.

To clarify, preserving strategies are not only limited to the species but also their natural environment, because the main reason for a species to be endangered is habitat loss. Therefore, it is important to indicate that the environment is also a factor we need to focus as well, in the process of conservation. In addition, as a side note, there are many countries, companies, organizations that need species as attraction for tourism industry and mainly to gain profit. As a result, endangered species should be protected because they are beneficial to our society, mostly our economy, in many ways.

On the other hand, in contrast to the economic viewpoint, which is profit and value from the species, there are some concerns that can't be ignored which is the environmental perspective. The conservation for species and their habitats is not easy, it will take a great deal of time and effort to restore the environment into suitable habitats for the species. Afterall, the species are at risk is mainly because of their habitat loss (“ National Geographic Society”). In addition, research shows that only 13-17 percent of the total annual funding needs for restoration and conservation are met—about \$50 billion.

That means there is a shortfall of \$250-350 billion per year (Faruqi). The numbers indicated in this source is a heads up about the risk factors in preserving and conservation projects; there are risk factors in those investment for restoring the environment, the species habitat. An upcoming study by Margaret A. Palmer at the University of Maryland reports that more than 75 percent of river and stream restorations failed to meet their own minimal performance targets. “ They may be pretty projects,” says Palmer, “ but they don’t provide ecological benefits.” (Conniff). Those are only general concerns that are in contrast with the economic lens.

Even though there are economic benefit, but the profits, benefits, are the result of the investment that is put beforehand. According to the numbers shown in those sources, the amount of money, effort, time, that is needed in order for those projects to work will be a great amount even for large organizations and big companies and most of the companies or organizations might not be affordable. In another words, can't afford the risk of failing. Not to mention there might be other things to concern about in the

aftermath. So, if the conservation has failed due to any reason, then the profit will not be harvested. Then, it all brings back to my initial problem, research question, is preserving endangered species actually beneficial, or in another words, does the pay back worth the investment put into conservation.

Now, to counter argue the point of view mentioned before, in contrast to point on initial investments and the issue about failing the conservation projects, more than 120 countries are participating in the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS), where they will decide whether to grant greater protection to iconic species such the Polar Bear, the African Lion, and several sharks, including the Hammerhead (Steiner). Although this source may not include other species and maybe not all the countries will give support. It is also questionable about their achievements, the idea of whether other species are being protected or not, the ones that are not as wide known as polar bears and hammerhead; this is a big weakness.

However, the number of countries that is involve is a significant sign that shows the power of cooperation. The countries that participate in the conference can donate, offer, or contribute some resource and effort for endangered species, then the loss can be minimized for each country if there is an issue in the project and there would also be enough money to help each conservation projects. To put it simple, the loss will be minimized if the countries all work together, the more that is involved the less risk there is.

Second, although there might not be much profit for those countries or organizations in the beginning and there will be risks involved, but there will be jobs provided for people and lower the unemployment rate. Also, there could also be benefits gained in the beginning of the conservation projects, there could be profit from species that can be kept in aquarium and zoos. In 2016, travel and tourism contributed \$7. 6 trillion, or 10. 2%, to total GDP, and the industry provided jobs to one in 10 people, according to the World Travel & Tourism Council (“ Growing Wildlife-Based Tourism Sustainably”).

Although the unemployment rate may not be much of an issue now in present days, but it can still provide some help to the local people. One thing to make note of is that the data is not recent and there is no prove of whether the data is biased or not, however, it is true that jobs will be provided to more people and the unemployment rate will be decrease. In addition, conservations may help developing countries and reduce poverty. Afterall not all species needs special care. Species like polar bears, hammerhead sharks may be at risk, but they could be placed in manmade habitats and be shown to the public, like zoos. This then would be changed into a win win situation; the animals will be protected, they could be release in the future when their habitats are restored, and money can be made from the tourism industry during this period because people would be attracted to the species that they rarely get a view of.

Lastly, there are also cases where the species are breed or rescued and then they were released in to the wild. If there is enough care and resources put into the conservation, then it will definitely bring great profit for the

company and organization every year due to the tourism industry. An example of the profit made each year is the global diving industry that is worth more than \$4 billion dollars, with the shark diving industry alone bringing in \$42. 2 million per year in Fiji, \$18 million in Palau, and \$38. 6 million in Maldives (Steiner).

Although the diving industry doesn't seem to connect to the preservation of species at first glance, but if you think about whether people would enjoy a healthy coral reef with unique species that are rarely seen or a dying coral reef with rarely any wildlife. In addition, the environment that is also preserved and maintained will bring natural resources that is beneficial. As a side note, environment protection, especially the natural habitats of the endangered species are important.

The exploitation of renewable natural resources (woods, nuts, oils) in tropical rain forests may bring greater economic benefits than conversion to more intensive land uses. (Mazzotti, Frank J). This source may not be as important right now, but it will in the future when fossil fuels and other power sources are greatly limited. Although it only talks about some natural resources and usually it may not be as efficient as the fossil fuels but the strength of this source is that it talks about how intensive use may exhaust the land and in the future many problem will faced, therefore it is important to protect the environment.

In addition to the benefits from the tourism industry, there is also other point of view in the economic perspective concerning the big organizations and

large companies. As we all know that species are not only animals but also includes plants, fungus that are usually overlooked. Those plant, or more of herbs, has a very big market in the medicine field. Some 40% of prescription drugs are substances originally extracted from plants, animals, fungi and microorganisms (Tanner). Preserving measures should not be only for the species in the animalia kingdom but also the plant kingdom.

Plant, herbs especially, that are put in traditional medicines have a value that is not only for curing illness but it is also a beneficial knowledge that is valuable for us to take, or to be aware of their values so that more illness can be cure or get control of. An example would be the Asian Ginseng, the mucilaginous inner bark of this tall flowering tree has many uses, including soothing coughs and the throat, soothing inflammatory conditions, and supporting the digestive, glandular, and urinary tract systems (Greentumble). Although the effect of the ginseng not all listed in this source, but the example is to present an idea that wild ginseng have great values but in current days most ginsengs are man cultivated which could have differences in the effectiveness.

The main purpose of including the herbs, plants, fungus, in the research is to present the idea that they are a big market for the medicine field, and they have great research values. " A few hundred wild species have stocked our pharmacies with antibiotics, anti-cancer agents, pain killers, and blood thinners," notes the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service. " The biochemistry of unexamined species is an unfathomed reservoir of new and potentially more effective substances." (Daniel). The idea behind this source is to tell the

people that species are being included in many drugs, antibodies, medicines etc.

There are even more reasons on why we should protect them, their hidden values are unpredictable when we might need them. Although the statement is from an organization which is quite reputable but that doesn't have much to do with the medical field and doesn't seem credible in their words consider their purpose is to preserve the species, bias could be included. However, they are more persuasive than bias because what they said is only potential value, not really bias. On the other hand, if we did try and preserve the species then we are the ones that will get the benefit, in addition protecting the species all start with the environment and their loss of habitat due to human interference is the main reason for endangered species. Therefore, protecting plants or animals are basically the same thing.

In conclusion, no matter if it is economic benefits or ethical concerns, we have the ability and theresponsibilityto help preserve and help those species at risk. It would be better if we can prevent any animals, plants and living organisms from extinction. We gain profit off the endangered species, we gain knowledge about them, we might even find potential values in them. In contrast, we will provide them shelter until their natural habitat are restored. It is a win win situation where both parties' benefits. Afterall each and every one of them are a part of the nature and the balance between them should be maintained so that the environment is stable.