

MAR 07 2025

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# SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

URGING THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT TO DEVELOP A NATIONAL  
BIODIVERSITY STRATEGY.

1           WHEREAS, the people of Hawai'i have a deep and enduring  
2 relationship with nature, which is central to their cultural,  
3 spiritual, and economic well-being, and the State has long  
4 prioritized the protection and preservation of its unique  
5 ecosystems and biodiversity; and

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7           WHEREAS, Hawai'i is home to a significant number of endemic  
8 species and habitats of great ecological, cultural, historical,  
9 and scientific value that must be protected for current and  
10 future generations; and

11  
12           WHEREAS, the United States is facing an unprecedented  
13 biodiversity crisis, primarily driven by irresponsible resource  
14 management practices that have altered seventy-five percent of  
15 terrestrial environments and sixty-six percent of marine  
16 environments; directly exploited wildlife and plant species;  
17 accelerated climate change; polluted air, land, and water; and  
18 introduced invasive species that have devastated native  
19 ecosystems; and

20  
21           WHEREAS, the ongoing biodiversity crisis threatens  
22 approximately one million species with extinction in the coming  
23 decades, including over forty percent of amphibians; thirty-  
24 three percent of corals, sharks, and marine mammals; over sixty  
25 percent of cycads; over thirty percent of conifer trees; and  
26 approximately ten percent of all insect species, which will  
27 cause significant declines in populations of wild species,  
28 including a sixty-eight percent decline in mammal populations;  
29 and



1           WHEREAS, Hawai'i has over five hundred fifty endangered  
2 species, representing approximately twenty-five percent of the  
3 nation's endangered species, yet receives only three percent of  
4 federal conservation funding; and

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6           WHEREAS, seventy-one percent of Hawai'i's residents support  
7 proactive measures to prevent the extinction of endangered  
8 species; and

9  
10          WHEREAS, the loss of biodiversity poses a direct threat to  
11 the security, health, and well-being of Hawai'i's residents by  
12 diminishing critical ecosystem services, including zoonotic  
13 disease buffering, pollination, water filtration, soil  
14 replenishment, game species provisioning, medicinal resource  
15 availability, and recreational opportunities; and

16  
17          WHEREAS, for Native Hawaiians, the relationship with 'āina  
18 (land) and native ecosystems is integral to cultural identity,  
19 sovereignty, and overall well-being, and traditional Hawaiian  
20 ecological knowledge provides unique perspectives essential to  
21 effective biodiversity conservation; and

22  
23          WHEREAS, the decline in biodiversity disproportionately  
24 impacts Native Hawaiian communities due to the genealogical and  
25 cultural connections between Kanaka Maoli and 'āina; and

26  
27          WHEREAS, the loss of biodiversity and weakened biosecurity  
28 threaten Hawai'i's endemic species and natural landscapes,  
29 increasing vulnerability to natural disasters, such as the  
30 Lahaina wildfire, which exemplifies the devastating consequences  
31 of replacing native wetland flora and fauna with non-drought-  
32 and non-fire-resistant vegetation; and

33  
34          WHEREAS, biodiversity preservation is crucial for food  
35 system security, the resilience of indigenous crops, and the  
36 sustainability of traditional foods and practices; and

37  
38          WHEREAS, Governor David Ige previously affirmed the State's  
39 commitment to biodiversity conservation at the International  
40 Union for Conservation of Nature's World Conservation Congress,



1 recognizing the interconnectedness of Indigenous Peoples and  
2 biodiversity; and

3  
4 WHEREAS, the State has enacted legislation to achieve full  
5 carbon neutrality by 2045, and protecting the State's  
6 biodiversity will mitigate carbon emissions by enhancing  
7 floodwater absorption, buffering against coastal erosion, and  
8 improving resilience to extreme weather events; and

9  
10 WHEREAS, the United States is not a party to key  
11 international biodiversity agreements, including the Convention  
12 on Biological Diversity and the Convention on Migratory Species,  
13 and does not issue a national biodiversity outlook nor maintain  
14 a national biodiversity strategy, unlike many other countries;  
15 and

16  
17 WHEREAS, addressing the biodiversity crisis requires  
18 coordinated action at the global, national, regional, and local  
19 levels, and the absence of a national biodiversity strategy  
20 hampers effective conservation efforts and collaboration among  
21 federal, state, and local governments, Native peoples, private  
22 landowners, and other stakeholders; and

23  
24 WHEREAS, globally, biosecurity is recognized as essential  
25 for protecting economies, cultures, and the environment, and  
26 multiple nations have amended their constitutions to enshrine  
27 the protection, conservation, and preservation of their natural  
28 resources and biodiversity; now, therefore,

29  
30 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Thirty-third  
31 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2025, the  
32 House of Representatives concurring, that this body urges the  
33 United States government to:

- 34  
35 (1) Establish a national biodiversity strategy to ensure  
36 the conservation and restoration of the nation's  
37 biodiversity, secure ecosystem services for future  
38 generations, advance the United Nations Sustainable  
39 Development Goals, set ambitious biodiversity  
40 conservation targets, promote equity and justice in  
41 conservation efforts, coordinate federal agency  
42 actions, and foster collaboration among governments,



1           Indigenous communities, non-governmental  
2           organizations, and international partners;

3  
4           (2)   Increase public awareness of biodiversity issues and  
5           develop the national biodiversity strategy through  
6           robust public input, engaging federal and state  
7           agencies, Indigenous communities, communities of  
8           color, low-income communities, private landowners, and  
9           other stakeholders to strengthen biodiversity  
10          restoration efforts; and

11  
12          (3)   Include in the national biodiversity strategy specific  
13          actions to:

14  
15           (A)   Support the national goal of conserving at least  
16           thirty percent of United States lands and waters  
17           by 2030;

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19           (B)   Establish additional science-based biodiversity  
20           conservation targets;

21  
22           (C)   Protect and restore threatened, endangered, and  
23           at-risk species;

24  
25           (D)   Review and enhance existing biodiversity-related  
26           laws, plans, and programs to maximize  
27           conservation impact and identify necessary  
28           legislative or policy changes; and

29  
30           (E)   Fund existing and new conservation initiatives to  
31           effectively address local stressors, including  
32           sediment and nutrient runoff, invasive species,  
33           and unsustainable harvesting practices; and

34  
35           BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this  
36           Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the President of the  
37           United States, Speaker of the United States House of  
38           Representatives, President Pro Tempore of the United States  
39           Senate, Secretary of the Interior, Secretary of Commerce,  
40           Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency,  
41           Chairperson of the Council on Environmental Quality, Governor,



1 each member of Hawai'i's Congressional Delegation, and  
2 Chairperson of the Board of Land and Natural Resources.

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OFFERED BY:



