

HABITAT DESTRUCTION

Habitat destruction is the leading cause of species extinction in Australia and around the world. This decimation of land and biodiversity represents the primary threat to over 80% of all species in Oceania. Australia's relentless clearing of land has earned us the title of the worst deforestation nation in the 'developed' world. Just 50% of Australia's forests and bushlands remain intact, as compared to preinvasion.

WILDLIFE LOSS

Many native animals are crushed and die as a direct result of land clearing. Surviving animals, whose homes are demolished, are left without adequate shelter from predators, and are at risk of starvation due to the loss of reliable food sources.

Estimates suggest that almost 4.9 million animals died nationwide due to land clearing every year in the decade ending in 2015. In the last 15 years, at least 13 native species have become extinct – almost one each year. If Australia continues clearing land at the current rate, our precious native wildlife face a very uncertain future. In fact, projections suggest that between one and two species will continue to face extinction each decade.

Data from the Australian government's National Greenhouse Accounts shows animal agriculture was the leading cause of land clearing between 2010 and 2018. This land desecration occurs for the sake of beef, lamb, dairy, leather and wool industry profits.

LAND CLEARING AND ANIMAL AGRICULTURE

Raising 'livestock' accounts for ~77% of all global farming land use, despite meat and dairy consumption only accounting for 18% of global calories and 37% of total protein.

'Livestock' grazing occupies about 54% of Australia's surface area, with more land used to grow crops fed to farmed animals. Conversely, just under 8% of land is set aside for critical nature conservation, with a further ~15% conserved as 'other protected including indigenous uses'.

According to the Queensland government, 93% of land clearing in the state in 2021 was for beef and leather production. This massive habitat destruction is directly tied to koala population declines, with the species now listed as endangered.

The sheep industry producing meat, wool and lanolin (used in cosmetics) is extremely land inefficient and destructive, too. About 1,830 square metres more land must be cleared or kept cleared to produce an Australian wool rather than cotton sweater.

A SHIFT AWAY FROM DESTRUCTION

BROADER IMPLICATIONS OF LAND CLEARING

Trees play a vital role in capturing and storing greenhouse gas emissions, and when cleared, that CO2 is released back into the atmosphere. This ultimately heats up the planet - contributing to climate change. Land clearing also promotes soil erosion and drought contributing to biodiversity decline and unsustainability.

SOLUTIONS

A transition away from animal-based farming in favour of plant-based agriculture, would reduce global farmland needed by 75%, eliminating the need for continued land clearing. This would also present an opportunity for rewilding and returning the land to nature. This system should be designed by Indigenous communities, who have lived sustainably on the land for 60,000 years prior to European invasion.

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