



What is conservation?

One of the most accepted definitions of the term is: **"Conservation is the act of protecting the Earth's natural resources for current and future generations"**. By natural resources we mean: **water, air, minerals, all living things, soil**, etc.

By this definition, conservation is the set of actions agreed by human beings to reduce the impact of man and leave natural systems in the most similar conditions possible to the absence of human presence, or at least in some conditions that ensure its survival or viability.

Understanding conservation

All living things generate **changes** in their environment and are affected by the changes made by other species. But currently **the impact of man must be debated and must be limited and regulated** due to the great capacity we have to transform the environment.

Our impact is so great mainly for two reasons: firstly because of the **large number of human individuals** who live on Earth (estimated at 8,000 Million in 2023!!), and secondly, because of our **great technological development** which provides us with a **great capacity for extraction and transformation**.

The impact of human beings does not have to be and is not always negative. In some areas, conservation efforts in recent decades have made a significant difference to the current state of biodiversity. Also in many cases **improvements in environmental policies** at local, regional and global scale have improved the state of conservation of many ecosystems.

However, **we must continue to make progress**, and much remains to be done at the level of environmental policies to reduce our impact on biodiversity. Conservation should be directed towards **a design of human activities that is more respectful of the natural environment**, seeking to obtain resources with minimal impact. We must fight for a conservation that aims to **preserve**, that is to say, modify as little as possible, instead of destroying and trying to restore later.

Sectors involved in conservation

Conservation, as we have defined it in this dossier, appeared more than a hundred years ago as a **meeting point between various groups worried by the loss of habitats and species**. Among these groups we find: **scientists, explorers, naturalists or sportsmen**. Without all these voices, conservation would not have achieved all that we have today. But we must not forget that this vision of respect for nature already **appears in many peoples and ancestral cultures around the world**.

Conservation must be **guided by knowledge**. In this sense, **scientific studies** will be needed to evaluate the **impact** of our actions, the situation of a certain territory or a certain species, and guide our management actions.



To conserve, we also need the **involvement of government administrations**. In our case, the involvement of **City Councils, Regional Councils, Provincial Councils, the Generalitat, the Spanish State and the European Union** is necessary. And a **global involvement of all countries** is needed. Based on scientific knowledge, it will be necessary for all these administrations to **legislate** for the protection of habitats and species, that is to say: they must design laws, they must approve and implement them, and they must ensure they are being followed and obeyed.

On the other hand, **civil society** has also played and must continue to play an important role in conservation. We need to realize our **power as citizens**: we are **voters** and **consumers** with great power to force change on governments and companies when we show what we want and what we don't want. **Our lifestyle decisions have a huge effect on the impact on biodiversity and the environment**, and at a given moment we can also **express our demand for protection** if we consider that the administrations are not looking after nature conservation properly.

Based on scientific knowledge, the advice we give is that in order to **guarantee the Earth's natural resources for current and future generations**, it is necessary to **encourage and force the decrease in our consumption and our impact on the environment**. It is necessary to force governments to legislate and force large companies to act in this sense.

Why is it important?

Nature conservation is important **not only for the systems affected** (species or territories), but it is **especially important for human beings**, since conservation **ensures access to natural resources that are necessary for our survival** (food, medicine, quality water, etc.), currently and in the future.

But we must not only preserve guided by a utilitarian view of nature. For years, and increasingly these later years, we have been valuing other benefits that nature offers us in a much more indirect way, such as **the importance of the meeting spaces for leisure and health that it offers us, the silence and the beauty of the natural spaces, and the value of nature as a driver of cultural creation** (see the "Oceans and Society" and "Ocean of health" posters that you will find at [OceanNight](#)) where we include gastronomy, artistic creation, the healthy lifestyle, etc.

Connection with Biodiversity

One of the main objectives of Conservation is to **preserve Biodiversity**. Our conservation actions will be aimed at preserving not only species, but also genes, ecosystems and all the evolutionary, ecological and cultural processes that sustain life.

For more information

- [Environmental conservation and protection](#)
- [Biodiversity in Catalonia, the challenge of conservation](#)
- [Network for the conservation of nature](#)
- [Fridays for future](#)
- [What you can do to help the planet : year illustrated guide _ The Natural History Museum , London](#)

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