

MAR 07 2025

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
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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
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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
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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

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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

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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

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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
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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
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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
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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,
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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:
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- 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,



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the President of the United States, Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, President Pro Tempore of the United States Senate, Secretary of the Interior, Secretary of Commerce, Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, 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:



