

MAR 07 2025

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# SENATE 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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31           WHEREAS, Hawai'i has over five hundred fifty endangered  
32 species, representing approximately twenty-five percent of the



1 nation's endangered species, yet receives only three percent of  
2 federal conservation funding; and

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

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

14  
15 WHEREAS, for Native Hawaiians, the relationship with 'āina  
16 (land) and native ecosystems is integral to cultural identity,  
17 sovereignty, and overall well-being, and traditional Hawaiian  
18 ecological knowledge provides unique perspectives essential to  
19 effective biodiversity conservation; and

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

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

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

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



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

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

13  
14           WHEREAS, addressing the biodiversity crisis requires  
15 coordinated action at the global, national, regional, and local  
16 levels, and the absence of a national biodiversity strategy  
17 hampers effective conservation efforts and collaboration among  
18 federal, state, and local governments, Native peoples, private  
19 landowners, and other stakeholders; and

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

26  
27           BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Thirty-third  
28 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2025,  
29 that this body urges the United States government to:

- 30  
31           (1) Establish a national biodiversity strategy to ensure  
32 the conservation and restoration of the nation's  
33 biodiversity, secure ecosystem services for future  
34 generations, advance the United Nations Sustainable  
35 Development Goals, set ambitious biodiversity  
36 conservation targets, promote equity and justice in  
37 conservation efforts, coordinate federal agency  
38 actions, and foster collaboration among governments,  
39 Indigenous communities, non-governmental  
40 organizations, and international partners;  
41



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

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

11  
12 (A) Support the national goal of conserving at least  
13 thirty percent of United States lands and waters  
14 by 2030;

15  
16 (B) Establish additional science-based biodiversity  
17 conservation targets;

18  
19 (C) Protect and restore threatened, endangered, and  
20 at-risk species;

21  
22 (D) Review and enhance existing biodiversity-related  
23 laws, plans, and programs to maximize  
24 conservation impact and identify necessary  
25 legislative or policy changes; and  
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27 (E) Fund existing and new conservation initiatives to  
28 effectively address local stressors, including  
29 sediment and nutrient runoff, invasive species,  
30 and unsustainable harvesting practices; and  
31

32 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this  
33 Resolution be transmitted to the President of the United States,  
34 Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, President  
35 Pro Tempore of the United States Senate, Secretary of the  
36 Interior, Secretary of Commerce, Administrator of the  
37 Environmental Protection Agency, Chairperson of the Council on  
38 Environmental Quality, Governor, each member of Hawai'i's  
39 Congressional Delegation, and Chairperson of the Board of Land  
40 and Natural Resources.  
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S.R. NO. 40

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OFFERED BY: Chhe Suttard

