

Is Life on Earth Really Dying?¹

Morten Jødal²

Transcribed by Jan-Erik Solheim³

Abstract

We are told about a 6th mass extinction of species and disappearance of the biological diversity. Facts contradict these claims. We know only a few species going extinct since 1500. The extinction rate is going down. All humans on Earth experience a larger diversity in their natural local surroundings. Most species have a better life in a slightly warmer climate. There is no reason to panic about the life on Earth.

What we are told

There exists a parallel institution to IPCC called IPBES (Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services). They too love hockeysticks. Their scary message is that the cumulative number of extinctions since 1500 is dramatically increasing (Figure 1).

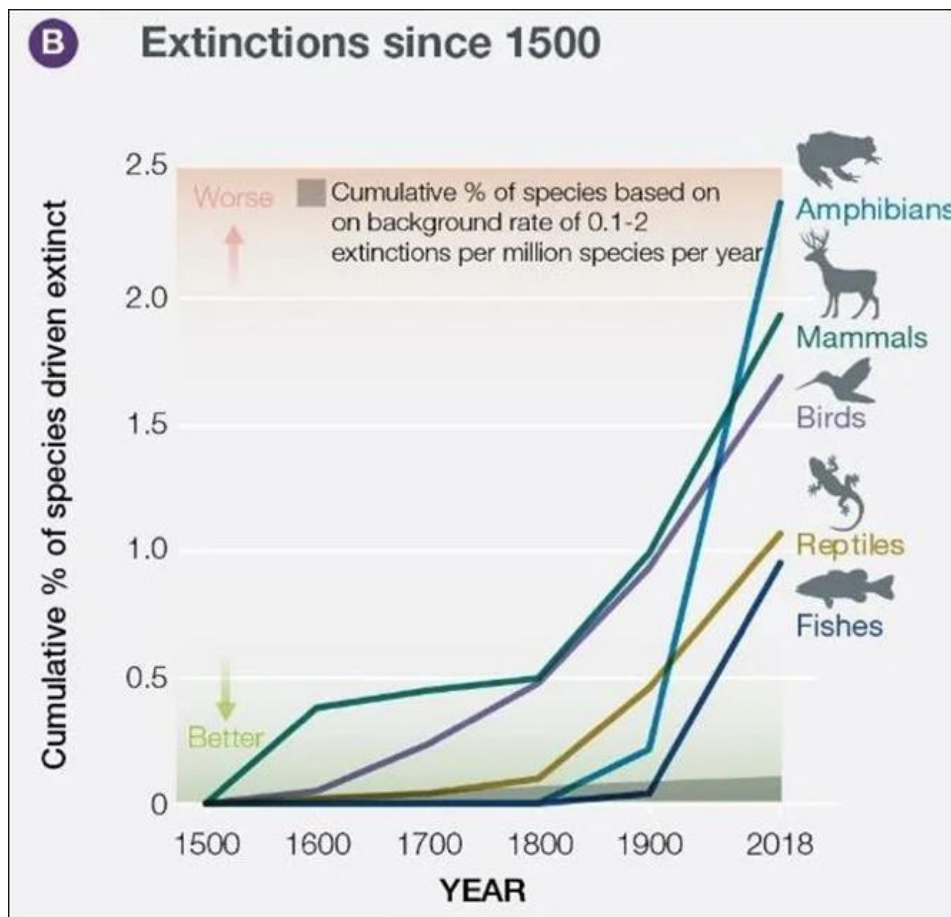


Figure 1. The scary story of IBES:
The number of extinctions of species are increasing exponentially.

¹ The talk can be found here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bocF5yzMF1k> (Recorded by Yngvar Engebretsen).

² Morten Jødal died in September 2021. Jan-Erik Solheim transcribed the talk.

³ Submitted Dec. 20, 2021. Accepted Dec. 30, 2021. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.53234/scc202112//224>

The story started with Norman Myers' book (1979) where it was told that 40 000 species go extinct per year. Another number from EU and Germany presented in 2008, was that 3 species go extinct pr hour, or 26 280 species per year. In 2018 we were told that insects are going extinct and this year (2019) the Amazon Forest is burning, and species will go extinct. But Myers' number of 40 000 species per year was based on a remark from a conference in 1974 where a lecturer guessed that one million species will go extinct in 25 years. This is completely wrong.

The reality

In the same building in Switzerland where IPBES is situated, we find another agency, International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) which keeps tracks of endangered and extinct species. Their Red List of all extinct species by decade since 1500 is shown in Figure 2. There was an increase in the extinction rate between 1800 and 1900, but from then on the extinction rate has been going down dramatically. During the last 10 years zero extinctions have been found. Since 1500, in total 860 species have gone extinct according to IPBES.

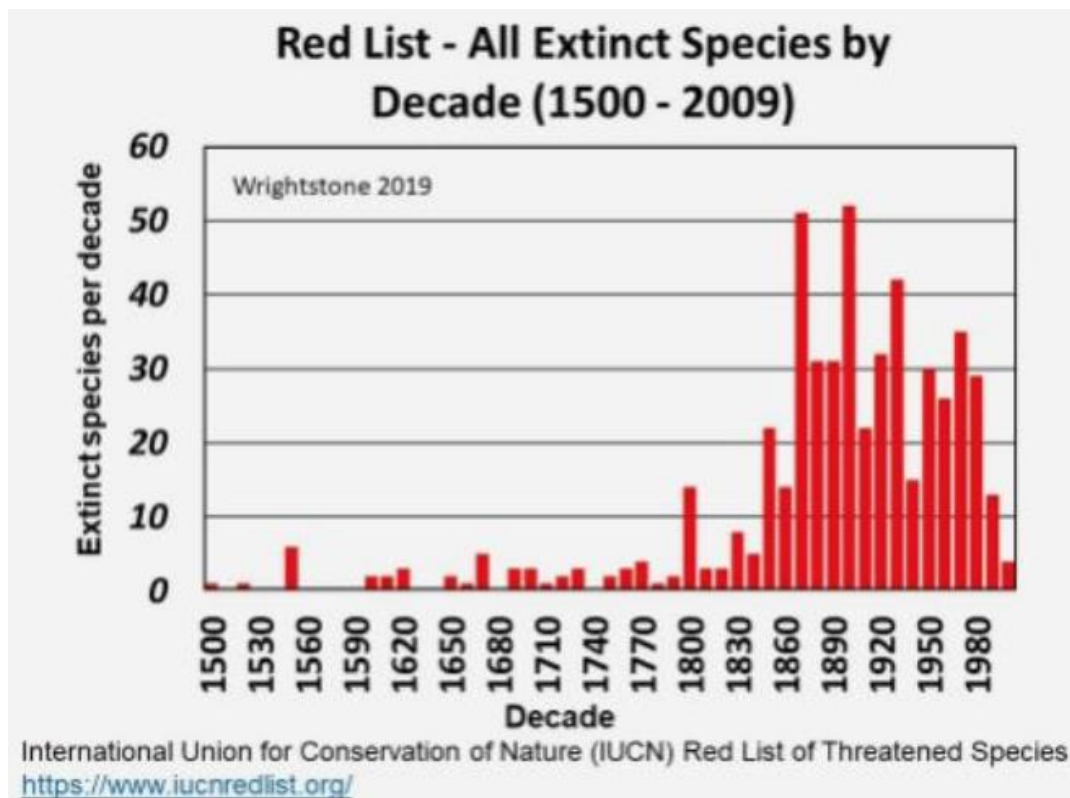


Figure 2. The number of species extinct per decade (from IUCN).

Table 1: Species going extinct since 1500 according to IPBES

Group	Extinct
Mammals	83
Birds	156
Fish	63
Reptiles	27
Amphibians	33
Anthropods	81
Molluscs	297
Other animals	4
Plants	116
All	860

In addition, there are about 65 species not living in nature, but are still alive in zoos. There is a big difference between the number 40 000 per year and 860 per 500 years. The reality in the red list is 1.7 species per year or 0.004 % of the IPBES claim.

The main threats:

- Loss of habitat: Agriculture is most important, but since 1960 we need 68 % less area to produce the same amount of food. Most species have gone extinct on islands.
- Introducing species: Especially islands are vulnerable. The cat and the rat are good examples on predators destroying island habitats
- Hunting
- Pollution
- Climate change – NO: Life is normally restricted by cold weather. But on mountain tops in the Alps the number of plant species has increased by more than 138 % in 100 years.

New plants introduced by humans

On nearly all islands we find a perfect relationship between native and introduced species. In Europe more than 12 000 new plant species have been introduced the last 500 years. We are experiencing a much larger biological diversity than our great-great-great-grandmother.

And now they tell us: If we lose a few species, the ecosystem will collapse. Gro Harlem Brundtland was wrong when she said: “Everything is connected to everything”. That is not correct anymore. This is not good biology.

The real problems

The real extinctions are small but are in many cases mixed up with reduced population sizes – which is a problem for some species. We hear all the time that something is unnatural. The nature changes dynamically. It changes all the time. We like the losers, not the winners. One example is the King Crab, introduced by Russians, which is doing very well – giving good income for the fisheries. It has come to stay. We absolutely want the white mountain fox, a beautiful animal. Large resources are allocated to save and increase the population. But the raccoon dog, which is numerous in Sweden – is blacklisted and hunted without restrictions in Norway. However, there are species in danger of extinction. Table 2 shows the full red list:

Table 2. The red list in categories

Category	Abr	Numbers IUCN	Numbers Norway
Extinct	EX	860	114
Extinct in wild		68	
Critically endangered	CR	5210	241
Endangered	EN	7781	879
Vulnerable	VU	11316	1235
Near Threatened	NT	5736	1235
Least Concern	LC	40920	16477

A problem with this list is that most of the species listed, are regionally at the edge of their distribution. The species have not gone extinct, but individuals have died. We have many such examples in Norway and Sweden of species listed as threatened, which live quite well in Russia and in the rest of Europe

A new biological Pangea – never mentioned in media.

Pangea was a supercontinent which allowed species to move across all land areas on the Earth. When the continents separated, this movement became restricted. We got isolated habitats and evolution in different directions.



Figure 3. A new biological Pangea is created.

The increased travel between continents by humans has created a new biological Pangea as shown in Figure 3. The result is that new species are created all the time by hybridization, by geographical isolation in new areas, and by new ecological niches. And the process of creating new species has become much shorter because of how humans move plants and species with them. An example is an apple tree brought in from abroad. With the tree comes insects, fungus, birds, and predators – and the habitat is changed in a few years.

My best rough guess: In one million years the Earth will have a double number of species.

Which means a new genesis.

We are not in the 6th extinction – it is really the opposite.

References

Norman Myers 1979. *The Sinking Ark. A New Look at the Problem of Disappearing Species.* Pergamon press.

Morten Jødal 2017. *Miljømytene – står vi framfor verdens undergang?* 448 p. (in Norwegian), Klimarealistene, ISBN 978-82-999196-2-3