

General FAQs

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How to use the Living Planet Index (LPI) website:

Q. The Living Planet Index and The Living Planet Database

A. The dataset behind the LPI is stored in the Living Planet Database (LPD), which is managed by ZSL. The LPD contains thousands of records of vertebrate population abundance over time, from a variety of sources such as the scientific literature or government reports and is continuously augmented. This information is used to calculate LPIs at different scales, the results of which are published every two years in WWF's Living Planet Report (LPR), along with the updated LPD. When searching for populations on the website you are searching the LPD. The database is open access; however, some populations are confidential and therefore do not appear in the public LPD. This is because the data were provided to the LPI team under the agreement that it would be used for analysis, but never displayed individually, usually because of sensitivity around the species' location, or because the data providers are looking to publish the data.

The LPD is intended to be used for non-commercial purposes. For details on the using the data, please see the Data Use Policy.

Q. How do I find information about a particular species?

A. The LPD contains more than 35,803 population records of 5790 species from all over the world. To search the database on the Living Planet Index website, use the [search page](#).

Type in the species' scientific or common name into the search bar, if there are records of this species in the database these populations will be displayed in the table below. To view these populations on the map, select one or more populations by clicking on them. To select all populations in the table to view on the map click the 'Select populations shown in table'. Select the view button in the details column to see more information on a population.

Q. How do I search for information from a particular country or region?

A. Much like species search, you can also search by location. Type a location in to the search bar; this can be a country, region or ocean. You can also filter results by realm and country using the columns at the top of the results table.

Q. Where can I find a previous Living Planet Report or other reports using the LPI?

A. A list of previous Living Planet Reports and other reports using the LPI can be found under the Publications tab. You can also find peer-reviewed scientific papers that use the LPI. The 'view publication' links will take you to the documents' abstracts or documents themselves if they are open source.

About the Living Planet Index and the process behind it:

Q. What does the LPI show.

A. A common misconception is the LPI measures the overall decline in absolute abundance. Instead, the LPI measures the average rate of change in population size across the species monitored. For more information see the About the Index page.

Q. How did the LPI come about?

A. The LPI was first developed in 1998 by WWF to monitor the changing state of nature. ZSL has been managing the Living Planet Index in a collaborative partnership with WWF since 2006.

Q. Which organisations are involved in the LPI?

A. The key partners of the LPI are the Zoological Society of London and World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF). There are many long-term partnerships which support the LPI, for a full list of collaborators, see the about page.

Q. How often is the Living Planet Report produced?

A. The Living Planet Report is published every two years by WWF in collaboration with ZSL. The most recent report was released in October 2026.

Q. How is the LPI used in policy?

A. The LPI was first adopted as a policy indicator in 2005 for measuring progress towards the first target set by the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). It was also one of a suite of global indicators used to monitor progress towards the CBD Aichi biodiversity targets in 2010 (Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, 2010). Following the failure to meet the Aichi targets, we are now in the next phase of international policy commitments to address biodiversity loss. The LPI has been included as a component and complementary indicator of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (UNEP (United Nations Environment Programme), 2022). More information about the role of the LPI in policy can be found in McRae et al. (2025).

Q. Can the LPI be used to assess change at the national level?

A. The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) requires individual nations to report on their progress towards meeting biodiversity targets. Although the LPI can be presented by country to produce a national indicator, this is only feasible if data coverage is sufficiently good to make a publicly available broad-scale assessment of biodiversity change. Data collection for the LPI often focuses on maximising the overall coverage of species and regions globally as opposed to within particular countries. While occasionally national indices are produced in collaboration with in-country representatives, who assist with focussed data collection. These require dedicated funding and a big time investment.

Q. How does a population get into the LPI database?

A. A species or population is added to the LPD by a trained data entry user, using published population data that meets the required Data Standards. These standards outline the criteria that must be met, including that the data source provides a measure of abundance for an individual vertebrate species at a specific location, monitored over a minimum period of two years. Another data entry user then vets the data, in a sort of proofreading process.

Not all suitable data are included in the database. The LPD is continuously being updated as new data become available and suitable datasets are identified. However, reviewing, processing and entering these data takes time. As a result, there may be suitable populations that have not yet been added to the database. If you know of any data sources that appear to meet the criteria, and are not in the database, please feel free to get in touch to suggest them, either by emailing livingplanetindex@ioz.ac.uk, or by filling in the relevant form on the [Contribute page](#) of our website.

Q. Why are there no records for the species I am interested in?

A. If you receive the message 'No records found for the search criteria' during a search, check the Keyword Search box to make sure that the information you have searched for is correct (e.g. there are no spelling errors in the search term you used). If you are searching for a species using a common name that you may be familiar with, it may not be a name that is widely used and may not be recorded for that species in the LPI. If this is the case, try rerunning the search using the correct scientific name, based on out taxonomic authorities: [Birds](#), [Mammals](#), [Fish](#), [Amphibians](#), [Reptiles](#) ([Crocodilians](#)).

If all your search criteria are correct and you still receive no results, this means that the species you are looking for is not yet recorded in the LPI database, and the reasons for this may vary. The LPI only uses population data from published studies that meet the required Data Standards, so it is possible that none of the information found was considered to be of sufficient quality to be entered. In other cases, published information is available but has yet to be added to the database. Finally, it could be that the species is inadequately researched, so that there are no studies available.

Using Living Planet Database:**Q. Can I download the information I have searched for?**

A. The information for a particular population found in a search (of the LPD) can be downloaded as either as CSV, or JSON file. The Terms of Use can be found under the Data Use Policy.

Q. Can I use LPI information for publication? (Citation, commercial, non-commercial use)

A. You are free to use data from a particular population record from the LPD for non-commercial purposes (e.g. school/college/university/art projects). You will need to provide a full and appropriate acknowledgement and citation in any materials or publications derived in part or in whole from the data. The preferred citation format, changing years and date accordingly, is: “LPI 2026. Living Planet Index database. 2026. < www.livingplanetindex.org/>. Downloaded on 24 November 2026”. If a publication makes substantial use of the data, you will need to contact LivingPlanetIndex@ioz.ac.uk. LPI data are not available for commercial use.

Contributing to the Living Planet database:

Q. I have some information, where can I submit this?

A. If you wish to contribute to the LPI database, you can do so in various ways. If you have information that fits the Data Standards and you are a registered user you can submit data by uploading a data entry template which can be found [here](#) or by filling in the relevant form on the [Contribute page](#) of our website. You could also email the information to LivingPlanetIndex@ioz.ac.uk If you are authorised to contribute directly to the database, you can do this using the online form.

Q. Do I need to be trained to contribute to the LPI?

A. Yes, you need to be trained to ensure that data are entered consistently between users – this is vital to ensure the index is reliable and representative. To become authorised to submit data to the LPI using the online form you can contact LivingPlanetIndex@ioz.ac.uk for details.

If your question has not been answered by this document, please refer to the 2026 [Technical supplement](#) which has more information on the LPI methodology and details of recent results or contact us at LivingPlanetIndex@ioz.ac.uk.