

ENDANGERED SPECIES ACROSS THE GLOBE

Let's now have a look at the individual continents to identify some of the endangered species and what is threatening them.

Californian Condor



NORTH AMERICA

The **Black Bear** is in danger because of logging (= cutting down trees for wood) and habitat fragmentation (= its habitat is interrupted by roads and cities, so the bear can't find food or mates). The main danger to the **Polar Bear** is climate change. The polar ice on which they hunt is getting thinner and cannot support their weight. As a result, the bears are starving to death. The **Californian Condor** is one of the world's rarest birds; there are about 150 of them in the wild. They are threatened because of power lines (= lines for electricity), which the birds collide with (= hit), and pesticides (= chemical substances used to kill harmful insects and wild plants) which weaken their eggs.

Black Bear



SOUTH AMERICA

Since the Amazon rainforest is home to a rich wildlife, deforestation is a big threat to biodiversity. The **Maned Three-Toed Sloth** is a slow mammal which spends most of its life in trees. Without them, it cannot survive. Also threatened are the many varieties of the brightly coloured **Poison Dart Frog**.

Three-Toed Sloth



Poison Dart Frog



Iberian Lynx



ASIA

This huge continent has many ecosystems with unique flora and fauna. The **Giant Panda** and **tiger** are critically endangered because of habitat loss and, in the case of the tiger, hunting. All Asian species of **rhinoceros** are threatened as they are actively hunted for their horns. Both types of **orangutan**, the Bornean and Sumatran, are endangered because of hunting and the destruction of their forest homes.

Numbat



AUSTRALIA

Many species of the unique Australian wildlife are in danger because of animals brought by the settlers from other continents. For example, **bilbies** (= rat-like animals with long rabbit ears) or **numbats** (= small striped insectivores) are threatened by foxes and cats. The **quoll** (= small cat-like carnivore living on trees) dies after eating the poisonous cane toad (= large frog), brought to Australia from Hawaii

Quoll



EUROPE

The long history of human settlement on this continent has meant that the many introduced species have replaced the original animals. Original animals suffer from habitat loss – for example, the once common **European Brown Bear** is now isolated only to a few places. Even more endangered is the **Iberian Lynx**. With only 100 individuals in the wild, this is the most endangered wild cat in the world.

AFRICA

Africa is home to the greatest concentration of mammal life on the planet. Many of the world's biggest land animals live there. Both the white and black **rhinoceros** are endangered. The same goes for the **African elephant** as well as the **lion**, king of the beasts, and the mighty **gorillas**, the world's largest apes. All these animals are threatened by poachers, who hunt them for meat and body parts.

ANIMAL GLOSSARY

- mammal** – an animal whose young are born alive and fed with milk from the mother's body
- ape** – a large monkey
- insectivore** – an animal that eats insects
- carnivore** – an animal that eats meat
- herbivore** – an animal that eats only plants