

PRESS RELEASE

Urgent call for a long-term approach to address planetary extinction threats and to ensure biodiversity and humankind preservation in the future

◀ **A scientific team led by the Doñana Biological Station – CSIC demands a long-term approach to address planetary extinction threats and to ensure biodiversity and humankind preservation in the future**



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Seville, 8th March 2024. International organisms and governments are setting objectives to deal with current environmental and climatic emergencies. However, most of these plans set short-time targets, in the range of a few decades at most. It is perhaps time to start thinking about the time when solar physics will make Earth uninhabitable, which will not happen overnight (estimated to happen millions of years from now), but will happen at some point inevitably. A scientific team from the Doñana Biological Station . CSIC and other institutions from United Kingdom, United State and Australia draws attention to the need to think about

biodiversity conservation, in the long term, beyond the existence of the planet. In their paper, published in the journal *BioScience*, the scientists defend the urgent need to improve international collaboration to address the threats that endanger life on Earth.

Life on Earth is finite

Francisco García-González, author, CSIC researcher at the Doñana Biological Station. CSIC and adjunct researcher at the University of Western Australia. A short-term perspective is not enough to guarantee biodiversity and humankind preservation in the long run. Long-term goals are necessary, of course, but it is important to place our gaze on the longer time scale.

Although this may sound dismal at first, Francisco Garcia-Gonzalez, along with co-authors Bill Ripple (Oregon State University) and Aurelio Malo (University of Alcalá and Imperial College London), argue that the possibility of an inevitable planetary emergency should propel us to think at transglobal levels, and motivate us to reach collective and long-term commitments to allow biodiversity and humanity to go on for as long as possible. To this end, it is necessary to devise a long-term plan to ensure a better future for all generations to come.

Humanity is in the midst of multiple environmental and climatic emergencies

In their article, the authors state that humanity is in the midst of multiple environmental and climatic emergencies that should be tackled right now and in the coming generations. But the possibility of an inevitable planetary emergency, such as the eventual death of the Sun, although distant in time, should be considered as well. The scientists describe this type of planetary emergency as a global effort, where humans not only evaluate the importance of planetary-scale dangers and how fast they may arrive, but also the speed at which we are capable of responding and providing solutions.

To consider the end of humanity for astronomical reasons may seem ridiculous to many people as the danger may seem distant, but it is important to consider that the possibility of a global emergency could compromise our long-term future and that of all known life forms.

The authors argue that it is our duty as a civilization to maintain maximal biodiversity on Earth and beyond, for a series of reasons. They include utilitarian reasons, for instance, as a life-supporting system for our own species' survival, and non-utilitarian motivations, such as giving empirical testament of the process of evolution of life on Earth. Ensuring that