



Wildlife
Conservation
Society

Your Conservation Impact

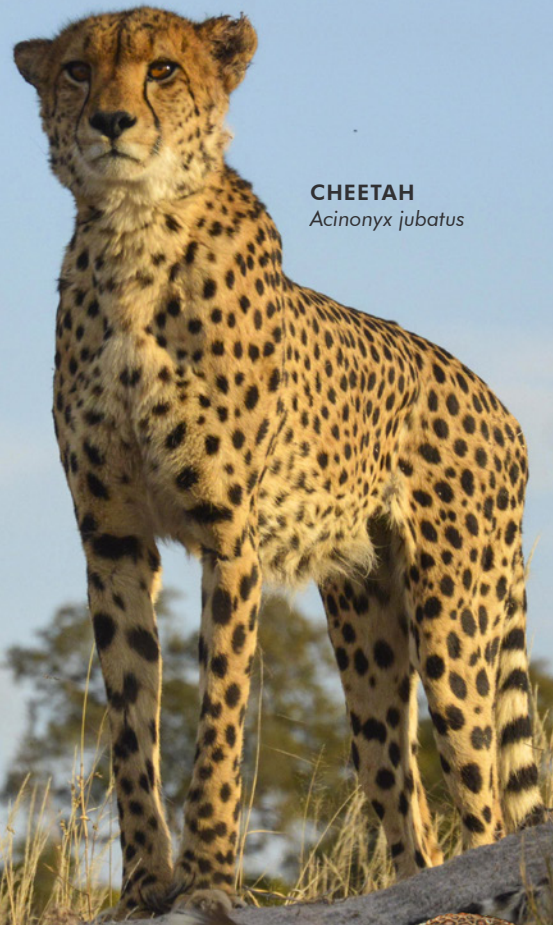
2026 REPORT

Ending the Wildlife Pet Trade

Each year, millions of animals—mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, fish, and others—are taken from the wild and sold as pets. The exotic pet trade strips forests and grasslands of vital pollinators, seed dispersers, and predators—depleting wildlife populations, making disease outbreaks more likely, and causing untold suffering and death, as many animals are transported in horrendous conditions.

WCS is intent on stopping this harmful trade.

Acting on WCS and partners' call for strong action, the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)—the major global organization that monitors endangered species—adopted a motion that recognizes the urgency of bringing the wildlife pet trade under control. WCS will now work with IUCN and nations around the world to set up clear, practical guidelines and tools to regulate pet trade responsibly.



CHEETAH
Acinonyx jubatus



LONG-TAILED MACAQUE
Macaca fascicularis



PANTHER CHAMELEON
Furcifer pardalis



PAINTED BUNTING
Passerina ciris

Thank You

WCS saves wildlife and wild places worldwide through science, conservation action, education, and inspiring people to value nature. Led by our flagship Bronx Zoo, the four zoos and aquarium in New York City open the eyes of millions each year to the wonders of the natural world. We are also the world's largest field-based conservation organization, on the ground in 55+ countries. Thank you for standing with us.

Securing Landmark Wins for At-Risk Wildlife

In the face of growing threats to key species, WCS has helped win stronger protections for a host of wildlife—especially sharks and rays. Trafficking for wildlife and body parts, such as shark fins, has driven many species close to extinction.

In late 2025, over 180 nations voted to enact new international trade policies protecting 70 species of sharks and rays, including trade bans for the world's largest shark, the whale shark, and manta rays. We also won historic safeguards for okapi, Galapagos iguanas, geckos, sloths, and others. This was achieved through CITES, an international treaty that regulates the global trade of wildlife and their products. WCS delegates from around the globe helped ensure decisions were grounded in rigorous, evidence-based science, and learnings from our work in the field. Our experts will now work with governments and communities to put new policies into action.

“We may look back at this moment as the turning point that pulled these shark and ray species back from the brink.”

—LUKE WARWICK
Director, WCS Shark and Ray Conservation



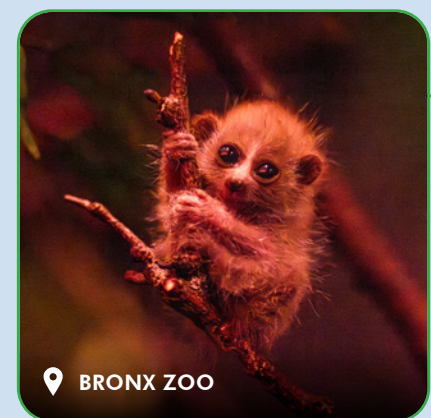
Learn more about these landmark decisions from WCS experts

WCS IMPACT HIGHLIGHTS

01

Celebrating a Baby Pygmy Slow Loris at the Bronx Zoo

In December 2025, WCS welcomed a baby pygmy slow loris at the Bronx Zoo's revitalized World of Darkness. Native to Southeast Asia, these tiny primates with huge eyes are endangered due to habitat loss and poaching for the illegal pet trade. The baby loris is doing well and can be seen on exhibit with its mother.



02

New Corridor Connecting the Andes to the Amazon

With WCS support, the government of Ecuador has established the Llanganates–Yasuní Corridor as a Special Conservation Area. Spanning more than 2,000 square kilometers, the corridor connects the high-altitude Andes with the Amazonian forests of the Yasuní Biosphere Reserve—which will give safe passage to jaguars and preserve the unique biodiversity of both habitats.



03

A New Generation of Gorillas in the Congo Basin

In a rare moment, WCS researchers in Republic of Congo saw a gorilla mother separate from her troop and return carrying her infant. The event signals hope for our long-term research and conservation efforts at Mbeli Bai in Nouabalé-Ndoki National Park, where we are working to monitor and protect gorillas, forest elephants, and other wildlife.



04

Elephants Dramatically Rebounding

The vast Ruaha-Katavi landscape in Tanzania harbors East Africa's most extensive elephant population along with wildlife including lions, African wild dogs, and sable antelopes. WCS works with hundreds of government and community rangers to safeguard wildlife across parks, game reserves, and community forests. Our efforts are paying off: data from WCS monitoring across the landscape's protected areas indicate that elephant numbers are dramatically rebounding.



05

Communities Living Sustainably Among Elephants

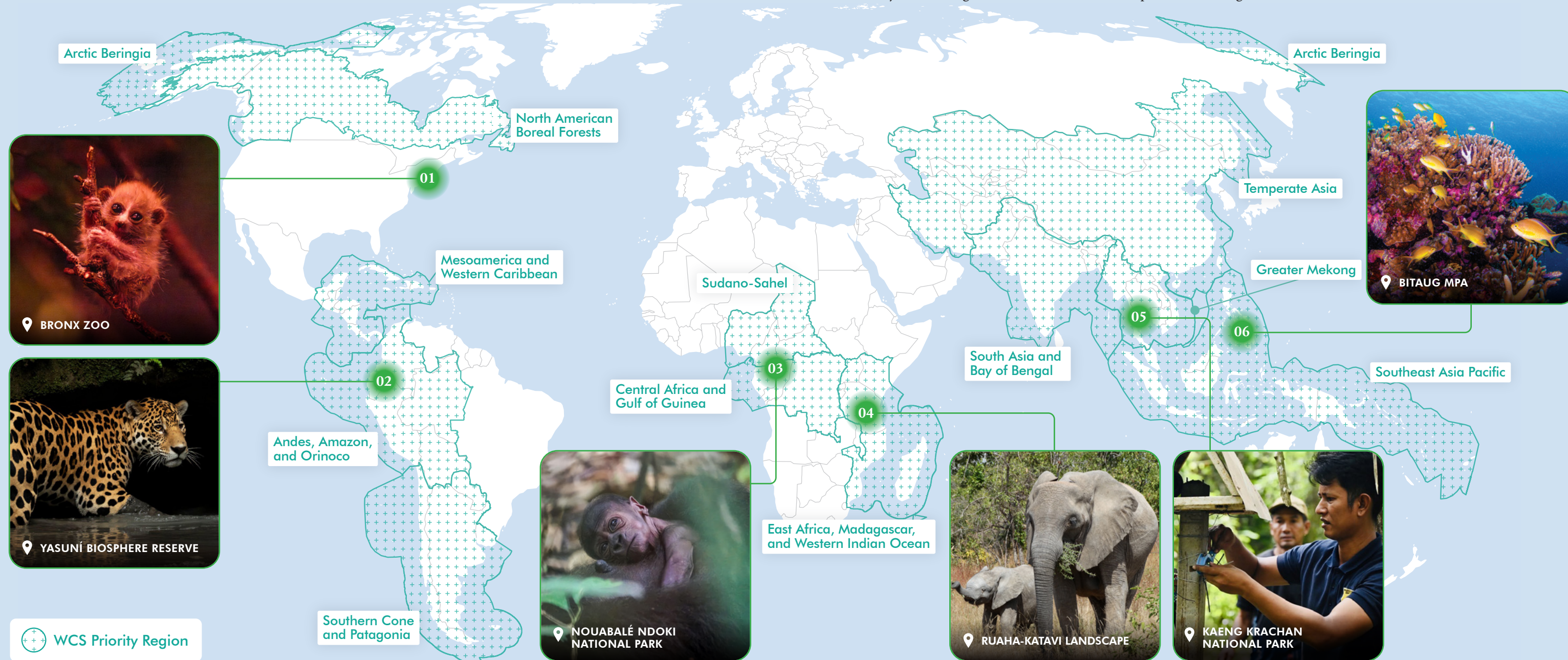
WCS has been working with local communities and government rangers in Kaeng Krachan National Park, Thailand, to reduce human–elephant conflict for over two decades. After testing multiple approaches, we have found that simple techniques—such as semi-permanent fencing, trip-wire alarms, crop guarding, and rapid response of government night-response teams—are the most effective methods for crop protection and have resulted in a steady decline in conflicts between elephants and villagers.



06

New Coral-Studded Marine Protected Area

After 18 years of local community advocacy and with WCS support, the Philippine Province of Siquijor has created the Bitaug Marine Protected Area. It safeguards climate-resilient coral reefs, seagrass meadows, turtle habitat, and provides new protections for sharks and rays. Ecotourism revenues, including from snorkeling and diving, are shared and reinvested into the community's ongoing conservation efforts.



WCS Priority Region

The boundaries and names shown and designations used on this map do not imply official endorsements.

Inspiring Learning at the Bronx Zoo World of Darkness

The reimagined World of Darkness opened at the Bronx Zoo last summer, introducing visitors of all ages to the little-known world of night-dwelling species. The animals adjusted well to their new habitats and the reverse day-night lighting systems, and visitors of all ages have been learning firsthand about these incredible species.

WHAT VISITORS ARE SAYING

- “ I remember coming to World of Darkness as a little girl...so to see it come back is really cool.”
- “ We were quite impressed with the immersive technology and myriad of animals. Thanks for adding the sloth in there, it was the highlight for us. Overall, what a wonderfully enhanced exhibit.”

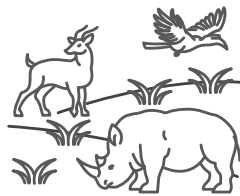


Looking Ahead

Through 2026 and beyond, WCS will:



Scale up protections for Nature's Strongholds, with a particular focus on key landscapes in Africa as well as climate-critical sites in Indonesia and the Andes Amazon region.



Build on the momentum of the World of Darkness by planning for ambitious new exhibits at the Bronx Zoo.



Advance our education programs, including training the next generation of conservationists in the field and at our zoos and aquarium, which have never been more essential.



ON THE COVER

Hoffmann's two-toed sloths spend most of their time hanging upside down in the treetops of Central and South America. WCS safeguards its forest habitats, helps to protect them from illegal wildlife trade, and promotes learning about these animals at the Bronx Zoo's World of Darkness.



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