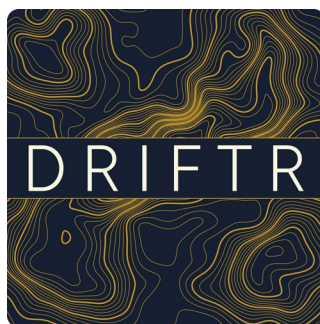




Protected on Paper

What the Living Planet Report 2026 says about verification, enforcement and the distance between reported and real conservation

“[P]rogress must be tracked independently and honestly. Without a clear and credible way to see what countries and other actors are actually doing, what is working, and where things are stuck, commitments drift, momentum fades, and the chance to learn and adjust is lost.”

WWF, Living Planet Report 2026, p. 14

An evidence note for trustees, family offices and philanthropy advisers

4 of 4

recoveries featured in the report
name enforcement or monitoring
(pp. 40–41)

30x30

“counts hectares, not the
biodiversity value of what is
protected” (p. 97)

< 8%

of their historic range still
occupied by tigers after a rise of
over 70% (p. 40)

October 2026

Source: WWF (2026), *Living Planet Report 2026: The Science of Hope*. Every quotation has been checked against the published report. Page numbers refer to the report's printed pages.

1. The case in brief

The Living Planet Report 2026, published by WWF with the Zoological Society of London, will be quoted mostly for its headline: monitored wildlife populations fell by an average of 73% between 1970 and 2022. Further in, the report says a good deal about how conservation results are reported, checked and kept. Five points matter to anyone funding conservation.

1. **Reported progress and real progress can come apart.** The report shows two countries that both meet their 30x30 area targets while global biodiversity keeps falling, and states: “30x30 counts hectares, not the biodiversity value of what is protected.” (p. 97)
2. **Independent checking is part of the report’s own prescription.** “Third, progress must be tracked independently and honestly.” (p. 14) It proposes a tracker that would draw on “a network of in-country experts, researchers and practitioners to assess practical implementation status, progress and obstacles”. (p. 99)
3. **Each recovery the report holds up as a success names enforcement or monitoring.** Tigers: “professionalized ranger units” and “cross-border anti-trafficking work”. Bluefin tuna: “dockside monitoring”. Green turtles: “enforcement against illegal take”. Southern African elephants: “anti-trafficking work, judicial reform and reduced corruption”. (pp. 40–41)
4. **At sea, the report ties recovery to enforcement.** It credits the slower decline of marine populations partly to “regulations and enforcement, as well as electronic monitoring and reporting systems that increase transparency” (p. 24). Marine protected areas rebuild fish stocks, in its words, “when effective protection allows”. (p. 46)
5. **The report calls its own successes fragile.** Tigers “still occupy less than 8% of their historic range”, and holding the bluefin recovery will take “continued vigilance, particularly against illegal and unregulated fishing”. (p. 40)

The limits. The report says nothing about the danger carried by rangers and fisheries officers. Fences, patrol vessels and the state of individual parks do not appear at all. And much of its weight falls on community rights and on changing food, energy and finance systems. Section 9 sets these limits out in full, so the argument stands up when an adviser opens the report and reads it for themselves. Figure 1 adds evidence from other sources on the human cost of front-line protection, and Section 10 covers community enforcement.

2. Reading the source correctly

Who wrote it. WWF publishes the report, and the Zoological Society of London manages the Living Planet Index in partnership with WWF (p. 4). It is best treated as an NGO publication built around a scientific index. Many specific claims carry references to peer-reviewed papers, and the source table at the end of this note lists the reference behind each passage quoted here. Passages without a reference are WWF’s own statements.

What the 73% means. The index follows 35,803 monitored populations of 5,790 vertebrate species (p. 22). The report is explicit: “This doesn’t mean that there are 73% fewer wild animals in total today than in 1970”, and “around half of the studied populations are stable or increasing” (p. 23). Get this wrong and a technical reader stops listening. The correct form is an average decline in the size of monitored populations.

Page numbers in this note are the report’s printed page numbers, which match the PDF.

3. What gets reported and what happens in nature

The clearest statement of the problem is in Box 5.1 (p. 97), which the report adapts from Milner-Gulland et al. (2026). It describes an industrialised country that meets its area targets at home while its imports drive damage abroad: “Country A can report progress while still contributing substantially to deforestation,

pollution and unsustainable extraction in Country B.” The graphic beneath reads: “Both report 30x30 progress. Global biodiversity still declines.” The box then adds: “National reports do not currently assess the cumulative impacts of domestic and international actions, making it difficult to determine whether the overall contribution to global objectives is positive or negative.”

Area is easy to count, so area is what gets reported. The report’s own example shows a target met in hectares while the thing those hectares were meant to protect keeps declining.

The same distance between commitment and delivery runs through the report:

- On the Global Biodiversity Framework: “current implementation is not delivering enough”, and “the global ambition as currently represented by the sum of the parties’ commitments is a fraction of what is required to deliver the GBF targets.” (p. 96)
- On food systems: “More than 130 countries have national-level strategic plans for food system transformation, but commitments have not translated into supportive policies and financial incentives that allow nature-positive production to compete with the incumbent.” (p. 74)
- On reporting by companies, communities and other non-state actors, voluntary reporting through the CBD platform “is incomplete and uncoordinated”, and “Failing to capture whole-of-society approaches leaves gaps in reporting, verification and long-term accountability.” (p. 99)
- On green finance products, the test is whether “sustainability labelling is rigorous enough to be meaningful” or amounts to “superficial rebranding”. (p. 85)

The Amazon Soy Moratorium shows how fast a voluntary commitment can go. Introduced in 2006, it cut the share of soy expansion in the Brazilian Amazon that caused deforestation from nearly 30% to 2% within a decade. Then, in January 2026, “after sustained pressure by local stakeholders and political interests of those who profit from cheap land expansion over natural habitats, major producers and traders withdrew from the agreement” (p. 75). The report uses the case to show “the fragility of voluntary commitments without the necessary policy supports” (p. 74). A measured, published result did not keep the agreement alive once the main parties chose to leave.

4. The report asks for independent checking on the ground

The executive summary names three changes needed to deliver the Global Biodiversity Framework. The third reads:

“Third, progress must be tracked independently and honestly. Without a clear and credible way to see what countries and other actors are actually doing, what is working, and where things are stuck, commitments drift, momentum fades, and the chance to learn and adjust is lost.” (p. 14)

Chapter 5 turns this into a proposal for “an independent mechanism to track and assess national efforts”, modelled on the Climate Action Tracker. The report says this Nature Action Tracker “should be capable of capturing and verifying real-world progress on policy-driven action, identifying obstacles to implementation” and should “draw from a network of in-country experts, researchers and practitioners to assess practical implementation status, progress and obstacles” (p. 99). The aim is to “see what’s working and what isn’t, adapt and reallocate resources where necessary, and hold governments and other actors to account” (p. 98).

The tracker is designed for governments. A trustee funding a single programme has the same problem on a smaller scale. The remedy the report describes for nations, with practitioners in-country checking implementation against claims, is the one DRIFTR applies to individual grants. The report also sets a standard for honesty about results. Real hope, it says, “uses evidence and is honest about what is and isn’t working, and it is willing to revise the pathway when the evidence requires it” (p. 35).

5. Enforcement runs through every recovery the report highlights

The report offers four recoveries as proof that conservation works: wild tigers, Atlantic and Pacific bluefin tuna, green sea turtles and southern African elephants (pp. 40–41). It tells them as stories of hope and collective effort. Read the case descriptions line by line and each one names enforcement, monitoring or both. Two further examples elsewhere in the report follow the same pattern.

Recovery	Result reported	Enforcement and monitoring named in the report	Page
Wild tigers	Up by over 70% between 2010 and 2025, from 3,200 to around 5,700 (camera-trap estimates)	“professionalized ranger units, protected area expansion, cross-border anti-trafficking work”; elsewhere “anti-poaching enforcement” and agency “from rangers to heads of state”	36, 40
Atlantic and Pacific bluefin tuna	Neither now considered overfished	“reduced quotas, size limits, spawning-area protections, and dockside monitoring”; future depends on “continued vigilance, particularly against illegal and unregulated fishing”	40
Green sea turtle	Downlisted from Endangered to Least Concern in 2025	“protection of nesting females and eggs”, “enforcement against illegal take”; nesting counted “at consistently monitored sites”	41
Southern African elephants	Increasing in some places, while declining across much of the wider range	Community-based management “reinforced by anti-trafficking work, judicial reform and reduced corruption”	41
Sea otters	Back in parts of their historic range after near extinction	“a combination of legal protection and translocations”	32
Managed fish stocks	Marine index shows the slowest decline of the three systems (59%)	“regulations and enforcement, as well as electronic monitoring and reporting systems”	24

Table 1. Enforcement and monitoring named in the report’s own recovery cases.

The report sums up what the four main cases share as “a clear goal, a credible pathway, agency exercised at multiple scales, and persistence across decades” (p. 41). Enforcement is missing from that summary, though every case description includes it. A donor who reads only the summary would miss it.

On elephants the report is blunt: “The difference is governance.” (p. 41) Its sentence on anti-trafficking and corruption cites peer-reviewed work, including Hauenstein et al. (2019), published under the title “African elephant poaching rates correlate with local poverty, national corruption and global ivory price”, and Kuiper et al. (2023) on the drivers and facilitators of illegal killing of elephants across 64 African sites. The report names judicial reform alongside anti-trafficking work. Protection in the field depends on what happens after an arrest as much as on the arrest itself.

6. At sea, protection works when it is enforced

Marine populations declined least of the three systems the index tracks: 59% since 1970, against 69% on land and 85% in fresh water (p. 24). The report gives a reason. The marine index “is dominated by fish species, and particularly managed fish stocks”, and:

“Better incentives, regulations and enforcement, as well as electronic monitoring and reporting systems that increase transparency are contributing to recent recoveries and stability following years of decline due to overfishing, and this is reflected in the lower overall decline.” (p. 24)

That sentence cites Hilborn et al. (2020) in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, titled “Effective fisheries management instrumental in improving fish stock status”. The same paragraph carries a warning: “Many other marine fish such as sharks and rays, however, continue to show steep declines, and this is often not apparent in a global average.”

Overharvesting is the main driver of loss in marine systems, according to the IPBES figures the report reproduces (Figure 2.2, p. 43). Fisheries enforcement goes straight at the largest marine threat.

On marine protected areas the wording is exact. Box 3.1 says policies for establishing them “can trigger rapid recovery of fish stocks when effective protection allows populations to reach thresholds for exponential reproduction”, after which spillover creates “economic incentives for continued protection and compliance” (p. 46). The condition is effective protection. A designation draws the boundary; the recovery the box describes depends on what happens inside it.

Alongside consumer campaigns and retailer commitments, the bluefin recovery rested on regional fisheries management that imposed “reduced quotas, size limits, spawning-area protections, and dockside monitoring”. Keeping it “will require resilience management approaches and continued vigilance, particularly against illegal and unregulated fishing” (p. 40). The report also notes that “Fisheries recover faster when local fishing communities help to design and enforce protections” (p. 13).

What the report leaves out. It never mentions patrol vessels, at-sea inspection, vessel tracking or what “effective protection” takes in practice. A protected area boundary at sea is a line on a chart. It becomes protection when someone can detect a vessel inside it, reach it and act, and when the case that follows ends in a sanction. Open vessel-tracking tools such as Global Fishing Watch and Skylight can flag activity inside a designated area, though vessels that switch off their transponders will not show. Desk review can confirm that patrols are funded. Confirming that they happen, and that boardings lead to penalties, takes evidence from the water and from the courts.

This paragraph is DRIFTR’s operational view, drawn from fisheries enforcement work off West Africa and the Guianas. It is not a claim made by the report.

7. Gains are fragile, so vigilance cannot lapse

The report is candid about how easily its successes could be lost. After describing the four recoveries it says:

“Yet these results are fragile. Without continued investment, even species that are the focus of conservation efforts will continue to decline without sustained investment to address the underlying drivers of environmental change that threaten their long-term survival and biodiversity more broadly.”
(p. 42)

The emphasis there is on the underlying drivers, and the sentence cites a peer-reviewed study of governance at the Torre Guaceto marine protected area (Russi, 2020). Even so, the word the report chooses for its best results is “fragile”. Elsewhere:

- Tigers: “The recovery is fragile and tigers still occupy less than 8% of their historic range.” (p. 40)
- Green turtles: “The downlisting is a milestone, not an endpoint”, with several subpopulations still threatened. (p. 41)
- All four recoveries “took decades. They required people to keep working without knowing whether their efforts would succeed, through political setbacks, funding cuts and long stretches when nothing visible seemed to be changing.” (p. 8)
- Single interventions: “isolated actions are rarely enough.” (p. 32)

For a funder, that changes the question. The recoveries in the report took decades of continuous effort, through funding cuts. Any claim of lasting success from a short grant should be read against that, and the years after a grant closes are when patrols, monitoring and prosecutions most need checking.

8. Where losses are steepest, monitoring is thinnest

The report is open about the gaps in its own data. “Some types of species, like charismatic birds and mammals and commercially harvested fish, are better monitored than others.” Species from the tropics, “which have seen steeper declines since 1970”, are less well represented in long-term monitoring than

temperate species (p. 23). In Africa, where the regional index fell by 80%, “Information on freshwater systems remains scarce in the region, so there is an urgent need to expand research and target conservation efforts” (p. 30). And the global index “is a global average, so it hides local details” (p. 7).

The consequence for a donor is direct. Headline indices cannot show whether a particular project is working, and where declines have been steepest, in the tropics, long-term monitoring is weakest. In those places a funder relies most heavily on the implementer’s own account. Independent verification adds the most value there.

9. Where the report does not support the argument

DRIFTR includes counter-evidence on purpose. An argument that claims more than the report says will be taken apart by the first adviser who checks.

It is silent on danger. The word “ranger” appears twice (pp. 36 and 40), both times in lists of what drove tiger recovery. The report does not discuss the risks rangers or fisheries officers face, armed poaching, or violence against enforcement staff. The point that conservation is dangerous work needs its own evidence, set out in Figure 1, and should not be attributed to this report.

It is silent on fences, patrol vessels and paper parks. Protected areas appear only in passing, and the report does not assess whether designated areas are staffed, managed or enforced. Its evidence supports “effective protection” and enforcement as parts of recovery. It does not describe how parks are physically secured.

It leans towards community governance. The executive summary states that “conservation outcomes are stronger where Indigenous Peoples and local communities have legal recognition of their rights and genuine authority over the lands and waters they manage” (p. 13). Chapter 2 counts “criminalization of traditional practices” among the factors that narrow the pathways open to marginalised groups (p. 37). The elephant recovery is credited first to community-based management, with enforcement reinforcing it (p. 41). A case built on fences and wardens alone will be read against these passages. The version the report supports is enforcement carried out with legitimate local governance, as in fisheries where local communities “help to design and enforce protections” (p. 13). Section 10 shows that this version still rests on enforcement.

Its central argument is systemic. “Conservation alone cannot reverse what these three systems produce” (p. 10), meaning energy, food and finance, and “We cannot fix biodiversity loss one species at a time” (p. 42). Field enforcement protects what remains, and the report is clear it cannot reverse the global trend by itself. The claim it does support is narrower: where conservation has worked, the report’s own accounts show enforcement and monitoring were part of it.

Transparency on its own changes little. In the finance chapter: “transparency alone is not enough, just as shining a light on the nature investment gap will not automatically close it” (p. 81). Verification is worth paying for when it changes funding decisions, which is why DRIFTR ties it to milestone-based disbursement.

Read its success stories as claims. WWF is a fundraising organisation, so its accounts of recovery deserve the same independent checking DRIFTR would apply to any implementer. The tiger figures are camera-trap estimates (p. 40); the report does not say whether survey coverage or methods changed between 2010 and 2025, which is the first question an independent reviewer would put to any population trend. Box 5.1, the strongest passage on 30x30, is adapted from Milner-Gulland et al. (2026), which the reference list gives as a preprint.

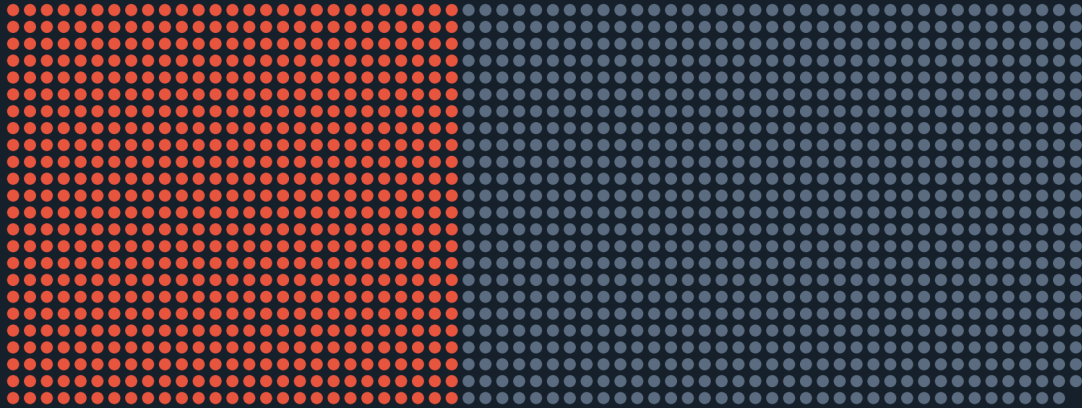
THE FRONT LINE IN NUMBERS

What a hectare count never shows

1,535

rangers died in the line of duty between 2006 and 2021.
Roughly two every week.

Each dot is one ranger



648 killed by people (42.2%)

Poachers, militias, rebels and organised crime groups

887 other line-of-duty deaths

Accidents, wildlife attacks, illness

In the 2024 Roll of Honour, poachers were blamed for 14 of the year's 38 ranger killings, 5 of them timber poachers in Ghana, India and Mexico.

147

rangers died in 40
countries in 2025 to 2026

Homicide was the leading
cause, at 29%

124

land and environmental
defenders killed in 2025

More than a third linked to
organised crime or hitmen.
Seven were Indigenous Guards.

14

fisheries observers
missing or dead at sea
since 2015

Some in circumstances human
rights groups identify as
suspicious

Deaths per 100,000 workers a year

Indicative, from confirmed deaths only

Rangers, all line-of-duty deaths

about 51

Rangers, killed by people

about 15

US workers, all fatal work injuries

3.3

A ranger is more than four times as likely to be killed on duty by another person as the average US worker is to die at work from any cause.

Figure 1. Sources: ranger deaths 2006 to 2021, Galliers et al. (2022), PARKS 28(1); 2024 perpetrators, International Ranger Federation, Roll of Honour 2024; deaths in 2025 to 2026, IRF World Ranger Day release, 31 July 2026; defenders, Global Witness, 16 September 2026; fisheries observers, Association for Professional Observers, reported by SBS News, July 2026; ranger workforce of 286,000, Appleton et al. (2022), Nature Sustainability; US rate, US Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2024. Rates are DRIFTR's indicative calculations from confirmed deaths only, so the true figures are probably higher; the ranger total is a 2022 estimate and the US rate is per full-time worker. Full references and source types are in Table 3.

10. Community control still needs a front line

Section 9 noted that the Living Planet Report leans towards community governance. That does not remove the need for enforcement. It changes who carries it out.

Research on community-managed resources is consistent on this. Elinor Ostrom's design principles for managing shared resources include monitoring and graduated sanctions. A review of 91 studies found the principles well supported, with the strongest support for monitors drawn from the community itself (Cox, Arnold and Villamayor Tomás, 2010). One case in that review makes the paper-versus-ground point on its own. Three forest communities in Maharashtra, India, all had graduated sanctions on paper. Only the community that succeeded enforced them strictly.

The people who do that enforcing face the same violence as state rangers. Seven of the 124 defenders Global Witness recorded killed in 2025 were Indigenous Guards. In Brazil, the Guajajara people's Guardians of the Forest patrol the Arariboia territory against illegal logging and hunting; one of them, Paulo Paulino Guajajara, was killed in 2019 in an alleged ambush by illegal loggers (Mongabay, 2023). The Living Planet Report makes a related point in its own words: fisheries recover faster when local communities "help to design and enforce protections" (p. 13).

One caution. In community systems, enforcement is often social or customary rather than armed, and a small body of research argues that formal sanctions matter less where social ties are strong (Cox et al., 2010). What the evidence supports is that protection depends on rules being enforced. Who enforces them, and how, varies from place to place.

Community control changes who stands on the front line. Someone still has to stand there.

11. Using this note

Lines from the Living Planet Report that hold up

1. WWF's Living Planet Report 2026 says progress "must be tracked independently and honestly", and warns that without it "commitments drift". (p. 14)
2. The report's own illustration of 30x30 states: "30x30 counts hectares, not the biodiversity value of what is protected." (p. 97, adapted from Milner-Gulland et al., 2026)
3. Each of the four recoveries the report celebrates involved enforcement or monitoring: ranger units and anti-trafficking work for tigers, dockside monitoring for bluefin tuna, enforcement against illegal take for green turtles, and anti-trafficking work and judicial reform for southern African elephants. (pp. 40–41)
4. The report says marine protected areas rebuild fish stocks "when effective protection allows". (p. 46)
5. The report calls its own success stories fragile, and says the bluefin tuna recovery needs "continued vigilance, particularly against illegal and unregulated fishing". (pp. 40, 42)

Lines from the front-line data

1. At least 1,535 rangers died in the line of duty between 2006 and 2021, roughly two a week, and 42.2% of those deaths were homicides. (Galliers et al., 2022, PARKS)
2. In 2025 to 2026 the International Ranger Federation recorded 147 ranger deaths in 40 countries, with homicide the leading cause at 29%. (IRF, 31 July 2026)
3. Community-managed resources depend on monitoring and sanctions, and community guards are killed too: seven Indigenous Guards were among the defenders killed in 2025. (Cox et al., 2010; Global Witness, 2026)

What not to attribute to the Living Planet Report

- Claims about ranger danger, fences or patrol vessels. Use the sources for Figure 1.
- “73% fewer animals”. The figure is an average decline in the size of monitored populations.
- Opposition to community-led conservation. The report supports it strongly.
- A finding that enforcement by itself can reverse biodiversity loss.

Questions for trustees

1. Beyond the area covered, what is the condition of what is protected, and which threats are present?
2. Who enforces protection, under what authority, and how is their presence verified?
3. How is the population or habitat trend measured, and has the method changed during the reporting period?
4. What pays for enforcement and monitoring after the grant ends?
5. Are the rangers, guards or community monitors trained, equipped and insured for the threats they face, and who supports their families if they are killed?

Source tables

Living Planet Report 2026 (Sections 1 to 9)

Each passage quoted from the report, the reference the report gives for it, and the type of source behind it. “Report statement” means the passage carries no reference and is WWF’s own text.

Passage	Page	Reference given in the report	Source type
Box 5.1, including “30x30 counts hectares...”	97	Milner-Gulland et al. (2026)	Academic preprint
“current implementation is not delivering enough”; commitments “a fraction of what is required”	96	None for these sentences; CBD (2025) for the paragraph on national strategies	Report statement; official (CBD)
“More than 130 countries have national-level strategic plans...”	74	UN Food Systems Coordination Hub (2025); Dean et al. (2023), Conservation Letters	Official (UN); peer-reviewed
Non-state reporting “incomplete and uncoordinated”	99	Widerberg et al. (2021), PBL Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency	Official (government agency)
Amazon Soy Moratorium results and 2026 withdrawal	74–75	Heilmayr et al. (2020), Nature Food; Gibbs et al. (2015), Science; de Oliveira et al. (2026), Science	Journal articles
“progress must be tracked independently and honestly”	14	None	Report statement
Nature Action Tracker proposal	99	Milner-Gulland et al. (2026)	Academic preprint
Tiger recovery, ranger units, range under 8%	36, 40	Global Tiger Recovery Program (2011); World Bank (2016); Global Tiger Forum (2024); Sanderson et al. (2025) for range	Official and intergovernmental; peer-reviewed (range)
Bluefin tuna recovery and dockside monitoring	40	IUCN (2021) news release; news items and NGO press releases; peer-reviewed studies. The “continued vigilance” sentence carries no reference	Mixed
Green turtle downlisting and enforcement	41	IUCN Red List assessment (Wallace and Broderick, 2025); Wallace et al. (2013), Ecosphere	Official (IUCN); peer-reviewed
Southern African elephants, anti-trafficking, corruption	41	Edwards et al. (2024), PNAS; Child and Barnes (2010); Gruber (2010); Kuiper et al. (2023); Hauenstein et al. (2019)	Peer-reviewed

Passage	Page	Reference given in the report	Source type
Marine enforcement and electronic monitoring	24	Hilborn et al. (2020), PNAS; Hilborn et al. (2022), Fish and Fisheries	Peer-reviewed
Overharvest as the main marine driver	43	IPBES Global Assessment (2019)	Official (intergovernmental science body)
MPAs recover stocks “when effective protection allows”	46	Lester et al. (2009), Marine Ecology Progress Series; Di Lorenzo et al. (2016), Journal for Nature Conservation	Peer-reviewed
“Yet these results are fragile”	42	Russi (2020), Marine Policy	Peer-reviewed
Monitoring bias and the meaning of the 73%	23	None in the box; readers are referred to the LPI 2026 technical report (ZSL)	Report statement
Community rights and conservation outcomes	13, 37	None on p. 13; p. 37 cites Garnett et al. (2018), Nature Sustainability, and Dawson et al. (2021), Ecology and Society	Report statement; peer-reviewed
“transparency alone is not enough”	81	None	Report statement

Table 2. Passages quoted from the Living Planet Report, the references it attaches to them, and source type.

Sources beyond the report (Figure 1 and Section 10)

Each source was read in full or in the relevant section before its figures were used.

Source	Used for	Source type
Galliers C, Cole R, Singh R et al. (2022). Conservation casualties: an analysis of on-duty ranger fatalities (2006–2021). PARKS 28(1). doi:10.2305/IUCN.CH.2022.PARKS-28-1CG.en	Ranger deaths 2006–2021, homicide share, under-recording	Peer-reviewed (IUCN journal); authors from the IRF and WWF
International Ranger Federation, Roll of Honour 2024 (causes of death, June 2023 to May 2024)	Perpetrators named for 38 homicides	Primary record (ranger federation)
International Ranger Federation, World Ranger Day press release, 31 July 2026	147 deaths in 2025 to 2026, 29% homicide	Primary record (ranger federation)
Appleton MR et al. (2022). Protected area personnel and ranger numbers are insufficient to deliver global expectations. Nature Sustainability. doi:10.1038/s41893-022-00970-0	286,000 rangers worldwide (denominator for the rate)	Peer-reviewed; figures taken from the Leibniz-IZW press release of 20 October 2022
US Bureau of Labor Statistics, Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries Summary, 2024 (released 19 February 2026)	All-worker fatal injury rate, 3.3 per 100,000 FTE	Official statistics
Global Witness, press release on its annual defenders report, 16 September 2026	124 killed in 2025; organised crime link; Indigenous Guards	Investigative NGO
Cox M, Arnold G, Villamayor Tomás S (2010). A review of design principles for community-based natural resource management. Ecology and Society 15(4): 38	Monitoring and sanctions in community governance; Maharashtra case	Peer-reviewed
SBS News, republished by PINA, 13 July 2026, citing the Association for Professional Observers	At least 14 fisheries observers missing or dead since 2015	Journalism citing a professional association
Mongabay, K. Mendes (20 November 2023)	Guardians of the Forest; Paulo Paulino Guajajara	Journalism

Table 3. Sources used in Figure 1 and Section 10.

Source document. WWF (2026). Living Planet Report 2026: The Science of Hope. WWF, Gland, Switzerland. ISBN 978-2-88085-322-8.



Investment-Grade Due Diligence for Conservation Capital

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Provided for discussion purposes.