



Activity – Taking it further

Here are few more things for you to think about if this topic has interested you, and some more resources for you to use.

Biodiversity Hotspots are important in identifying areas where conservation efforts should be focused, but they do not tell us anything about what we should actually do in these regions to best conserve biodiversity. Use the websites of the conservation organisations you have already looked at to explore management strategies that have been employed in these regions (and others). What geographical knowledge and understanding can be used to inform these management strategies? Think about your understanding of how geographical understanding of ecosystems work (e.g. food webs, trophic levels, keystone species) – how is this knowledge important in improving the chances of conservation projects being successful?

The Biodiversity Hotspots concept was originally designed for use at the global scale, but can it be successfully applied at more local scales? For example, how could the idea be used as part of efforts to conserve biodiversity in the UK? Search online for national-level biodiversity hotspot projects – the Australian government has one for example.

In this topic, we have implicitly assumed that we should be conserving biodiversity. However, you may never have stopped to think about why we should make so much effort to prevent extinction and habitat loss. There may be moral reasons, but there are many other arguments too. The link below takes you to a video of environmental ecologist Pavan Sukhdev discussing the economic value of biodiversity..

https://www.ted.com/talks/pavan_sukhdev_what_s_the_price_of_nature

Another very interesting example of a spatial pattern of biodiversity is the pattern of species richness on islands, which has been developed into “The Theory of Island Biogeography”. There is an excellent popular science book “The Song of the Dodo” by David Quammen which investigates broad questions of biogeography, including island biogeography, and how they are relevant to the current extinction crisis. It is available in paperback and there is a Kindle edition, and is well worth reading!