

Guide To Preserving Sacred Land Near You



Jimmy Videle ~ Source: YouTube

01-09-2025 ~ Preserving biodiversity is among the most urgent issues of our time, and it needs to be addressed regionally to succeed.

Anthropogenic climate change and biodiversity loss are the most pressing issues for our planet. Carbon dioxide emissions in the atmosphere continue to [rise](#) due to the burning of fossil fuels and land use change, with the latter occurring primarily in the form of animal agriculture and growing crops to feed livestock. Biodiversity loss is greatly enhanced by these climate changes, [causing catastrophic threats to nature](#). Because these unprecedented climate changes make modeling future scenarios relatively impossible, region-by-region data is the only reliable tool, so conservation efforts must begin regionally.

Biodiversity comes from the term “biological diversity.” Many biologists have followed the most simple and concise [definition](#): “The totality of genes, species, and ecosystems in a region.” Biodiversity in one region can be very different from another, even within the same state, province, or country, and it is necessary to preserve and protect it all. Protecting Earth’s biodiversity is essential because it ensures the stability of ecosystems, which provide vital resources like clean air, water, and food. Biodiversity also supports resilience against environmental changes and diseases, securing a sustainable future for all life.

Throughout human history, sacred places have been identified for their importance to the people living there. Looking at that notion from a broader animist perspective—where all things, including animals, plants, rocks, and

weather, are believed to have a soul or *anima*—it would seem that all those beings who have chosen to live in any particular region would find them sacred. Looking at our world from this non-dominant, ultimately equal viewpoint may help our human consciousness perceive what and who protecting biodiversity is actually for.

Indigenous groups understand the importance of protecting nature and biodiversity more fundamentally than Western societies. These groups, which have been stewards of nature for millennia, understand that all of Earth's creatures have the unalienable right to live on this planet just as we do.

“Indigenous Peoples are defenders of Mother Earth. For centuries, our values and practices have sustained and cared for the environment and kept biodiversity [in] balance. Our life, our culture, and our identity are linked intimately to our lands and territories, [and] to the environment. Our environment shaped and shapes our ways of living,” [said](#) Beverly Longid, the South East Asia sub-regional representative of Indigenous Peoples to the Executive Council of Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact. “Colonialism and capitalism have wrought havoc upon Mother Earth, eroding our symbiotic relationship with the land. It has cut down our forests. It has dammed our rivers. It has ravaged our mountains. All these at the expense of Indigenous Peoples' lives and livelihoods and other vulnerable communities to satisfy the greed of big businesses tied with governments for profit.”

In December 2022, the [Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework](#) was adopted by 196 countries at the [15th UN Biodiversity Conference \(COP15\)](#). Every country on Earth decided that biodiversity was crucial to the planet's future. [Twenty-three targets](#) were adopted to reach them by 2030. The targets included planning and managing all areas to reduce biodiversity loss; restoring 30 percent of all degraded ecosystems; conserving 30 percent of lands, waters, and seas; halting species extinction; reducing the introduction of invasive alien species by 50 percent; reducing pollution levels; enhancing green spaces and urban planning.

Many consider this framework the boldest action proposed for biological diversity in human history. Yet, two years later, at [COP16](#) in November 2024, two main issues remained unresolved:

1. No decision was made on the financing model to protect biodiversity. The targets adopted in 2022 are estimated to cost \$700 billion.
2. No monitoring mechanism was decided to track progress and ensure each country complied with the biodiversity goals.

Since the framework is non-binding, how will countries enact the targets? Will they try to fulfill their goals because it is the right thing to do for the planet, or will governments continue to pander to their tax base and corporate lobbyists?

According to a [2024 article](#) published in Nature by Senior and her colleagues, “The need for greater attention to biodiversity conservation is unequivocal and urgent. The world is entering its sixth mass extinction event, the first that is attributable to one species: *Homo Sapiens*. Biodiversity loss is a global concern...”

Where I live in Québec, the provincial government appears to be taking the matter seriously with their [2030 Nature Plan](#). They have partnered with nongovernmental organizations [SNAP Québec](#) and [Nature Québec](#) to seek out public lands that need biodiversity protection.

Québec is an interesting model for conserving biodiversity. It holds 3 percent of Earth’s [freshwater reserves](#) and is home to 21 percent—or 1.2 million square kilometers—of [Canada’s total boreal forest area](#). More than 500 species of [flora](#) and 175 species of [fauna](#) are at risk of extinction.

In June 2024, I formally partnered with the two aforementioned NGOs, having outlined a biodiversity hotspot in Boileau, Québec, that spans 3,060 hectares (7,560 acres). The joint public and private land conservation initiative is home to over 550 species of flora, fauna, and insects, of which 35 are at risk of extinction, according to the [IUCN Red List of Threatened Species](#). The area will be free of development, logging, and mining, and we will also work to ban hunting. The area is the territory of the Eastern Wolf, which the Canadian government has recently designated as a [threatened species](#).

Due to our team’s diligence, the municipality of Boileau and the county of Papineau signed their support, a prerequisite for the initial collaboration stage. The Minister of Environment is scheduled to conduct a regional assessment in autumn 2025. If successful, the Boileau Biodiversity Reserve will be completed by autumn 2027.

In 2023, I spent 700 hours documenting biodiversity and conservation research, all captured in the new book [*Preserving Our Sacred Lands*](#). My experiences have made it more apparent that there is no time to lose.

In the article "[2024 State of the Climate Report: Perilous Times on Planet Earth](#)," the authors put it bluntly:

We are on the brink of an irreversible climate disaster. This is a global emergency beyond any doubt. Much of the very fabric of life on Earth is imperiled. We are stepping into a critical and unpredictable new phase of the climate crisis. For many years, scientists, including a group of more than 15,000, have sounded the alarm about the impending dangers of climate change driven by increasing greenhouse gas emissions and ecosystem change... We find ourselves amid an abrupt climate upheaval, a dire situation never before encountered in the annals of human existence. We have now brought the planet into climatic conditions never witnessed by us or our prehistoric relatives within our genus, *Homo*.

It is time to hold politicians accountable. It is going to take community scientists. It is going to take us all.

Thankfully, it is relatively easy to begin your journey in understanding and preserving sacred land—and the biodiversity it supports—close to where you live:

- *Understand Sacred Lands*

— Sacred lands often hold cultural, spiritual, or historical importance to indigenous communities or religious groups.

— They can include burial grounds, ceremonial sites, temples, or natural landmarks like mountains or rivers.

- *Become a Curious Naturalist*

— Train your mind on the principles of nature and conservation. Read works by respected naturalists and conservationists like [Aldo Leopold](#), [John Muir](#), [Henry David Thoreau](#), [Rachel Carson](#), [Dian Fossey](#), [Sylvia Earle](#), [Winona LaDuke](#), [Jane Goodall](#), and [Vandana Shiva](#).

- *Research Online*

- Search for sacred lands in your area by combining terms like “sacred lands near [your location]” or “Indigenous sacred sites [your area].”
- Check resources like the [Sacred Land Film Project](#) or the [Native Land Digital Map](#), which can help identify Indigenous territories and culturally significant areas.
- Check community science databases like [eBird](#) and [iNaturalist](#) to locate citizen scientists and biodiversity hotspots near you.
- Learn which at-risk species inhabit your region through governmental publications like [Canada’s List of Wildlife Species at Risk](#), the [U.S. Fish & Wildlife Endangered Species Library](#), and the [International Union for Conservation of Nature Red List of Threatened Species](#). Although all uninhabited lands should be protected, most conservation organizations will be more willing to collaborate if they contain vulnerable or endangered species of flora, fauna, fungi, and insects.

- Consult and Visit Local Resources

- Visit local libraries, historical societies, science and cultural centers, universities, parks, nonprofit environmental groups, and museums. These institutions often have books, maps, research, and other information about nearby sacred or historically significant sites, the local environment, and indigenous or endangered species.
- Parks departments often have information about species that reside in or visit their locations.
- National parks, monuments, or conservation areas often encompass sacred lands. Contact the park office or read the signage to learn about their cultural significance.
- If applicable, contact local Indigenous groups or tribes to learn about the sacred lands in your area. If you visit, be respectful and seek permission.
- Contact religious or spiritual organizations. Some sacred sites are associated with specific religious traditions. Local temples, churches, or mosques can guide you to significant places.

- Volunteer

— Get involved with local, state, or regional organizations working on conservation projects.

— Join a citizen science project with [Zooniverse](#), [SciStarter](#), or [CitizenScience.gov](#).

- *Document*

— Record your observations of species and sacred sites through databases and spreadsheets.

— Share your journey through social media and in your local community. The more of us there are, the more people will want to be involved.

Let this be when historians look back and say, “They got it right. The people of the 2020s decided to protect the Earth and all beings forever.” We only have one planet and need to do everything we can to protect it.

By Jimmy Videle

Author Bio: Jimmy Videle is a farmer, naturalist, and researcher. He is the author of [The Veganic Grower’s Handbook: Cultivating Fruits, Vegetables, and Herbs from Urban Backyard to Rural Farmyard](#) and [Preserving Our Sacred Lands](#). He is also the co-founder of [NAVCS-Certified Veganic](#) and a contributor to the [Observatory](#). His writing has appeared in CounterPunch, Countercurrents, and LA Progressive, among others.

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