**ACTIVITY: Threats to biodiversity**

**Activity idea**

In this activity, students research three aspects of biodiversity loss – direct species loss, habitat loss and pests and weeds.

By the end of this activity, students should be able to:

* discuss aspects of biodiversity and threats to it
* carry out online research and share ideas
* understand some ways biodiversity loss is being tackled in New Zealand.

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**Introduction/background**

For an introduction to the idea of biodiversity in New Zealand, read the article [Biodiversity](http://link.sciencelearn.org.nz/resources/1454-biodiversity). This has links to other New Zealand websites relating to the topic.

Students can then work in groups to research three of the main aspects of biodiversity loss.

**What you need**

* Access to the internet

**What to do**

1. Divide the class into research groups. Allocate each group one of the ways in which New Zealand has suffered biodiversity loss:

* Direct species loss
* Habitat loss
* Pests and weeds.

1. Each group should use links within the Science Learning Hub and links to external resources to find out:

* the timescale of the loss
* the historic reasons behind the loss
* the scale of the loss
* measures that are in place to prevent further biodiversity loss in that way – this might include finding out about a local or national project to safeguard biodiversity.

1. Groups will then present their findings to the rest of the class.
2. As a class, discuss why biodiversity is important – such as culturally, ethically, ecologically (for example, food webs) and for bioprospecting (the search for compounds useful to humans).