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# **Invasive Species As The Main Threat To Biodiversity In The Galapagos**

## **Introduction**

Invasive species are the main threat to biodiversity in the Galapagos. Its presence is linked to the growth of the population, tourism and the flow of maritime and air transport, increased by the demand for resources by the inhabitants of the islands. Invasive species are established accidentally or intentionally at a site outside their natural range of distribution and cause damage to native ecosystems and species.

There are 500 species of insects and more than 750 species of plants introduced to the islands by humans. There have also been 36 species of vertebrates, including fish, frogs, reptiles, birds and mammals such as goats, pigs and dogs.

The introduction of invasive species has been identified as the second most important reason for global biodiversity loss (IUCN), for the damage it causes to biological productivity, habitat structure and species composition. Due to the steady increase in human activities over the past 30 years, maritime traffic has increased, which means a greater risk of possible transmission of species from one region to another.

## **Problem**

The Charles Darwin Foundation warned on Wednesday, April 10, 2019, that the state of conservation of natural capital in the Galapagos archipelago may be affected in the coming years, after a study found that there are ten times more species invaders of what was believed. The impact of marine litter on our archipelago, one of the best-preserved in the world, is more serious. Scientists from the Charles Darwin Foundation and technicians from the Galapagos National Park have detected that non-native species are arriving at the islands using these wastes as transport that are pushed by the currents. (Appendix 1-2)

## **Solutions**

The Ecuadorian government has a fund for the control of invasive species. 'It is a mechanism that allows organizations that are working in the Galapagos to present projects for the eradication of these species and to access the fund that can finance this type of initiative,' explained Santiago Silva, National Director of Biodiversity of the Ministry of the Environment of Ecuador.

Within this management plan, which is projected for a decade, guidelines for the coordination of actions between public and private institutions to address the threat of invasive species in Galapagos ecosystems and the planning of strategies to prevent their dispersion and new introductions. (El Universo)

## **Recommendations**

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- Improve prevention standards as much as possible, so that the mechanisms for finding a non-indigenous species are more effective.
  - Controlling tourism levels in the Galapagos Islands.
  - Trying to give another use to invasive species, such as not only killing goats but taking advantage of it by marketing their meat, so they could have more income.

## Personal Recommendation

Try to give an extra advantage to the native species that are being affected by invasive species, such as more food or artificial nests as in the zoo. (Appendix)

## Bibliography

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