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NOT EVALUATED	DATA DEFICIENT	LEAST CONCERN	NEAR THREATENED	< VULNERABLE >	ENDANGERED	CRITICALLY ENDANGERED	EXTINCT IN THE WILD	EXTINCT
NE	DD	LC	NT	VU	EN	CR	EW	EX



Geographical range

Species of the Day: European Bison

The **European Bison**, *Bison bonasus*, is listed as 'Vulnerable' on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species™. It is the largest herbivore in Europe and, historically, was distributed throughout western, central, and south-eastern Europe and the Caucasus.

By the end of the 19th century, the European Bison was close to extinction, with only two wild populations remaining. Habitat degradation and fragmentation due to agricultural activity, forest logging, and unlimited hunting and poaching were the primary reasons for the decrease and extinction of European Bison populations.

As a result of captive breeding, reintroductions, and intensive conservation management, the total population of free-ranging bison has now increased. The captive population is therefore extremely important as a gene reservoir for increasing numbers in the wild. Re-introductions to forests in Belarus, Poland, Russia, Slovakia, Lithuania and the Ukraine, have been extremely successful. The saving of the bison has undoubtedly been a success, but further action is essential in order to continue protecting the existing population.

www.iucnredlist.org
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