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# New fears for species extinctions

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Scientists say nations have not honoured commitments

**Scientists have warned of an alarming increase in the extinction of animal species, because of threats to biodiversity and ecosystems.**

The threats are posed by pollution, climate change and urban spread.

The comments come two days ahead of a meeting of the Diversitas group of global experts on biodiversity in the South African city of Cape Town.

Group members say world leaders have failed to honour commitments on reducing the loss of biodiversity.

## **Rivers warning**

These latest warnings are stark.

They point to statistics that demonstrate that the extinction rates of animal species are much higher than had been predicted only a few years ago.

The worst affected - according to the scientists from the Diversitas group of biodiversity experts - are freshwater species like fish, frogs, turtles and crocodiles.

The scientists warn that these freshwater species are becoming extinct six times faster than their terrestrial and marine cousins.

Some of the group's experts predict that by 2025 not a single river in China will reach the sea - except during floods.

The members of Diversitas are meeting from Tuesday in Cape Town to come up with new goals to slow down the extinction rates.

They lay the blame on these increased threats to animal species on world leaders.

The leaders, they say, have failed to implement the policies needed to make good on their commitments - drafted at the Earth Summit in Johannesburg seven years ago - to

significantly reduce the loss of biodiversity by 2010.