



Oct 7, 2019  
By Kiley Price

Oct 7, 2019

By Kiley Price

**Editor's Note:** News about conservation and the environment is made every day, but some of it can fly under the radar. In a recurring feature, Conservation News shares three stories from the past week that you should know about.

## [1. Ocean cleanup device successfully collects plastic for the first time](#)

A large floating boom is helping collect plastic from one of the most polluted areas in the Pacific Ocean.

**The Story:** In the [“Great Pacific Garbage Patch”](#) — a debris-filled ocean area between Hawai‘i and California — a 600 meter-long (2,000 ft) floating device is successfully trapping plastic that will be removed and recycled in December, reported [Daniel Boffey](#) for The Guardian. Along with large plastic and waste, the boom barrier will also collect microplastics in a 3-meter (10-ft) screen below it.

**The Big Picture:** Each year, [8 million metric tons of plastic](#) are dumped into the ocean. Marine life often confuses plastic for prey, suffering from digestive problems and even death after swallowing plastic debris, while other fish get [trapped in discarded fishers’ nets](#). While this floating device and other cleanup systems can help remove existing plastic pollution, keeping it out of the ocean in the first place — by drastically [reducing consumption of single-use plastics](#) — is critical to protect the health of the ocean and marine life.

Read the full story [here](#).

## [2. We're pulling tuna out of the ocean at unprecedented – and unsustainable – rates](#)

Tuna are being fished from the ocean at extremely high rates, according to a [new study](#).

**The Story:** A study published in [Fisheries Research](#) determined that tuna fishing has increased by 1,000 percent in the last 60 years, reported [Clare Leschin-Hoar](#) for NPR. Humans are taking more tuna from the oceans than ever before, the study reveals, pulling almost 6 million metric tons of tuna from the oceans every year.

**The Big Picture:** "Everywhere tuna swim, they're being pursued by industrial fisheries," said [Shana Miller](#), the director of the Global Tuna Conservation Project at the Ocean Foundation. Industrial tuna fishing now spans between 55 to 90 percent of the global oceans, putting increased pressure on certain tuna populations. Many coastal communities rely on tuna for their livelihood, but this rate of overfishing could drive some tuna species to extinction.

Read the full story [here](#).

## [3. Wildlife trade entangles nearly a fifth of the planet's vertebrate animals](#)

One out of every five terrestrial animals is exchanged internationally in the global wildlife trade, a [recent study](#) says.

**The Story:** In the first major global estimate of its kind, a [new study](#) revealed that about 18 percent of the planet's known terrestrial vertebrate animals are part of the wildlife trade, reported [Rachel Nuwer](#) for Scientific American. The multibillion-dollar wildlife trade industry – which has pushed species such as [pangolins to near extinction](#) – has become increasingly accessible through expanded trade networks and social media, quickly connecting buyers and sellers in different countries.

**The Big Picture:** "What's surprising and important about this work is that, for the first time, we know the sheer magnitude of the global wildlife trade," says [Brett Scheffers](#), a conservation biologist at the University of Florida and lead author of the study. The bleak findings confirm the pervasiveness of the global wildlife trade – and could even help to predict what species are likely to be trafficked next. The authors of this study were able to project an additional 3,196 species that are at risk of entering the market, which could help organizations and governments better protect them.

Read the full story [here](#).

*Kiley Price is a staff writer for Conservation International. Want to read more stories like this? Sign up for email updates [here](#). Donate to Conservation International [here](#).*

*Cover image: Pangolins are the most trafficked animal species in the world. (© Conor Wall)*

*Link: <https://www.conservation.org/blog/ocean-cleanup-tuna-in-trouble-wildlife-trade-3-stories-you-may-have-missed>*