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ESA Position Statement on the Endangered Species

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The Entomological Society of America (ESA) advocates the following positions regarding the importance of reauthorizing the Endangered Species Act of 1973.

Preserving Biological Diversity is of Paramount Importance

Biological diversity is the fabric of biological science and provides our only basis of comparison and understanding in biology. This diversity is necessary for the functioning of all ecosystems and its loss disturbs the interdependence of all species in these ecosystems. Loss of diversity is the most irreversible action of human encroachment on the environment.

The importance of preserving biological diversity reaches far beyond the jungles of foreign countries. It is economically prudent for future advances in agriculture, industry, pharmacology, the medical sciences, and genetic engineering to maintain this diversity. Insects and other arthropods account for the majority of macroscopic life on this planet. Preservation of one insect may save plants and other animals dependent on the same habitat or survival.

Legislation Will Ensure Future Existence of Ecosystem Diversity

ESA urges the U.S. Congress to reauthorize the Endangered Species Act of 1973, to pass amendments that broaden the number of ecosystems protected under the act, and to ensure sufficient funding is made available for its full implementation.

Animals and plants are an essential aspect of our nation's natural heritage and legacy. The Endangered Species Act is among the most important and effective legislative acts protecting this heritage. The act also reflects our nation's commitment to biological preservation worldwide. It is held in high regard internationally because it not only seeks to protect imperiled plants and animals, but also emphasizes plans for their recovery.

Reauthorization of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 will secure the future existence of diverse ecosystems worldwide.

The Entomological Society of America is the largest organization in the world serving the professional and scientific needs of entomologists and people in related disciplines. Founded in 1889, ESA today has more than 7,000 members worldwide affiliated with educational institutions, health agencies, private industry, and

government. Members, many of whom utilize collections directly or indirectly but all of whom understand their importance, include researchers, teachers, extension educators, administrators, marketing representatives, research technicians, consultants, students, and hobbyists. For more information, visit <http://www.entsoc.org>.

(Originally published in 1997. March 2002 Update: The reauthorization of the Endangered Species Act failed in 1998 due to a stalemate in Congress. Since then, to the Society's knowledge, no bill on the Endangered Species Act has reached the floor of the House or the Senate.)