**Glossary of Terms used throughout the Units**

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| Biodiversity | 1. Biodiversity is a term used to describe the full mix of life on Earth. From the tiniest insects to the tallest trees—and everything in between. It even includes us—human beings—though we tend to forget we are part of the natural world. 2. **Biodiversity is the foundation of the natural systems that produce clean air, drinkable water, a healthy climate, medicines, and food.**Biodiversity also serves as a natural barrier against many diseases, including diseases that can turn into pandemics. *International Fund for Animal Welfare 2022* 3. **Biodiversity is the variety of all living things on Earth, including plants, animals and microorganisms. It means that there are many different types of living things in the world and they all play an important role in keeping our planet healthy. Think of it like a big puzzle with many different pieces, each one representing a different kind of living thing. Without all of the pieces, the puzzle wouldn’t be complete.**   [*https://www.wilderness.org.au/protecting-nature/biodiversity-and-extinction*](https://www.wilderness.org.au/protecting-nature/biodiversity-and-extinction)  *Quick video explaining biodiversity in terms of Australian wildlife*  *Wilderness.org.au retrieved Jan2023* |
| Biome | an area classified according to the species that live in that location. Temperature range, soil type, and the amount of light and water are unique to a particular place and form the niches for specific species allowing scientists to define the biome. However, scientists disagree on how many biomes exist. Some count six (forest, grassland, freshwater, marine, desert, and tundra), others eight (separating two types of forests and adding tropical savannah), and still others are more specific and count as many as 11 biomes. Nat. *Geog. Society 2023* |
| Climate | describes the average weather conditions of a particular place over a 30 year period. *Nat.Geog. Society 2023* |
| Critically Endangered | A species is classified as critically endangered when its population has declined at least 90 percent and the cause of the decline is known. *Nat.Geog. Society 2023*  The species is at extremely high risk of extinction in the wild. |
| Endangered | An endangered species is a type of organism that is threatened by extinction. 50%-70% population decline. *Nat.Geog. Society 2023*The species is at very high risk of extinction in the wild.  Endangered means that there are very few of a certain kind of animal or plant left in the world. They might be in danger of becoming extinct, which means they might not be around anymore. |
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| Ecology | the study of the environment and helps us understand how organisms live with each other in unique physical environments. *Nat. Geog. Society 2023* |
| Ecosystem | An ecosystem is a geographic area where plants, animals, and other organisms, as well as weather and landscapes, work together to form a bubble of life. *Nat. Geog. Society 2023* |
| Environment | 1. the surroundings or conditions in which a person, animal, or plant lives or operates. 2. the natural world, as a whole or in a particular geographical area, especially as affected by human activity. *Nat.Geog. Society 2023* |
| Granite Belt | The Granite Belt is a region that gets its name from the type of rock found in the area, which is granite. It is not clear who named the region specifically, but it is likely that the name came about due to the prevalence of granite in the area. Granite is a type of rock that is formed deep beneath the earth's surface, and it is made up of a variety of minerals including feldspar, quartz and mica. As the granite cooled and solidified, it was pushed up to the surface by the tectonic activity and erosion over time exposed the granite rock. The granite belt region of Queensland is known for its unique landscape and natural beauty, which is characterized by the granite outcrops and cliffs, making it a popular tourist destination. |
| Habitat | **a place where an organism makes its home**. A habitat meets all the environmental conditions an organism needs to survive. For an animal, that means everything it needs to find and gather food, select a mate, and successfully reproduce. *Nat. Geog. Society 2023* |
| Nature | Nature is **all the animals, plants, and other things in the world that are not made by people, and all the events and processes that are not caused by people**. The most amazing thing about nature is its infinite variety. *Collins Dictionary 2023* |
| Natural Environment | The natural environment consists of land-based ecosystems such as grasslands and forests, aquatic ecosystems such as rivers and wetlands, and coastal and marine ecosystems such as mangroves and sea-grass meadows |
| Species | a group of organisms that can reproduce naturally with one another and create fertile offspring *Nat.Geog. Society 2023* |
| Vulnerable | A species is vulnerable **if its population has declined at least 50 percent and the cause of the decline is known**. The species is at high risk of extinction in the wild. Habitat loss is the leading known cause of population decline. *Nat.Geog. Society 2023* |
| Weather | short-term, daily changes in the atmosphere *Nat.Geog. Society 2023* |