

TWO-FIFTHS OF WORLD'S PLANTS AT RISK OF EXTINCTION

2nd October 2020



Scientists have revealed that around two-fifths of the world's plants are at risk of extinction. This stark warning comes from a piece of research called the State of the World's Plants and Fungi. More than 200 scientists analysed the state of play of the world's flora in 42 countries. A top botanist, Professor Alexandre Antonelli, said: "We are living in an age of extinction. It's a very worrying picture of risk and urgent need for action. We're losing the race against time because species are disappearing faster than we can find and name them. Many of them **could** hold important clues for solving some of the most pressing challenges of medicine and even perhaps of the emerging and current pandemics we are seeing today."

There have been positive signs in the past few years. More than 4,000 species of plants and fungi were discovered in 2019. Among these are potential future foods that **could** be a lifeline to millions of people on Earth suffering from poverty and food insecurity. Professor Antonelli stressed the importance of protecting these and all plant life on Earth. He said: "We would not be able to survive without plants and fungi – all life depends on them. Every time we lose a species, we lose an opportunity for humankind." The research was released on the day of a United Nations summit aimed at addressing this issue. Leading scientists will meet and insist world leaders act against biodiversity loss.

Sources: bbc.com / theguardian.com / yahoo.com

1-True / False

- a) The warning about plant extinction comes from a piece of research. T / F
- b) More than 42 scientists looked at the state of play regarding flora. T / F
- c) A botanist warned that we are living in an age of extinction. T / F
- d) The botanist said some new species could help fight pandemics. T / F
- e) The article says 4,000 new plant species were found in the past decade. T / F

- f) New plant species could be invaluable for the poor and hungry. T / F
- g) A botanist said we could survive without fungi. T / F
- h) Scientists said world leaders would not act to fight biodiversity loss. T / F

2-Translate the underlined sentences. What do the sentences have in common?

3-Could, may and might

We use **could, may and might** to express degrees of future possibility.

Compare

<p>The restaurant may close.</p>	<p>It is likely that the restaurant will close.</p>
<p>The restaurant could close.</p>	<p>It is less likely that the restaurant will close.</p>
<p>The restaurant might close.</p>	<p>There is only a possibility that the restaurant will close but no one is very sure.</p>

Write 6 sentences expressing your ideas about the future in the context of the pandemic: use **MAY, COULD** and **MIGHT** at least once.

Examples:

A vaccine for Covid-19 **could** be available next April 2021.

We **might** go back to face-to-face classes at schools in November.



