

Quantifying anthropogenic threats to orchids using the IUCN Red List

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1 **Quantifying anthropogenic threats to orchids using the IUCN Red List**

2 **Abstract**

3 Orchids are diverse, occur in a wide range of habitats and dominate threatened species lists,
4 but which orchids are threatened, where and by what? Using the International Union for
5 Conservation of Nature Red List, we assessed the range and diversity of threats to orchids
6 globally including identifying four threat syndromes: 1) terrestrial orchids in forests that are
7 endemic to a country and threatened by illegal collecting; 2) orchids threatened by climate
8 change, pollution, transportation and disturbance/development for tourism, and recreation
9 activities, often in East Asia; (3) epiphytic orchids in Sub-Saharan Africa including
10 Madagascar with diverse threats; and (4) South and Southeast Asia orchids threatened by
11 land clearing for shifting agriculture. Despite limitations in the Red List data, the results
12 highlight how conservation efforts can focus on clusters of co-occurring threats in regions,
13 while remaining aware of the trifecta of broad threats from plant collecting, land clearing and
14 climate change.

15 **Keywords**

16 Conservation, global biodiversity, human impacts, illegal plant collection, threatened species

17 **Introduction**

18 Orchids are the world's most diverse group of flowering plants with an estimated 26,567
19 species within 850-100 genera that account for 10% of angiosperms worldwide (Cribb et al.
20 2003; Jones 2006). Although individual orchid species often have narrow distributions, the
21 family itself is widespread with orchids found on every continent except Antarctica (Jones
22 2006). They occur in a range of habitats including forests, wetlands, shrublands and
23 grasslands and include terrestrial, epiphytic and lithophytic growth forms (Jones 2006). The
24 increasing popularity of orchids among collectors, along with factors such as land clearing
25 and climate change, means they are not only among the most diverse plants, but also among
26 the most often threatened (Roberts and Dixon 2008).

27 The specific biological association of many orchid species with other organisms means that
28 individual orchid species often occur as small isolated populations, heightening their risk of
29 extinction (Swarts and Dixon 2009a). For example, many orchids rely on specific
30 associations with fungi for germination, growth and nutrients (Swarts and Dixon 2009a). In
31 addition, some orchids have very precise pollination mechanisms with elaborate systems for
32 attracting pollinators, restricting the orchid's distribution to that of its specific pollinators
33 (Nilsson 1992; Cozzolino and Widmer 2005). Others, including many epiphytic orchids, have
34 tight associations with their host plants, again limiting the orchid's distribution to that of their
35 host (Santos et al. 2000). These factors contribute to many orchids facing increasing risks of
36 extinction from a range of threatening processes (Swarts and Dixon 2009a).

37 Threats to plants, including orchids, are numerous and diverse and include those from co-
38 occurring anthropogenic activities acting as threat syndromes (Burgman et al. 2007; IUCN
39 2016). Globally, habitat loss is recognised as the major threat to biodiversity with extensive
40 areas of vegetation cleared annually, including in areas of high orchid diversity (Brummitt et

41 al. 2015). Land clearing and other activities, including the construction of roads, can further
42 fragment remaining vegetation adding to the threats for plants with specialist habitat
43 requirements (Laurance et al. 2015). Habitat loss and fragmentation has already contributed
44 to significant population declines in orchids. For example, in the United Kingdom, the
45 distribution of many orchids has contracted by 50% while in Estonia distributions have
46 contracted by 25% (Kull and Hutchings 2006).

47 Increasing access to remote locations can amplify the threats not only from land clearing and
48 fragmentation, but also by providing more opportunities for people to collect plants from the
49 wild. Harvesting plants from the wild is a \$US 21 billion industry with wild plant products
50 used in medicines, horticulture and food (Rosen and Smith 2010). Some rare and threatened
51 orchid species are specifically targeted by collectors due to their charismatic appearance,
52 diversity of floral forms and natural rarity. This has contributed to the extinction of many
53 species from attractive orchid genera such as *Paphiopedilum* and *Cypripedium* (Ballantyne
54 and Pickering 2012; Phelps and Webb 2015; Hinsley et al. 2016). Although the trade in all
55 wild orchids is restricted between countries under the Convention on International Trade in
56 Endangered Species (CITES), illegal collection and underground markets in wild orchids
57 within, and between, countries still flourish (Roberts and Dixon 2008).

58 Climate change is rapidly becoming the greatest threat to plants, including orchids (Seaton et
59 al. 2010). It is projected that climate change will drive 15-37% of all taxa to extinction by
60 2050, including 56,000 endemic plant species in biodiversity hotspots (Thomas et al. 2004;
61 Malcolm et al. 2006). Orchids are particularly at risk from climate change because of factors
62 such as their narrow ranges and specific symbiotic associations with fungi and pollinators.
63 Climate change is likely to further limit the availability of suitable habitats for orchids, as
64 well as enhance existing threats such as those from droughts, fires and the spread of weeds
65 (Gradstein 2008; Seaton et al. 2010). There is increasing recognition of all these threatening

66 processes but which are the most common threat threats to orchids globally, where, and do
67 they co-occur as threat syndromes?

68 The aim of this study was to determine the most common threats to orchids globally and
69 outline potential strategies to combat them. To do this we used data from the International
70 Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red List as it is the most comprehensive global
71 database of threatened species, and because it uses a standardized set of criteria for listing
72 species and threats (Rodrigues et al. 2006; Brummitt et al. 2015; IUCN 2016, Kull et al.
73 2016). Specifically, we assessed: 1) the most common broad threats to orchids globally, 2)
74 whether threats co-occur as threat syndromes, 3) where threats were more likely to occur, e.g.
75 which threats are associated with which land regions, 4) whether there are patterns between
76 orchid habitats and common threats, 5) the relationship between the growth forms of orchids
77 (e.g. terrestrial, epiphytic or lithophytic) and threats, 6) what is threatening the most
78 commonly listed orchid genera, and 7) finally, at a fine scale of threat category, which threats
79 are correlated with land region, growth form, habitat and endemism?

80 **Methods**

81 There were 519 Orchidaceae species on the IUCN Red List listed as Critically Endangered
82 (CR), Endangered (EN) or Vulnerable (VU) in October 2016. To assess global patterns in
83 threats to orchids, we collected data for the 442 threatened orchid species with threat data on
84 the Red List including the species name, IUCN status, habitat and where it occurs (e.g. land
85 region, native countries and endemism), along with data on the 12 broad categories of threats
86 and detailed threats for each category (Appendix Table S1). Additional data about the growth
87 form of the orchids (e.g. if it was terrestrial, epiphytic or lithophytic) was obtained from the
88 World Checklist of Selected Plant Families (WCSP 2016).

89 **Data Analysis**

90 The total number and proportion of orchid species threatened globally were calculated for
91 different regions, habitat, growth forms and genera. To assess if certain threats co-occurred
92 among orchids, a hierarchical clustering of threats into groups was performed. The clustering
93 used the results of a Bray Curtis similarity matrix constructed in the ordination program
94 Primer 6 with data on the broad threats for the 442 species of orchids (Clarke and Gorley
95 2006). The results were expressed visually as a dendrogram showing the percentage
96 similarity among the threats based on the number of orchid species with the same threats.

97 To assess geographical patterns in threats, the distribution of orchids among regions was
98 mapped for the four most common broad threats using ArcGIS (ESRI 2016). To determine
99 whether there were significant differences in threats depending on whether the species occur
100 within a protected area, and if they are endemic, a series of Chi-square analyses were
101 performed using the statistical program RStudio (RStudio Team 2016). There were many
102 threatened orchids from just two genera on the Red List: *Paphiopedilum* and *Cypripedium*.
103 Therefore, patterns in threats for these two genera were analysed separately to see if they had
104 distinct combinations of threats and locations compared to the rest of the genera. Finally, to
105 explore potential threat syndromes and their relationship with these other factors in more
106 detail, we repeated the dendrogram analysis using Red List data on more detailed levels of
107 threats and combined this with information on land regions, growth forms and habitat types
108 in the ordination program Primer 6 (Clarke and Gorley 2006).

109 **Results**

110 There is a wide diversity of threats to orchids globally, with orchids threatened by 11 of the
111 12 broad categories used in the IUCN Red List (Appendix Table S1). The most common
112 threat was biological resource use (80% of the 442 species of orchids), followed by
113 agriculture and aquaculture (53%) (Appendix Table S1). Human intrusion and disturbance

114 affected 36% of the species, residential and commercial development threatened 35.5% of
115 species, while modifications to natural systems affected 35% of the 442 orchids.

116 Most orchids were at risk from more than one type of threat, with an average of three threats
117 per species and only 170 species listed with a single major threat. Some threats co-occurred
118 as potential threat syndromes, indicating that many species are not only affected by one type
119 of threat but commonly threatened by a pattern of co-occurring threatening processes (Figure
120 1). Many orchids threatened by pollution, for example, were also threatened by climate
121 change and from the impact of transport and service corridors (Figure 1). Orchids threatened
122 by residential and commercial development were often also threatened by agriculture and
123 aquaculture while these two threats were both correlated with threats from biological use
124 along with human intrusion and disturbance (Figure 1). In contrast, the few species of orchids
125 threatened by geological events (6 species), energy production and mining (45) or invasive
126 species and diseases (36) were rarely also at risk from other threats.

127 It was clear that threats to orchids varied among regions, both in terms of the types of threats,
128 and how many species were affected (Figure 2, Table 1). Sub-Saharan Africa had the highest
129 number of threatened orchids (194 species) and the most common threats were agriculture
130 and aquaculture (92 species), and modifications to natural systems (59 species). Over half of
131 the Sub-Saharan Africa threatened orchids (98 species) were from Madagascar, with
132 biological resource use threatening nearly all of them (91 species). Other regions with high
133 numbers of threatened orchids included South and Southeast Asia (15% of orchids on the Red
134 List), East Asia (14.5% of species) and South America (11% of species) (Figure 2). Orchids
135 in these regions were most commonly affected by biological resource use, residential and
136 commercial development, and human intrusion and disturbance (Figure 2, Table 1).

137 Over half of all threatened orchids had limited distributions, with 247 species naturally
138 restricted to single countries (e.g. country endemics), but the proportion of country endemics
139 varied significantly among regions (Chi square tests, $p < 0.001$, Table 1). Just over half of the
140 orchids from Sub-Saharan Africa were endemic to a country, including nearly all (94 species)
141 of the orchids in Madagascar. Nearly all the European and Oceanian Red Listed orchids were
142 also country endemics, while very few of those listed as threatened in North America and
143 Mesoamerica were country endemics (Table 1). Country endemic orchids were more likely to
144 be threatened by energy production and mining, biological resource use and natural systems
145 modification (Chi square tests, $p < 0.001$) than orchids that occur naturally in more than one
146 country (Table 1).

147 Growth forms of orchids, i.e. if they are terrestrial, epiphytic or lithophytic, differed in the
148 types of threats they are exposed to (Chi square tests, $p < 0.001$). Most of the Red List
149 orchids are terrestrial and for these orchids biological resource use was the most common
150 threat (82% of the 324 species), followed by agriculture and aquaculture (50% of species)
151 and human intrusion and disturbance (45% of species) (Figure 3). Epiphytic orchids account
152 for 162 of the Red Listed orchids. Proportionally fewer of these epiphytic orchids were
153 threatened by biological resource use (73%) and development (28%) than terrestrial orchids,
154 but they were more likely to be threatened agriculture and aquaculture (65%) (Figure 3).

155 There are few lithophytic orchids on the Red List (37 species), of which 86% are threatened
156 by biological resource use, 57% by human intrusion and disturbance and 48% by natural
157 system modifications (Figure 3).

158 Although there were 94 genera of orchids with at least one species on the Red List, two
159 terrestrial and charismatic genera, *Paphiopedilum* and *Cypripedium* alone accounted for 125
160 of the Red List orchid species. Of the 101 recognised species of *Paphiopedilum* orchids
161 (WCSP 2016), 84 are on the Red List. Like other orchids, they are mainly threatened by

162 biological resource use (83% of species) and human intrusion and disturbance (72%). Fewer
163 *Paphiopedilum* orchids were threatened by agriculture and aquaculture (31%) than expected
164 based on the patterns for other orchid genera (Figure 4).

165 There are 41 Red Listed *Cypripedium* species (out of the 64 species recognised
166 internationally) (WCSP 2016). Individual *Cypripedium* species tended to be threatened by a
167 wide diversity of factors, and were proportionally more likely to be threatened by pollution
168 (90% of species), climate change and severe weather (88%) or transportation and service
169 corridors (85%) than other orchids (Figure 5). However, they were also still threatened by
170 other common factors including biological resource use, human intrusion and disturbance and
171 development (Figure 4).

172 Finally, when we looked at threats at the finest scale on the Red List, including how they
173 were correlated with land region, growth form and habitat, four threat syndromes were
174 apparent (Figure 5). They were (1) Terrestrial species of orchids in forests that are endemic to
175 at least one country and that are threatened by illegal plant collection; (2) Orchids in East
176 Asia affected by climate change, pollution, transportation including roads and railroads, and
177 disturbance/development for tourism and recreation activities; (3) Epiphytic species in Sub-
178 Saharan Africa including in Madagascar, but with a range of threats; and (4) Orchids in South
179 and Southeast Asia that are affected by land clearing for non-timber agricultural crops.

180 **Discussion**

181 **Common threats and threat syndromes**

182 Many orchid species are threatened globally, particularly by biological resource use,
183 agriculture and aquaculture, human intrusion and disturbance along with residential and
184 commercial development. These threats were also found to be important for all plants in a
185 recent review of threatening processes that also used IUCN Red List data (Brummitt et al.

186 2015). For orchids, however, human intrusion and disturbance was a more common threat
187 than for some other types of plants.

188 Identifying which orchids are at risk of extinction and why using data from well-regarded
189 threatened species lists is important for conservation. These lists directly affect regulations
190 and legal processes for the trade in orchids, affect approval for land clearing, shape
191 management strategies, and inform the broader communities of the ongoing threats to these
192 charismatic species (Burgman et al. 2007; Brummitt et al. 2015; Kull et al. 2016).

193 Increasingly, researchers are interested in using such lists to identify threat syndromes which
194 allow more targeted and effective management of threats than treating them as independent
195 problems (Burgman et al. 2007). Here we found co-occurring threats to orchids which were
196 associated with specific habitats, regions and growth forms allowing more targeted
197 management of threats to orchids.

198 **Threat syndrome one**

199 Biological resource use was the most common threat for orchids, which is not surprising, as it
200 includes the illegal collection of plants from the wild for medicine, food and trade (Subedi et
201 al. 2013). Specifically, we found that illegal collecting of orchids was often a threat for
202 terrestrial orchids in forests with limited distributions (e.g. country endemics) and hence,
203 form a threat syndrome. This combination of threat, growth form, and habitat was important
204 in several regions, with all listed orchids in South and Southeast Asia and East Asia
205 threatened by biological resource use. This potentially reflects, at least in part, the extent to
206 which orchids are used as medicinal plants within these regions. For example, a quarter of the
207 native orchids in China and 347 species of orchids in Southeast Asia are collected for
208 medicinal purposes, contributing to declines in orchid populations in the region (Liu et al.
209 2014; Phelps and Webb 2015).

210 The collecting of charismatic orchids for cultivation and propagation is also problematic,
211 with the trade in orchids worth millions of dollars each year (NASS 2017). This is
212 particularly important for orchids with charismatic flowers, such as many *Paphiopedilum*
213 species, that have been the focus of collection by orchid enthusiasts for a long time (Phelps
214 and Webb 2015). This has already driven some of these orchids, such as *Paphiopedilum*
215 *vietnamese*, to extinction (Roberts and Dixon 2008) and collecting currently threatens nearly
216 all extant *Paphiopedilum* species.

217 Strategies to reduce illegal plant collecting from the wild include: 1) conservation reserves, 2)
218 legal propagation of desirable orchids to help satisfy demand, 3) enforcement of restrictions
219 on collecting and the trade in these orchids, and 4) educating collectors and others to enhance
220 support for orchid conservation. In addition to general protected areas, some countries have
221 established specific orchid reserves to help reduce the demand for harvesting orchids from
222 the wild. Establishing and supporting sustainable and legal orchid breeding/propagation
223 programs can also satisfy the demand for some species of orchids including horticultural,
224 medicinal and edible orchids (Subedi et al. 2013). For example, programs have been
225 established in some areas in China to support the legal cultivation of attractive epiphytic,
226 perennial orchids including *Dendrobium* species (Liu et al. 2014). In some countries, botanic
227 gardens are involved in propagating rare orchids for use in their collections, for replanting in
228 the wild, but also in some cases, for sale to the public to reduce the demand for wild orchids
229 (Swarts and Dixon 2009b). Despite these types of approaches, enforcement of laws and
230 regulations restricting the collection and trade in orchids remains important. With ongoing
231 demand in new types and forms of orchids, it is critical that collectors and horticulturists
232 adhere to regulations restricting the trade in some orchids including CITES (Hinsley et al.
233 2016). Finally, education is important and includes the work of orchid societies which raise

234 awareness of their members about these issues, including what is threatening orchids, where,
235 and how they can contribute to their conservation (Cuoco and Cronan 2009).

236 **Threat syndrome two**

237 Both climate change and pollution threaten orchids, including many of the same species of
238 orchids. Climate change is increasingly threatening plants globally and orchids are no
239 exception. Our study showed climate change, an important emerging threat, was strongly
240 associated with threatened orchids in East Asia. For example, with climate change, suitable
241 conditions for some orchids in the tropics of South-western China will only occur much
242 higher up mountains (Liu et al. 2015). More broadly, climate change is known to be a major
243 threat to specialist habitats such as cloud forests, threatening species restricted to such
244 habitats such as epiphytic orchids (Foster 2001; Adhikari et al. 2012). With land clearing,
245 some orchids may not be able to successfully disperse to suitable habitats, or there may no
246 longer be forests at the higher altitude sites (Liu et al. 2015).

247 With climate change already affecting plant distributions in many regions and even greater
248 changes predicted in the future, research modelling the effects of climate change on the
249 distribution of orchids and their symbionts is important (Brundrett 2007). Dealing with the
250 threat of climate change on the ground is likely to require integrated conservation strategies
251 to maintain some existing habitat, but also possible translocation efforts to new habitats.
252 Unfortunately, due to the specificity of orchids and their habitats, these approaches are not
253 simple and may not always be feasible (Cuoco and Cronan 2009; Swarts and Dixon 2009a;
254 Liu et al.2015).

255 Many of the orchids threatened by climate change and pollution were also threated by land
256 clearing, trampling and fragmentation associated with disturbance and development for roads
257 and railroads, tourism and recreation infrastructure and recreation activities among others. As

258 the human population is expanding, increased pressure is being placed on natural areas,
259 including areas with numerous threatened orchid species and high tourist visitation
260 (Ballantyne and Pickering 2012). Consequently, there is an increase in road and infrastructure
261 development, which have well recognised impacts on many species of plants. These impacts
262 include fragmenting otherwise intact natural habitats and increased competition from weeds
263 (Parra-Tabla et al. 2011). Tourism and recreation, both from infrastructure and activities, is
264 also increasingly recognised as a threat to many plants including orchids (Wraith and
265 Pickering 2017). Orchids are often the focus of specialised tourism, known as orchid tourism,
266 with many groups targeting threatened species to photograph or collect. This orchid tourism
267 causes trampling damage to the orchids and surrounding vegetation from hiking and other
268 activities such as four wheel driving (Light and MacConaill 2007).

269 As the threats within this syndrome are large scale issues, solutions also need to be large
270 scale. These solutions include identifying and protecting natural areas of high conservation
271 value with joint management by governments, non-government agencies, landholders and the
272 general public (Laurance et al. 2015). Appropriate management within vulnerable areas will
273 help conserve threatened species, including orchids, which are suffering the impacts of this
274 threat syndrome.

275 **Threat syndromes three and four**

276 The final two threat syndromes were more specific and geographically based than those
277 above. They included epiphytic orchids in Sub-Saharan Africa, including Madagascar, that
278 were threatened by a range of factors, and orchids in South and Southeast Asia threatened by
279 shifting agriculture, a form of land clearing.

280 That there are many threatened orchids in Madagascar is not surprising as the country is
281 renowned for floral diversity, much of which is both endemic to the country and threatened

282 (Cribb and Hermans 2007; Brummitt et al. 2015). What is interesting is that it is often the
283 epiphytic species that are at risk. One of the more common threatening processes for
284 epiphytic orchids in Sub-Saharan Africa was land clearing from agriculture and deforestation
285 (Harper et al. 2007). Epiphytic orchids often have specific associations with host trees, and
286 hence the recovery of their populations post disturbance is correlated with the regeneration of
287 host trees, which is slow if at all (Adhikari et al. 2012). Therefore, conserving primary forest
288 habitat is important (Gradstein 2008) as it will help conserve orchids as well as other
289 charismatic species.

290 Terrestrial orchids occurring in South and Southeast Asia were commonly affected by land
291 clearing for shifting agriculture which is not unexpected as this practice is a known
292 contributor to deforestation in the region (Rasul and Thapa 2003). Although shifting
293 agriculture is still common in the region, agriculture practices are increasingly transitioning
294 to more secure and permanent methods, but these still have impacts on biodiversity from
295 clearing of natural habitat. Financial and social support for more sustainable agriculture
296 practices is important in these regions and more generally to protect threatened species
297 (Tilman et al. 2002).

298 More broadly than just these examples, land clearing is a key threatening process for orchids
299 globally. In the IUCN Red List it appeared in different broad threat categories, such as
300 logging in biological resource use, clearing for agriculture in agriculture and aquaculture, and
301 clearing and fragmentation associated with urbanisation in the broader residential and
302 commercial development category. Overall, land clearing threatens many forest orchids in
303 South and Southeast Asia and tropical areas of Sub-Saharan Africa, including some parts of
304 Madagascar. The high specificity, localised populations and intrinsic rarity of orchids makes
305 land clearing a common and severe threat to orchid populations (Swarts and Dixon 2009a;
306 Swarts et al. 2010; Ballantyne and Pickering 2012).

307 Limiting deforestation and other types of land clearing and securing more protected areas will
308 help protect forest-dependent terrestrial and epiphytic orchids. For example, increasing
309 conservation efforts in Sub-Saharan Africa is important, including the expansion of protected
310 areas to include populations of threatened orchids is important as only a third of the
311 threatened orchids in the region are currently in protected areas, including those in
312 Madagascar (Mittermeier et al. 2005).

313 **Limitations**

314 Using global databases, such as the IUCN Red List, for research and conservation has some
315 limitations, and as such, this current assessment of threats to orchids should be treated as
316 indicative rather than a definitive assessment of global patterns. Although the IUCN Red List
317 is regarded as a useful tool for the management of threatened species (Brummitt et al. 2015)
318 and is often used in global reviews of threats (Ripple et al. 2017), it should be used with some
319 caution (Possingham et al. 2002; Rodrigues et al. 2006). A key issue with relying upon the
320 database is an underrepresentation of threatened species for some regions and groups of
321 organisms. Lags in adding species to the Red List occurs for some countries and regions.
322 These delays are often the result of the interplay between a lack of funding, different levels of
323 government cooperation in listing, different priorities for government conservation
324 authorities, and/or a lack of research identifying species at threat and by what (Schatz 2009).
325 Focused efforts on research and listing from key biodiversity hotspots will help address some
326 of these gaps.

327 Even for some countries with a good track record in research and with governments that
328 recognise the importance of threatened species, there can still be an underrepresentation of
329 data in the IUCN Red List data. Australia is a clear example of this, with only five species of
330 orchids from Australia on the Red List, even though there are 200 species of orchids on the

331 Australian Government's own list of threatened plants (Rankin et al. 2015; Australian
332 Government 2016).

333 Limitations regarding the amount of threat data available for some species of orchids were
334 also evident in the Red List, with 77 orchid species on the list lacking threat data. When
335 threat data were available, they were not always comprehensive, as data on the overall
336 severity and impact of some threats were missing. Information on the severity of a threat is
337 important for interpreting the relative importance of threats and determining which need
338 immediate mitigation. These limitations concomitantly limited our capacity to assess the full
339 range of orchid species and their threats. Adding more species and more comprehensive,
340 updated data will enhance the accuracy and usefulness of the IUCN Red list as a resource
341 for assessing global patterns in biodiversity (Rodrigues et al. 2006).

342 **Conclusions**

343 Orchids are threatened globally, most often terrestrial orchids in forests. Major threats to
344 orchids on the IUCN Red List include illegal collecting (biological resource use), habitat loss
345 and fragmentation (agriculture and aquaculture, human intrusion and disturbances and
346 development), climate change and natural system modifications. Many of these threats co-
347 occurred and we identified four threat syndromes which require integrated management and
348 conservation efforts. Highlighting threat syndromes on a global scale can create more
349 consistent conservation planning and help focus efforts on the specific threats in a given
350 region.

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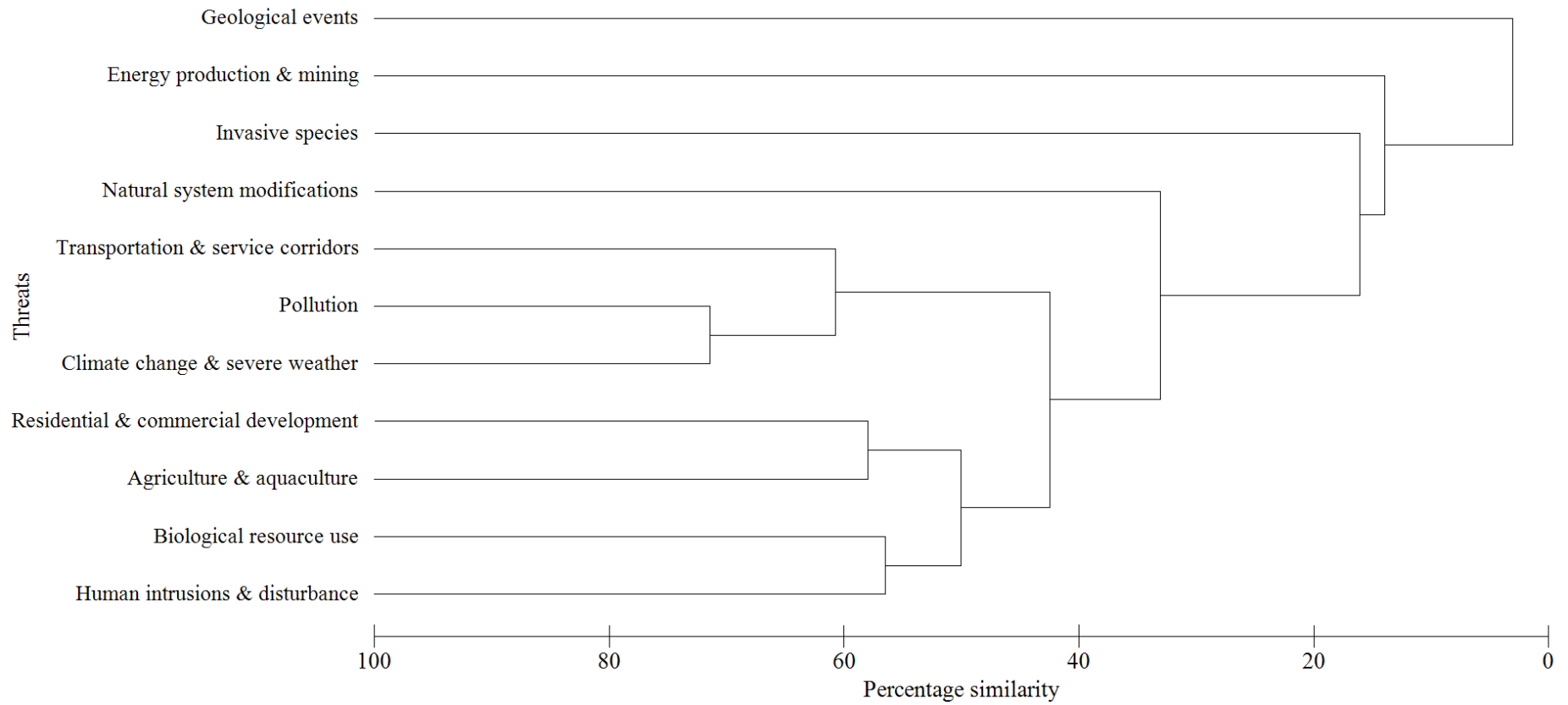
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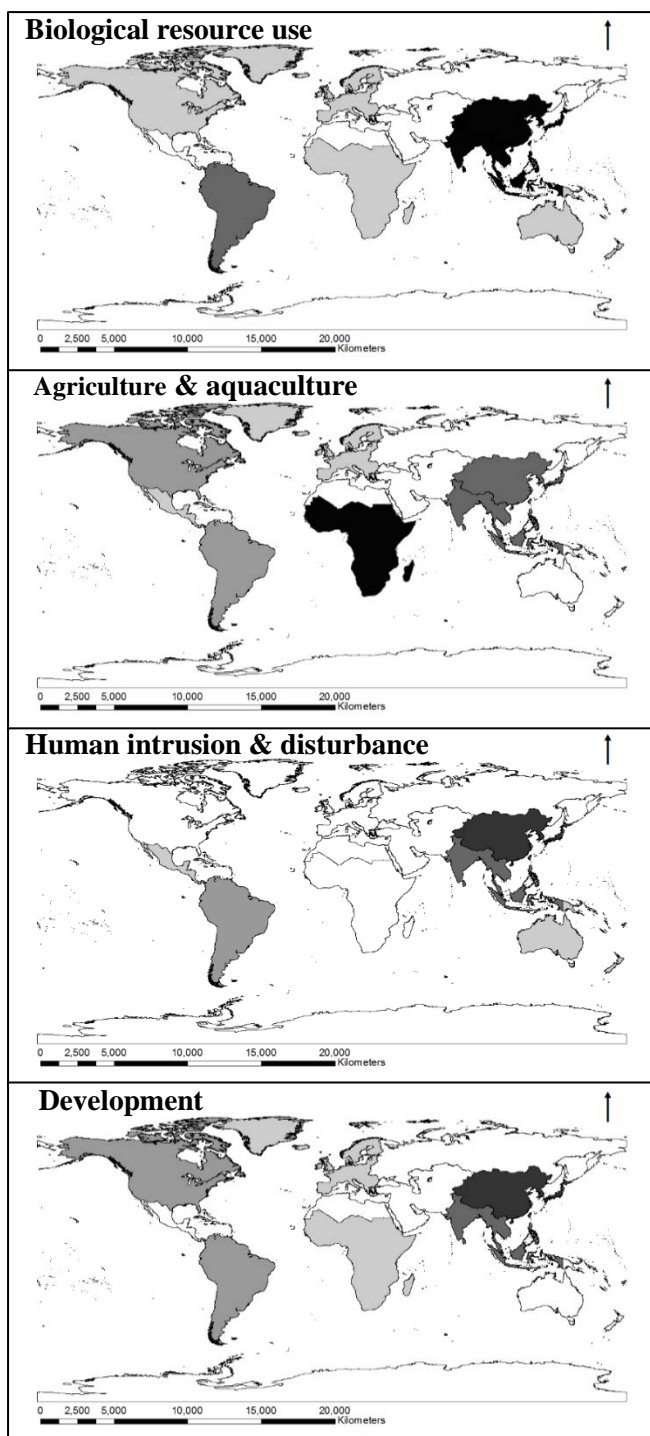
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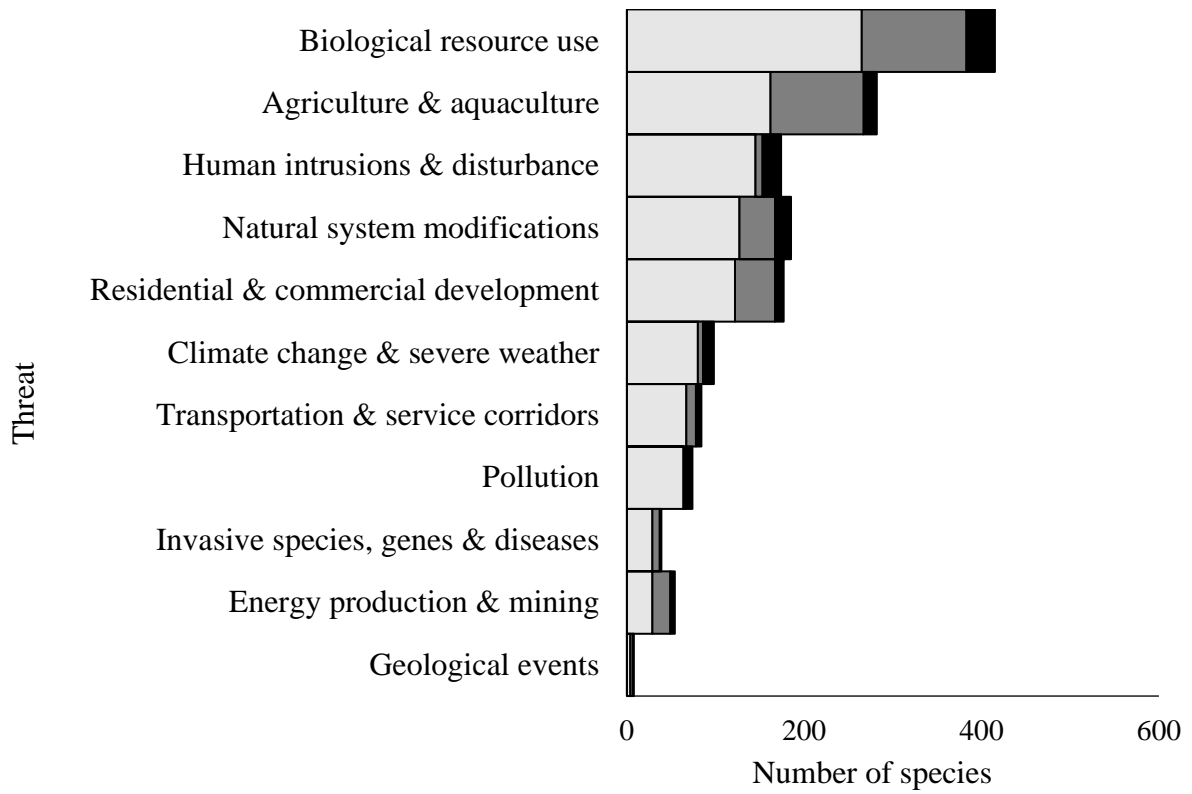


473 Figure 1. Bray Curtis similarity resemblance plot showing the levels of similarity among threats to the 442 orchid species on the IUCN Red List.

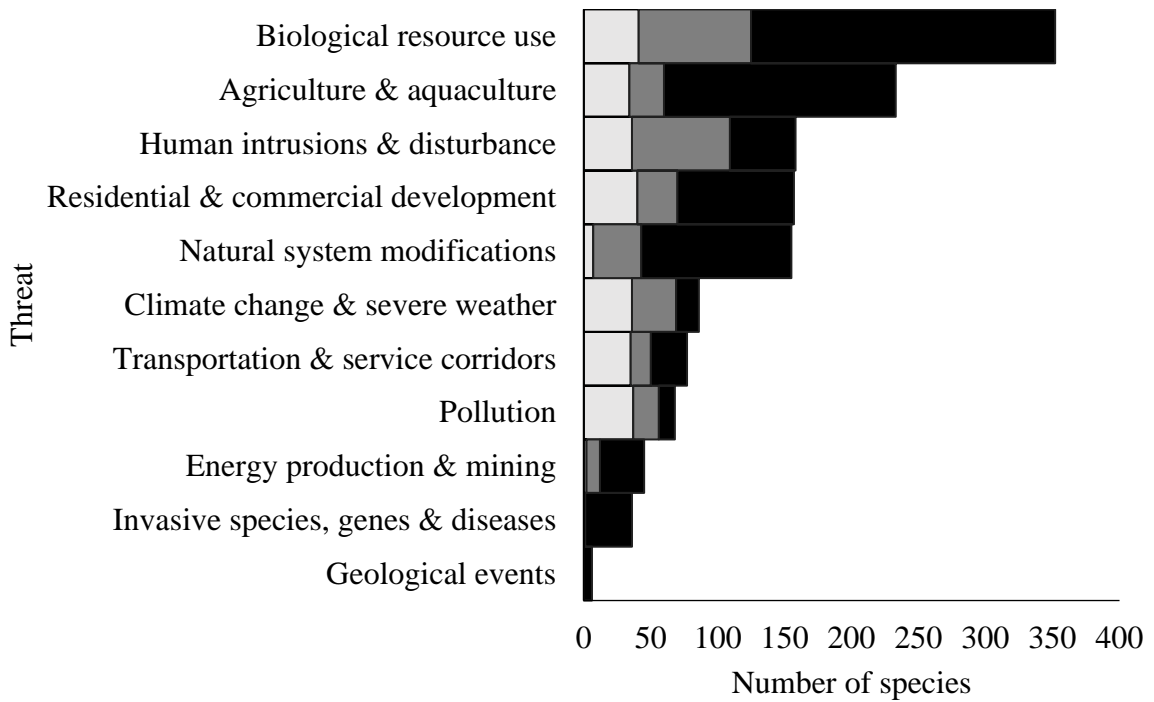


Number of species

474 Figure 2. The number of orchid species in different regions threatened by biological resource
 475 use, agriculture and aquaculture, human intrusion and disturbance or development, based on
 476 data for 442 species of orchids on the IUCN Red List.

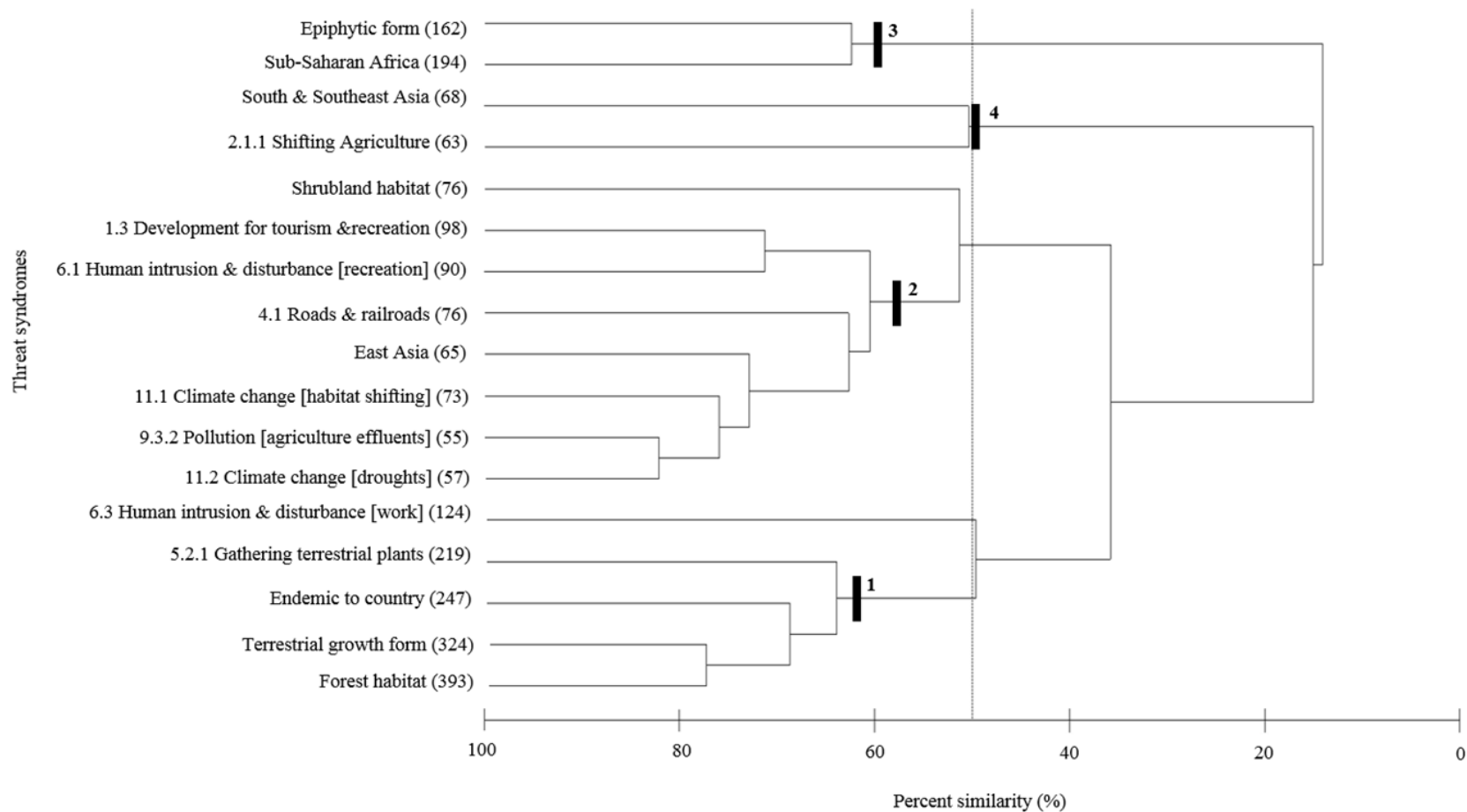


477 Figure 3. The number of orchid species of each growth form affected by each of the major
 478 types of threats on the IUCN Red List, terrestrial species (light grey), epiphytic (mid grey)
 479 and lithophytic species (black).



480

481 Figure 4. The number of *Cypripedium* (light grey) and *Paphiopedilum* (mid grey) orchids
 482 affected by the 11 major types of threats on the IUCN Red List compared to all other genera
 483 (black).



499

500 Figure 5. Bray-Curtis similarity resemblance plot showing the levels of similarity among threats, land regions, habitats, endemism and growth
 501 form to the 442 orchid species on the IUCN Red List and the four identified threat syndromes labelled 1-4 based on percent similarity, including;
 502 (1) Terrestrial species of orchids in forests that are endemic to at least one country and that are threatened by illegal plant collection; (2) Orchids

503 in East Asia affected by climate change, pollution, transportation including roads and railroads, and disturbance/development for tourism and
504 recreation activities; (3) Epiphytic species in Sub-Saharan Africa including in Madagascar, but with a range of threats; and (4) Orchids in South
505 and Southeast Asia that are affected by land clearing for non-timber agricultural crops.

Table 1. Threats to the 442 orchid species on the IUCN Red List per region, including the total number of species, the number endemic to a single country and the number of species in protected areas.

	Sub-Saharan Africa	South & Southeast Asia	East Asia	South America	North America	Europe	Mesoamerica	Oceania	Caribbean Islands	North Africa
Endemic	104	47	30	32	1	15	1	10	5	2
Protected area	67	24	26	11	14	3	4	2	5	1
Total listed with threats	194	68	65	47	19	16	12	11	8	2
Biological resource use	130	68	65	43	12	12	10	7	5	
Agriculture & aquaculture	92	37	33	23	16	13	8	4	5	2
Human intrusions & disturbance	3	42	58	18	10	10	6	8	1	2
Residential & commercial development	13	34	46	18	18	13	5	2	8	
Natural system modifications	59	26	19	19	12	10	5	4	1	
Climate change & severe weather	4	19	47	2	7	1	3	2	1	
Transportation & service corridors		4	43	13	6	6	1	1	2	1
Pollution		4	48	2	8	3	1	2		
Energy production & mining	21	5	5	10	3	1				
Invasive species, genes & diseases	7	1	1	7	10	2	2	4	2	
Geological events	2		1	1		1			1	