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Geographical range

Species of the Day: Guanaco

The **Guanaco**, *Lama guanicoe*, is listed as 'Least Concern' on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species™. Being the wild relative of the domestic Llama, this elegant animal has a widespread but rather fragmented distribution across much of South America.

Although still relatively widespread and abundant, the Guanaco now occupies only around 40 percent of its original range, and many populations have become quite isolated. The main threats to the species include overhunting and poaching, habitat degradation (often due to overgrazing and drought), competition with domestic livestock, and the use of barbed wire fences.

The Guanaco is considered dependent on conservation measures for its long-term survival. Guanacos are legally protected in many areas, and international trade in the species is regulated by CITES, but illegal hunting still persists. In Argentina, home to 90% of the Guanaco population, a National Management Plan is in place, while sustainable use programmes, such as live-shearing initiatives as an alternative to killing the animals for their fibre, may provide incentives to protect wild Guanaco populations.

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