

DOLPHINS

Dolphins play an important role in keeping their environment in balance. They eat other animals – mainly fish and squid – and are themselves a source of food for some sharks and other creatures.

Without dolphins, the animals they prey on would increase in number, and their predators wouldn't have as much to eat. This would disrupt the natural balance in the food chain and could negatively affect other wildlife and the health of the ocean environment.

By protecting dolphins we're helping look after our oceans – and that's good for all the wildlife and billions of people who depend on the sea.

Illustrations by Emma Walling from Patterns to Protect colouring book



GIANT PANDA

Giant pandas help to keep their mountain forests healthy by spreading seeds in their droppings, which helps vegetation to thrive.

The panda's forest environment is also important for local people – for food, income and fuel for cooking and heating. Giant pandas live in the mountain catchment areas of the Yangtze and Yellow rivers, whose river basins are the economic heart of China, home to over half a billion people.

Panda habitat rivals the highest biodiversity of any ecosystem in the world. It's also vitally important for other threatened species, including golden sub-nosed monkeys, takins, red pandas and snow leopards.

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TIGER

As top predators, tigers help to keep their environment healthy.

It's the way things naturally work in the wild – the predators prey on other animals, in this case herbivores (plant-eaters) such as deer. But without enough tigers to eat them, herbivores can overgraze and damage the land, disrupting the balance of the local environment.

Local people also depend on a healthy environment for food, water and lots of other resources. By helping protect tigers we're also helping look after the places where they live, which is good for all the people and wildlife sharing that environment.

AFRICAN ELEPHANT

Elephants play an essential role in their environment. They're 'landscape architects' – for instance as they move around and feed, they create clearings in wooded areas, which lets new plants grow and forests regenerate naturally.

And then there's seed dispersal. When elephants eat seed-bearing plants and fruits, the seeds often re-emerge undigested. It's the way a lot of plants spread. And elephants can eat big seeds that small animals can't.

Without elephants, the natural structure and functioning of their landscapes would be very different, which would have impacts on the other wildlife and the people who share that space.

