Maned Sloth
A Look At Its Population Ecology And Consequent Vulnerabilities

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Introduction to Maned Sloths

- *Bradypus torquatus*
- Arboreal
  - Long limbs
  - Curved claws
  - Green tinted fur
- Predators:
  - Harpy eagles
  - Jaguars
  - Humans
Slow Moving Sloths

- Slow, sluggish movers
- Strict folivores
- Sleep 15 hrs a day
- Low metabolic rate
- Reduced muscles
Habitat

- Coastal Brazilian Atlantic rain forest
- 1 of the top 5 biodiversity hotspots in the world
- Tropical evergreen
- Bahia, Espirito Santo, Rio de Janeiro
- 3 distinct populations
- IUCN lists maned sloths as vulnerable
- Population count difficult but believed to be declining
Threats: Deforestation

- Atlantic forest greatly reduced
- Agriculture, urbanization, coal production
- Rate of deforestation decreased by not stopped
- Fragmentation/destruction of sloth habitat
Additional Threats

- Hunting
  - Subsistence
- Road kill
- Tourism
Traits Affecting Vulnerability and Conservation

- **Very limited distribution**
  - Only found in the Coastal Atlantic Forest of Brazil
  - Survival linked to the health of the Atlantic forest

- **Conservation Response**
  - Protected Areas in each state
  - Environmental education
  - Tourism over agriculture
Traits Affecting Vulnerability and Conservation

- Limited range and speed of motion
  - Inability to respond to threats
  - Limited dispersal ability
  - Fragmentation leads to complete isolation
    - Allee effects
    - Inbreeding depression
- Conservation response
  - Habitat corridors
  - Translocation
Traits Affecting Vulnerability and Conservation

- Low reproduction and high parental care
  - 1 offspring/yr
  - Gestation period-6 months
  - Close relationship between mother and offspring

- Conservation Response
  - Breeding in captivity has been poor
  - More research necessary
Conclusions

- Maned sloths are vulnerable to deforestation due to their limited distribution, limited movement, and slow reproductive rates.
- Efforts should focus on protecting Atlantic forest habitat.
- More research should be done in order to create successful breeding programs and to formulate effective management strategies.
References