

What would world's animal populations look like without humans?

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In a world without humans, most of northern Europe would probably now be home to not only wolves, Eurasian elk (moose) and bears, but also animals such as elephants and rhinoceroses.

This is demonstrated in a new study conducted by researchers from Aarhus University, Denmark. In a previous analysis, they have shown that the mass extinction of large mammals during the Last Ice Age and in subsequent millennia (the late-Quaternary megafauna extinction) is largely explainable from the expansion of modern man (*Homo sapiens*) across the world. In this follow-up study, they investigate what the natural worldwide diversity patterns of mammals would be like in the absence of past and present human impacts, based on estimates of the natural distribution of each species according to its ecology, biogeography and the current natural environmental template. They provide the first estimate of how the mammal diversity world map would have appeared without the impact of modern man.

The current world map of mammal diversity shows that Africa is virtually the only place with a high diversity of large mammals. However, the world map constructed by the researchers of the natural diversity of large mammals shows far greater distribution of high large-mammal diversity across most of the world, with particularly high levels in North and South America, areas that are currently relatively poor in large mammals.

Read full, original post: [Without humans, the whole world could look like Serengeti](#)