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Field in the frame: face to face with harlequin toads

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Harlequin toads are under threat from habitat change, pathogen spread, and climate change. Stefan Lötters and colleagues examined population records of 131 harlequin toad species (*Atelopus*), from 2004–2022. They interviewed harlequin toad experts and compiled population and threat data, finding that the status of harlequin toads has not improved since 2004. Despite species rediscoveries and increased conservation efforts, the lack of recovery indicates that the amphibian extinction crisis is ongoing. They recommend habitat protection, disease management, and captive breeding programs for the future.



Credit: Jaime Culebras, Photo Wildlife Tours.

Prof. Lötters says: “Harlequin toads are the poster child of the ongoing biodiversity crisis. Although their situation has not much improved by now, we must not stop giving our best in helping these and other threatened animals to survive. They are important in a big puzzle that must not crumble too much. Take the chance! They die – we die!”
You can read the research here¹.

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Reference

1. Lötters, S. et al. Ongoing harlequin toad declines suggest the amphibian extinction crisis is still an emergency. *Commun. Earth Environ.* **4**, 412 (2023).

Competing interests

The author declares no competing interests.

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