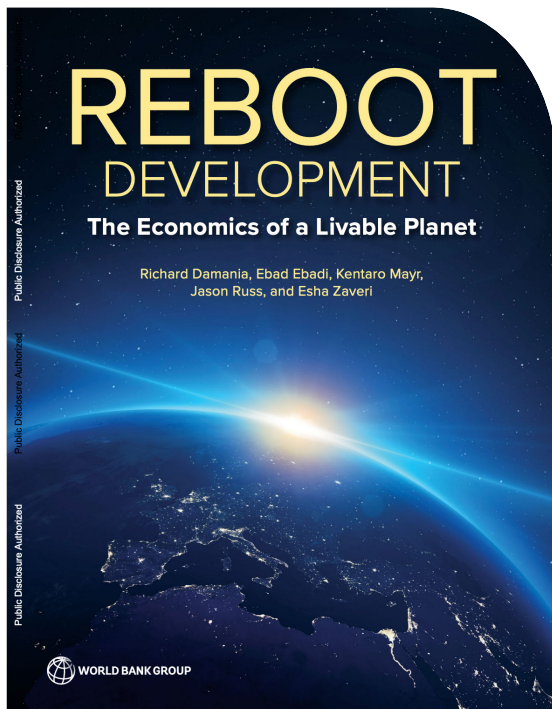




# POLICY SIGNALS

FOR ANIMAL ADVOCACY

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## AUTHORS


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## BACKGROUND

*Reboot Development: The Economics of a Livable Planet* was released by the World Bank Group in September 2025.

The report argues that environmental degradation is not a side issue to development, but a direct threat to prosperity, health, and resilience. It is especially relevant to animal advocates because it shows that economic systems depend on healthy ecosystems, that declines in wild animal populations incur major economic and social costs, and that food systems and trade are driving biodiversity loss at scale. The policy reforms it proposes, from repurposing agricultural subsidies to new trade agreements, would reshape how economies interact with the natural world.

*This Policy Signal quotes extracts of the report that are relevant to animal advocates. We encourage you to consult the full report for a comprehensive analysis.*

 Click on any paragraph in this brief to see the relevant page in the original report.

# Highlights for animal advocacy

The report makes the economic case for protecting ecosystems and biodiversity. It argues that *“maintaining a livable planet is not merely a distant environmental concern but a present economic threat”* and that *“economic development cannot be sustained without safeguarding the ecosystems that support it”*.

## 01

### **Human systems are displacing wild animals at an extreme scale**

One of the report’s clearest signals for advocates: current development and food systems are degrading ecosystems and reshaping life on Earth profoundly.

*“Of all the mammalian biomass on Earth today, wild mammals comprise a mere 5 percent—the remaining 95 percent consists of humans (35 percent) and mammals for human consumption (60 percent). Such is the impact of the anthropogenic forces that drive this decline, much of which is due to habitat loss driven by the agriculture, forestry, and mining sectors (McElwee et al. 2024)”*.

#### **Trade and deforestation**

The report explores the linkages between international trade and deforestation. It highlights, *“70 percent of deforestation in the Amazon rainforest is a consequence of cattle ranching and soy production, two heavily traded commodities (Pendrill et al. 2019a).”*

It further adds, *“robust statistical approaches show that deforestation rates tend to peak after regional trade agreements, increasing net deforestation, particularly in developing tropical countries (Abman and Lundberg 2020).”*

The report examines the problem of displaced deforestation - stricter environmental regulations in one country shifting deforestation to countries with laxer regulations (Pendrill et al. 2019a). It notes that consumption patterns (especially in high-income countries or HICs) are largely responsible for trade-driven deforestation. It adds that consumers in HICs benefit from products that are kept artificially cheap by unsustainable production patterns in the tropics (Brenton et al. 2024; WRI 2020).

The report notes that beef has a land footprint of 20 times that of legumes (Ritchie 2021), reinforcing the outsized environmental footprint of livestock-related production.