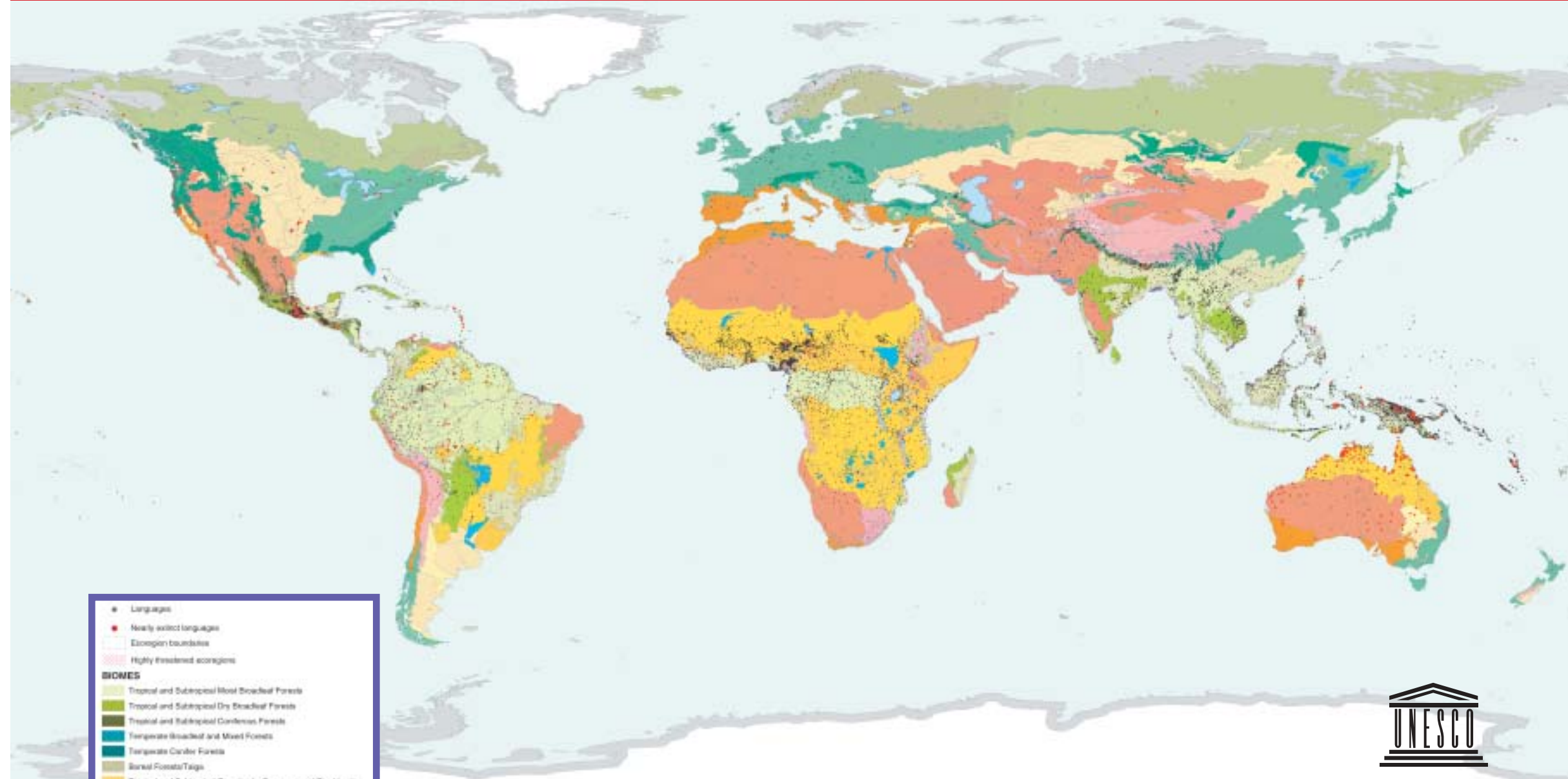




# The World's Biocultural Diversity : People, Languages and Ecosystems.



This map was prepared as a collaboration between UNESCO, Terralingua and the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF). It shows the overlapping distribution of the world's 6800 languages and 866 ecoregions. Areas of high biodiversity (diversity of plant and animal species and their habitats) tend to coincide with a high number of distinct ethnic groups speaking different languages. Most of the world's languages, many of which are at risk of extinction, are spoken in the forested areas of the tropics, that are themselves threatened.

In the 21st century joint action needs to be taken to maintain and restore the integrity and vitality of the world's ecosystems, cultures, and languages, that is, their biocultural diversity. This includes ensuring the continuity and development of traditional ecological knowledge and the environmental practices of indigenous, tribal and other local communities. It also requires fostering the continued use and transmission of the languages through which this knowledge is communicated.