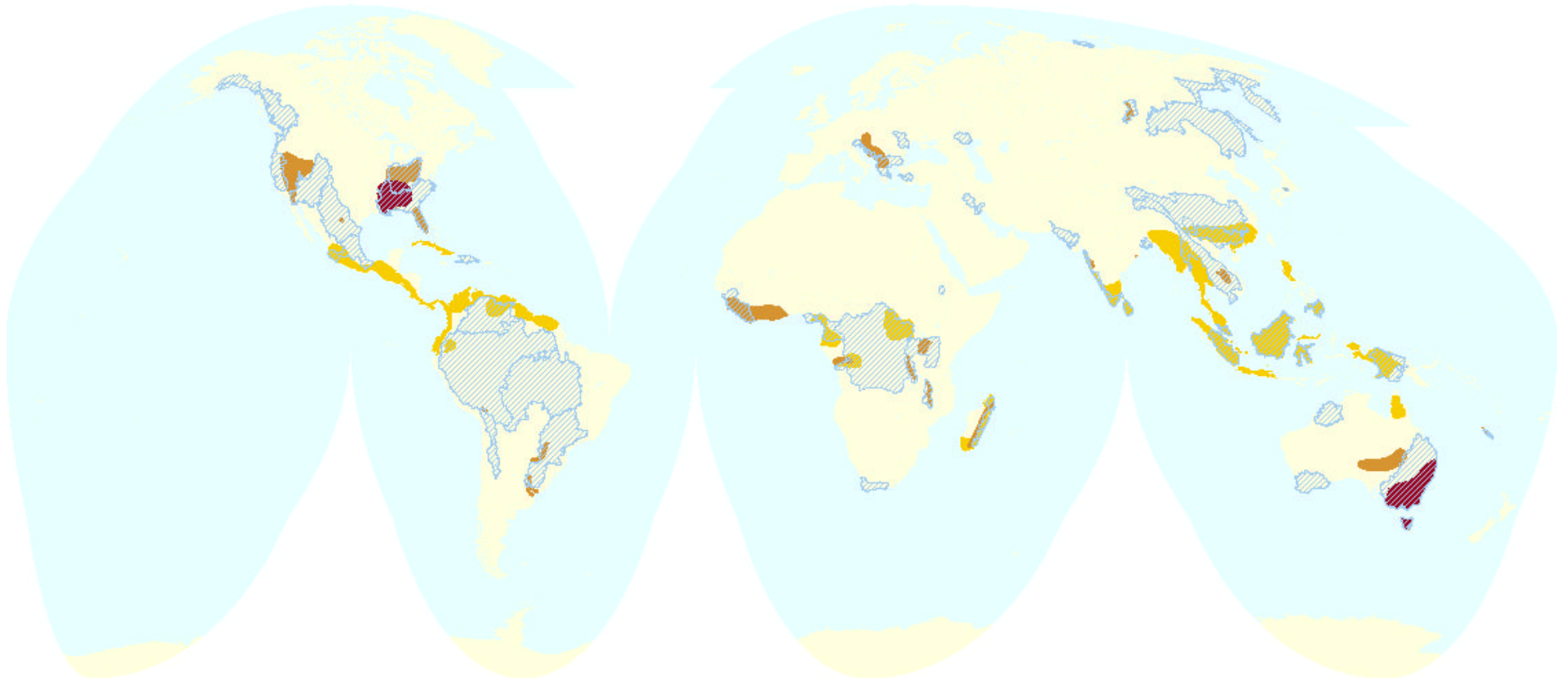


## Important Areas and Ecoregions for Freshwater Biodiversity



**Map Projection:** Interrupted Goode's Homolosine

**Citation:** World Resources Institute - PAGE, 2000

**Notes:**

Important areas of  
freshwater biodiversity

■ Crayfish

■ Molluscs

■ Crabs

■ Important freshwater  
ecoregions

**Map Description:**

This map presents a global view of important areas for freshwater biodiversity as prioritized by the World Wildlife Fund-US (WWF-US) and the World Conservation Monitoring Centre (WCMC) for conservation purposes. The major concentrations of freshwater biodiversity (according to these two analyses) are in the tropical areas of Latin America, Africa, and Southeast Asia, as well as large parts of Australia, Madagascar, North America, the Yangtze basin in China, and the Amur basin in Russia.

**Analytical Overview:**

The World Conservation Monitoring Centre identified 136 areas of high freshwater biodiversity: 32 in Africa, 14 in Oceania, 45 in Eurasia, 18 in North America, and 27 in South America. These areas of high diversity focus on five groups of species: freshwater fish, molluscs, crabs, crayfish, and fairy shrimp, and were identified through expert opinion. WWF-US identified areas of global importance for freshwater biodiversity based on species richness, species endemism, unique higher taxa (such as genera and families), unusual ecological or evolutionary phenomena, and global rarity of major habitat types (Olson and Dinerstein 1999). This analysis identified 53 freshwater ecoregions as outstanding areas for freshwater biodiversity. It is important to note that this ecoregional analysis, known as the Global 200, has also identified important terrestrial areas, such as grasslands and forests. Many of these selected forest and grasslands areas can also be considered "freshwater ecosystems" because they are seasonally flooded and represent important areas for freshwater as well as terrestrial biodiversity.

**Source:**

1. Grommbridge B. and M. Jenkins. 1998, Freshwater Biodiversity: a Preliminary Global Assessment.. World Conservation Monitoring Centre, Cambridge, UK:World Conservation Press.
2. Olson, D.M. and E. Dinerstein. 1998. "The Global 200: A Representation Approach to Conserving the Earth's Most Biologically Valuable Ecoregions". Conservation Biology 12 (3): 502-515.