

Project launched to fight frog-killing fungus

11 May 2009, By BRETT ZONGKER , Associated Press Writer

(AP) -- Researchers are heading to Central America to develop ways to fight a fungus blamed for the extinction of dozens of frog and amphibian species.

The Smithsonian Institution is leading the Amphibian Rescue and Conservation Project announced Monday. It includes six other zoos and institutes.

Scientists say the chytrid (KIH-trid) [fungus](#) threatens to wipe out a third of the approximately 6,000 known amphibian species. Already, conservationists say 122 [amphibian species](#) are believed to have gone extinct in the last 30 years, primarily because of the fungus.

The fungus is found in dozens of countries, including the U.S.

Scientists will study healthy frogs in Panama to see if their natural bacteria can be used to build resistance to the fungus.

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