

CBD

in a

NUTSHELL

by



**Global Youth
Biodiversity
Network**



Japan
Biodiversity
Fund



Convention on
Biological Diversity



United Nations Decade on Biodiversity

A Guidebook to the CBD Process

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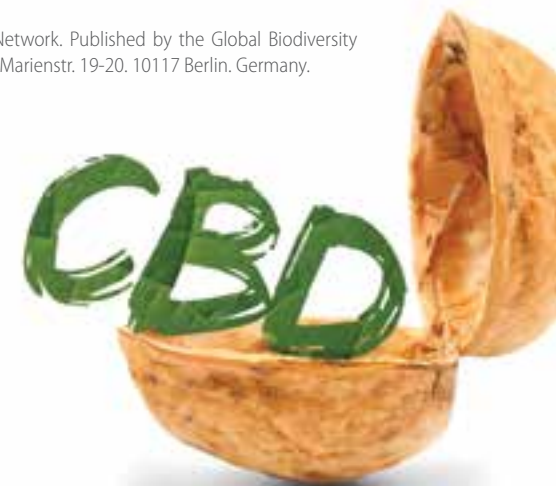
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Rationale

The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) is a very comprehensive international treaty with the ambitious aim to conserve biodiversity, promote its sustainable use and the fair access and benefit-sharing arising from its genetic resources.

Throughout the years the CBD has evolved organically, developing an international negotiating framework for biodiversity issues and also a framework for implementation. During this process a great number of experts, policy makers and stakeholders were mobilised and an extensive community of governments, institutions, organisations and agencies related to biodiversity issues was formed.

Due to the broad scope of the Convention and the organic way in which it has developed, its procedures and operational framework reached a high level of complexity that makes the understanding of the process under the CBD very difficult and sometimes can challenge the most experienced negotiators.

Although literature about the structure of the CBD-process does exist, it is scattered, very often outdated, highly fragmented, with most documents only looking at particular aspects. This makes it difficult for CBD-beginners to get an overview of the process and to understand how a meaningful contribution can look like.

To close this gap and as an effort to strengthen young people's role in the negotiations, GYBN in partnership with the CBD Secretariat, agreed to develop the "CBD in a nutshell" - a "survival" guidebook for the CBD process containing an overview of the CBD's institutional and operational arrangements and basic guidelines for effective participation in meetings.

The guidebook was envisioned to be not only a comprehensive document with solid content, but also to be a visually engaging publication to introduce the complexity of the CBD process in an intuitive and user-friendly way, facilitating the access to essential information for young people and CBD newcomers.



Photos: Pixabay



Photo: GYBN

Foreword

I am pleased to join the members of the Global Youth Biodiversity Network and their partners in introducing this guidebook about youth participation in the Convention on Biological Diversity.

The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) is a legally binding treaty that was opened for signature at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in June 1992. At the time, world leaders recognized the need to develop a strategy for sustainable development, a strategy that would allow us to meet our needs while ensuring that we leave a healthy and viable world for future generations. Twenty years later, the United Nations Secretary-General asked all stakeholders to strengthen partnerships with youth-led organizations and to integrate their voices more meaningfully into decision-making processes at all levels. And since then, the Conference of the Parties (COP) to the CBD recognized the importance of youth participation in decision-making

processes and implementation measures related to biodiversity.

Over the years, young people have themselves proven the relevance of their involvement and demonstrated their readiness to join other stakeholders and governments in their efforts to protect biodiversity. One very concrete result of the willingness of young people to take action has been the establishment of the Global Youth Biodiversity Network (GYBN). Since 2012, the network has provided a global platform where youth organizations and individuals can join forces, share concrete experiences about biodiversity and prepare contributions to the CBD processes.

Biodiversity needs that kind of attention and engagement. It will be crucial in determining whether the environmental conditions that benefitted human civilizations for over 10,000 years will exist beyond this century.

By immersing yourself in this guidebook, you will embark on a journey through history and across the globe, and will discover the importance of taking action to protect biodiversity as an individual or as part of a community. By consulting and using the guidebook as a reference, you will find practical answers and advice on how to engage in the work of the Convention. You will find information on the structure and institutional framework of the CBD, including meetings of the COP and its subsidiary bodies, about the decision-making process, the documents related to the meetings of the COP as well as the procedure to register, organize side-events and other good tips. You will also find out how you can take part in GYBN and join other youth in their efforts take direct and concrete action for biodiversity.

I wish you all a very interesting journey in the world of the Convention on Biological Diversity!



Photo: GYBN

**Bráulio Ferreira
de Souza Dias**

*Executive Secretary
of the Convention on
Biological Diversity*



Photo: GYBN

Foreword

It's been four years since GYBN first took up its role as coordination platform for youth participation in the CBD. And in 2012, thanks to the effort of young people coordinated under GYBN, a decision has been adopted by COP11 in Hyderabad, in which parties "*recognise the importance of young people in decision making process at all levels and encourage governments to include youth in all relevant processes and to support youth activities that contributes to the achievements of the CBD's objectives*" (Decision XI/8).

This was a major milestone for effective participation of youth in the CBD as it legitimises their role within the process and opens up doors for governments and organisations to involve young people in their activities.

GYBN is very proud that the role of young people in the CBD has been strengthened and has gradually become more effective in raising awareness and improving capacity among young people, and also in influencing the decision-making process. However,

while the motivation of young people to make their voice heard in the negotiations is quite substantial, the lack of youth-friendly information kits for CBD-beginners can hinder effective participation of young people and other representatives with little experience in the CBD.

In order to tackle this challenge, and building upon its own experiences in preparing and coordinating youth representatives GYBN has started a capacity building and awareness raising project called *Youth Voices* to develop youth-friendly publications and workshops that help young people understand the CBD process, the Strategic Plan and its Aichi Targets.

As part of *Youth Voices*, GYBN has developed the *CBD in a Nutshell* guidebook, aiming at helping future youth delegates to better understand the CBD-process and to provide them with all the information they need to participate effectively in the negotiations.

CBD in a Nutshell, as the name suggests,

provides an overview of the negotiating process in the CBD, the operational and institutional frameworks that supports this process and the main actors involved in it. It gives hands-on information in how to get active in the process, employing extensive use of visualisations and other reader-friendly tools.

It includes several tips on how youth delegates can make the most out of their participation in CBD meetings, guiding them through their potential roles and responsibilities, while providing them with examples of activities and strategies to make a difference in the process. It also includes a number of best-practices showcasing youth-led initiatives to inspire more people to take action.

We hope that *CBD in a Nutshell* will guide you throughout your journey in the CBD, facilitating your understanding of the process, strengthening your position within the negotiations and ultimately supporting your actions to achieve the objectives of the Convention!



GYBN
Steering Committee



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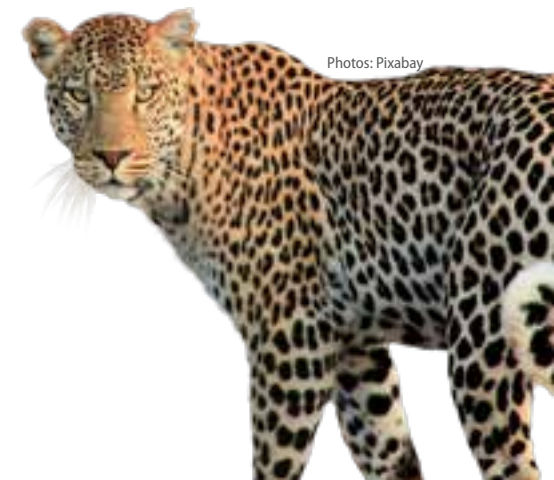
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1 Biodiversity – The Web Of Life

Photo: Andrew Hendry/California, USA

Chapter 1

Biodiversity – The Web Of Life

Chapter one provides a brief overview of biodiversity, covering its definition, components, distribution, and its importance in maintaining the well being of the planet. It also provides a glimpse of the many threats and pressures biodiversity is facing today and the future perspectives.

What is biodiversity?

Variety of life on Earth and the natural patterns it forms



Biodiversity

All of the life forms that have evolved during the past millions of years.

From genes and chromosomes to animals, plants and ecosystems, biodiversity is the web of life that governs all ecological interactions.

Biodiversity, which is short for biological diversity, means the variety of life - origina-

ting from the Greek 'bios' meaning 'life' and the Latin 'diversus' meaning 'various.' It is the essence underpinning life, which makes every living organism on Planet Earth unique and enables nature to thrive.

Illustration: João Elias de Brito



Convention on Biological Diversity

The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) officially defines biodiversity as, "The variability among living organisms from all sources including, inter alia, terrestrial, marine and other aquatic ecosystems and the ecological complexes of which they are part; this includes diversity within species, between species and of ecosystems."

Ecosystem Diversity

Species Diversity

Genetic Diversity

Biodiversity is our life

When elements of biodiversity such as species or habitats are lost, ecosystems become less resilient and the services provided by them are compromised.

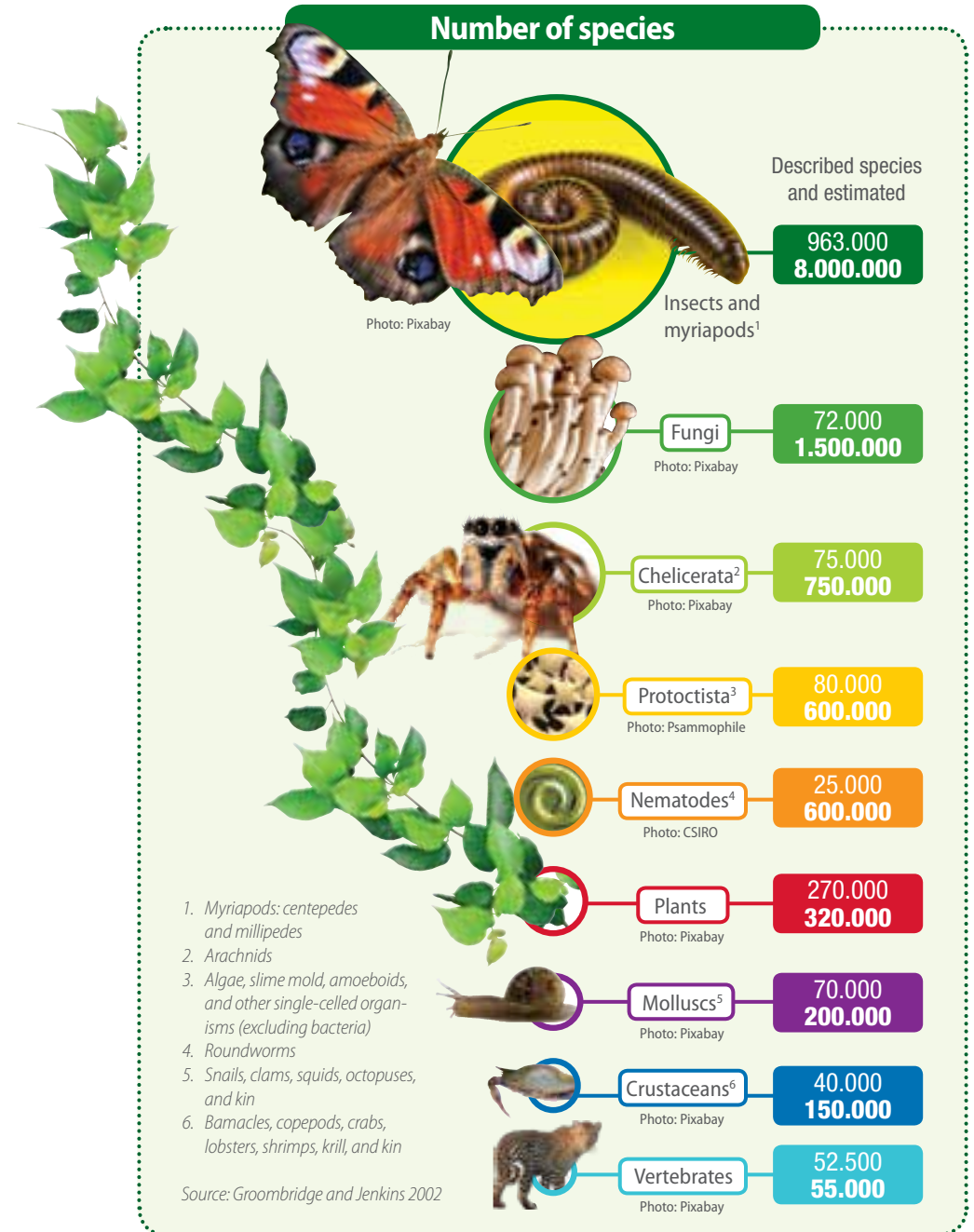
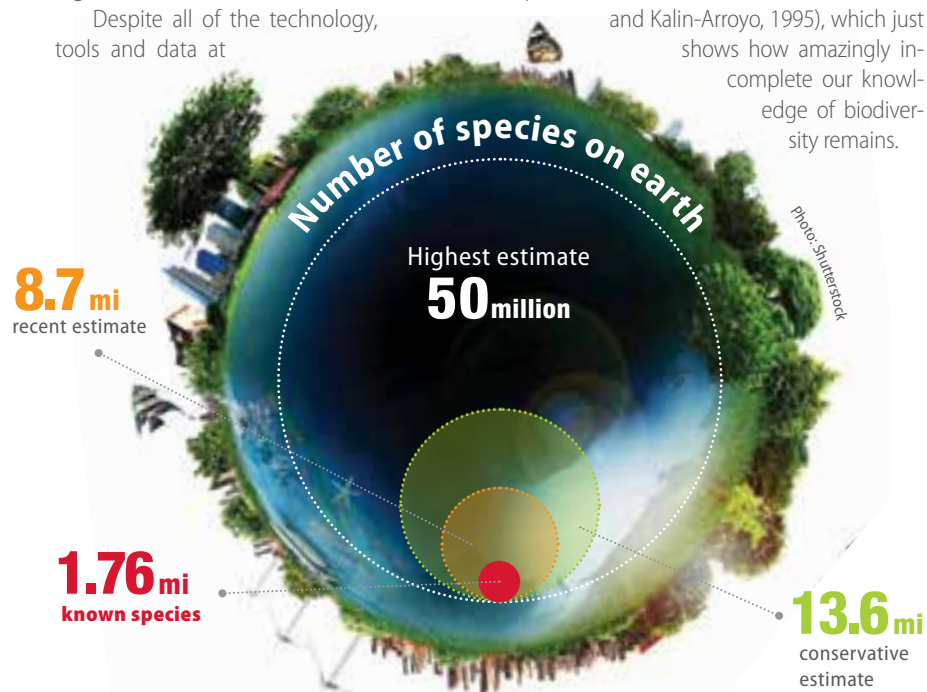
That is why every time a species or a group of species go extinct due, for example, to overexploitation or habitat loss, we might be losing valuable services provided by these species or the opportunity of ever knowing whether there would have been any potential to significantly improve our lives.

Biodiversity contains the necessary building blocks for all these services that are constantly shaping and regulating our environment and providing us with resources, shelter and spiritual and psychological benefits.

Despite all of the technology, tools and data at

our disposal, biodiversity remains difficult to quantify. Knowledge of taxonomic diversity, which is the best-known dimension of biodiversity remains incomplete and strongly biased towards the species level, megafauna, temperature systems and components used by people (MEA, 2005). Nevertheless, scientists worldwide are continuously working on quantifying and measuring biodiversity.

To estimate the number of species on Earth is a great challenge, and scientists still can't agree on a number. Estimates can range between 5 to more than 50 million, with more conservative estimates at 13.6 million species and recent estimates at 8.7 million species (Mora et al., 2011). Only around 1.76 million species have been identified (Hawksworth and Kalin-Arroyo, 1995), which just shows how amazingly incomplete our knowledge of biodiversity remains.



Biodiversity is everywhere

Biodiversity distribution

Life forms are found everywhere in our planet

The distribution of biodiversity depends on a number of factors such as climate, altitude, soil and the presence of other species.

Biodiversity, as mentioned previously, covers ecosystems, species and genetic diversity. Ecosystems that share a broadly similar biological evolutionary history con-

stitute large spatial regions known as biogeographic realms.

There are eight terrestrial biogeographic realms which correspond to continents. It must be noted that marine biogeographical realms remain poorly known and largely undefined.

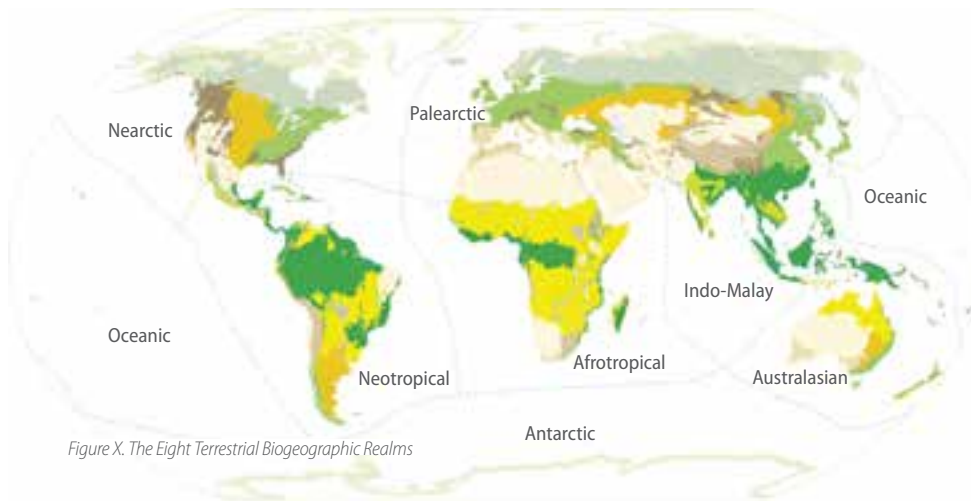
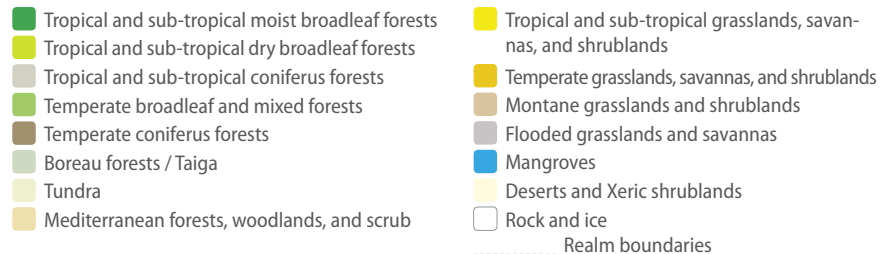


Figure X. The Eight Terrestrial Biogeographic Realms



Source: Millennium Ecosystem Assessment

Megadiverse countries

The concept of “megadiverse countries” was put forward for the first time in 1988, at the Conference on Biodiversity held at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C by renowned primatologist and vice-chair of Conservation International, Russel Mittermeier. It soon became a popular concept among scientists and policy makers as it identifies the biologically wealthiest nations on Earth.

Seventeen countries were identified as hosting more than 70% of earth’s Biodiversity, and are considered key countries to biodiversity conservation globally.

This classification demonstrates how a small number of countries hold a large portion of global diversity and therefore

have a disproportionate political responsibility for conservation and biodiversity management

In February 2002, the Ministers in charge of the Environment and the Delegates of Bolivia, Brazil, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ecuador, India, Indonesia, Kenya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Mexico, Peru, Philippines, South Africa and Venezuela, assembled in the Mexican City of Cancún. These countries declared to set up a Group of Like-Minded Megadiverse Countries (LMMC) as a mechanism for consultation and cooperation so that their interests and priorities relating to the preservation and sustainable use of biological diversity could be promoted.



Source: Mittermeier, 2005

Global biodiversity hotspots

Biodiversity hotspots are biogeographic regions which feature exceptional concentrations of endemic species experiencing exceptional loss of habitat (Myers et al. 2000).

Biodiversity hotspots refer to 35 biologically rich areas worldwide and represent 2.3%

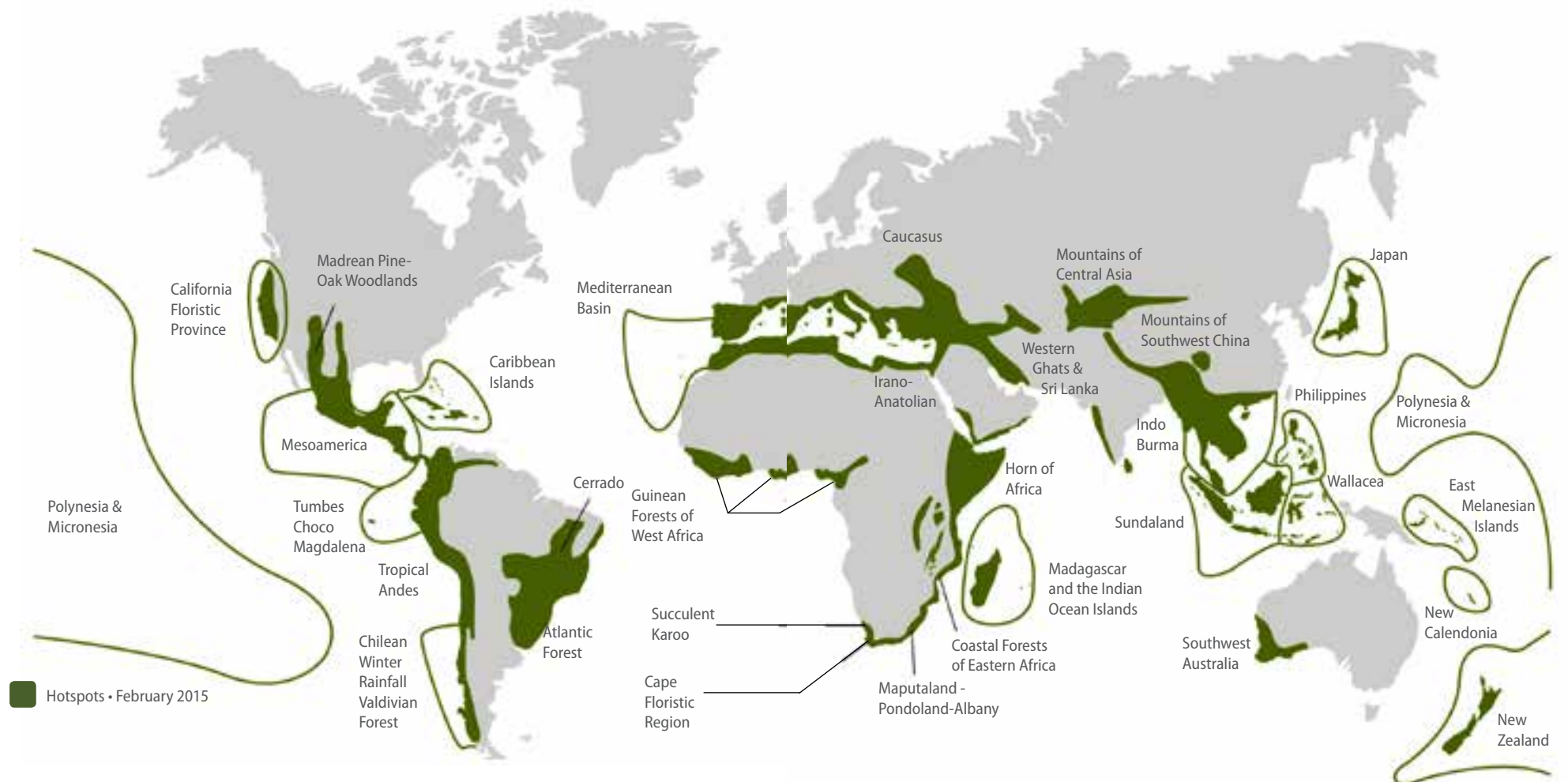
of Earth's land surface. This might sound like a small number but this small area supports more than half of the world's endemic plant species and nearly 43% of bird, mammal, reptile and amphibian species all of which are also endemics (Conservation International, 2015).

In order to qualify as a biodiversity hotspot, a region or area must meet **two strict criteria, which are:**

The area must have at least **1,500** endemic vascular plants.

The area must have **30%** or less of its original natural vegetation

Source: The Crop Site, February 2005 Global Biodiversity Hotspot Map. Available Online: URL <<http://www.thecropsite.com/focus/5m/52/biodiversity-protecting-the-natural-world>>(accessed July 19 2016)

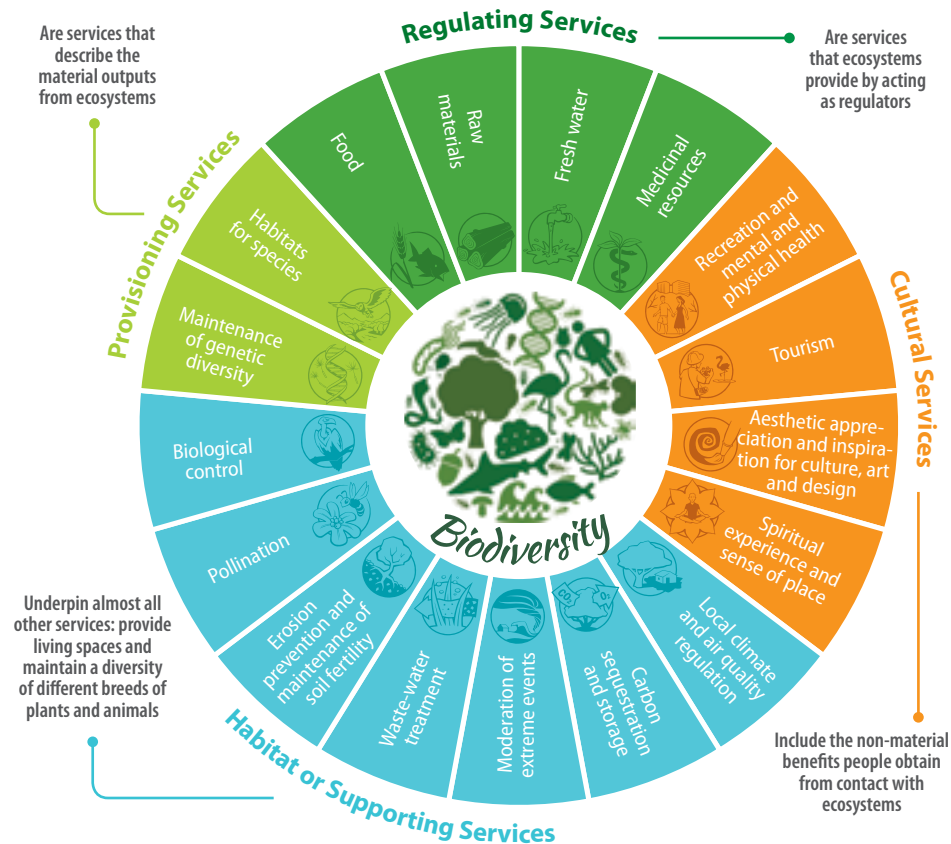


Why is it **important?**

Although biodiversity has been undervalued and often taken for granted by modern societies, its existence is the basis for a wide range of ecosystem services: from food to fibers, climate regulation, pollination, recreational and spiritual activities. These are the services that allow us and every other species to live on Earth.

Biodiversity is the basis for ecosystem services

Ecosystem services are **benefits** provided to humans by ecosystems and nature in general. In recent years, the concept of ecosystem services have been developed to describe and categorize these benefits. The Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, divided ecosystem services into four categories:



Source: TEEB (2010)

Our personal health, and the health of our economy and human society, depends on the continuous supply of various ecological services that would be extremely costly or **impossible to replace**. These natural services are so varied as to be almost infinite. For

example, it would be impractical to replace, to any large extent, services such as pest control performed by various creatures feeding on one another or pollination performed by insects and birds going about their everyday business.

Coral Reefs



Photo: Pixabay

Considered the rainforests of the ocean, coral reefs provide ecosystem services to coastal communities such as recreation, research, fisheries, protection against natural hazards and climate regulation. According to TEEB (2012) about half a billion people are thought to depend economically on coral reefs. It is estimated that coral reefs generate up to US\$1,25 million per hectare from tourism, coastal protection, bioprospecting and fisheries annually.

Pollination provides essential ecosystem services. Between 15% and 30% of food consumed by humans in developed countries requires an animal pollinator. According to the TEEB report (2010), the total economic value of insect pollination globally is estimated to be €153 Billion, which equates to 9.5% of agricultural production. Therefore, worldwide declines in pollinator diversity is therefore an issue of major concern.

Photo: Andrew Hendry/Europe



Pollination

Current status

Life under threat

Despite its crucial importance for all life on earth, biodiversity continues to be lost at an unprecedented rate.

The Millennium Ecosystem Assessment,

which involved the work of more than 1,360 experts worldwide, also shows the dramatic change of all Earth's ecosystems due to human activities.



More land was converted to cropland in the 30 years after 1950 than in the 150 years between 1700 and 1850.



Between 1960 and 2000, reservoir storage capacity quadrupled, and as a result the amount of water stored behind large dams is estimated to be three to six times the amount of water flowing through rivers at any one time.



Some 35% of mangroves have been lost in the last two decades in countries where adequate data are available.



Already 20% of known coral reefs have been destroyed and another 20% degraded in the last several decades.



Over half of the 14 biomes assessed have experienced a 20–50% conversion to human use, with temperate and Mediterranean forests and temperate grasslands being the most affected.

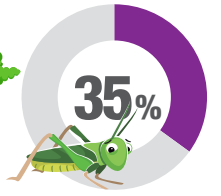
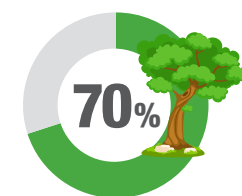
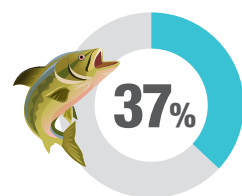
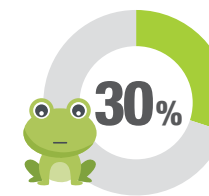
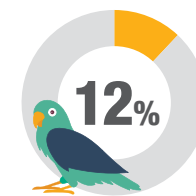
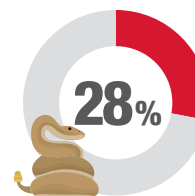
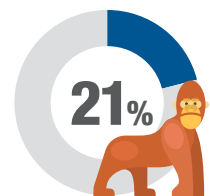
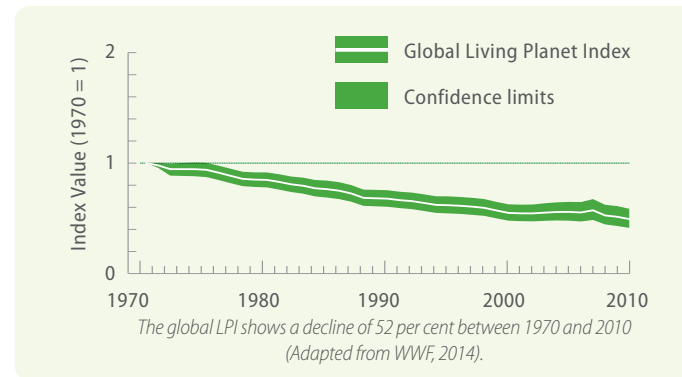


Estimates of future extinction rates are 10 times higher than the current rates.

The WWF Living Planet Report (2014), shows similar trends, and states that populations of vertebrates are about half the size they were 40 years ago.

The report also shows the last global

updates on the Living Planet Index (LPI). The LPI is an indicator of the status of global biodiversity based on population trends of vertebrates (mammal, bird, reptile, amphibian and fish species).



so far, are under threat

17,291 species out of all

47,677 species



are considered to be at

serious risk

(IUCN Red List, 2009)

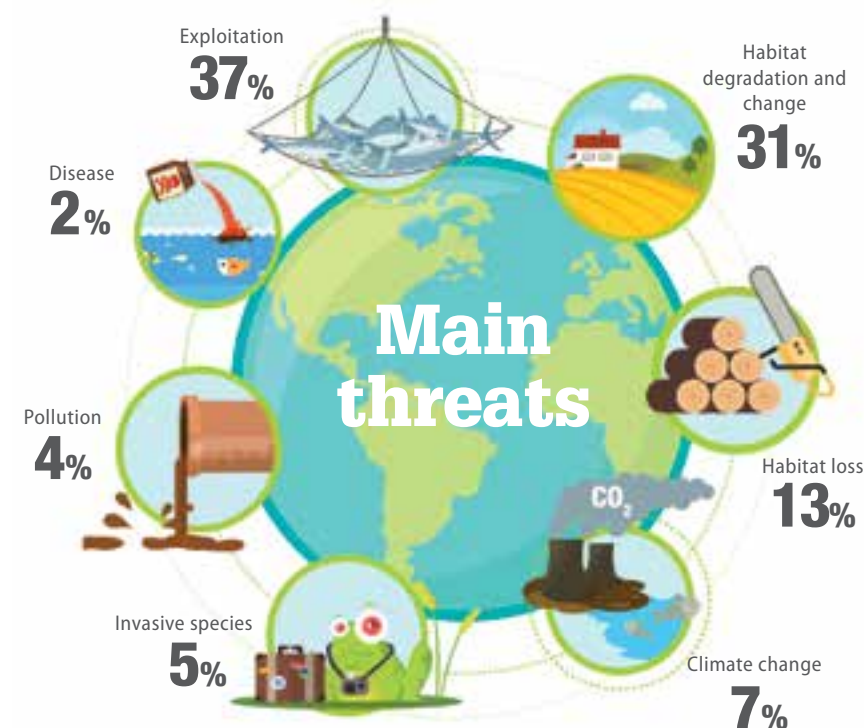
Direct drivers of biodiversity loss

"The conclusions are inescapable: during the last few decades, humans have emerged as a new force of nature. We are modifying physical, chemical, and biological systems in new ways, at faster rates and over larger spatial scales than ever recorded on Earth. Humans have unwittingly embarked upon a grand experiment with our planet. The outcome of this experiment is unknown but has profound implications for all life on Earth." (Address by Jane Lubchenco at the meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, 1998)

From the dawn of agriculture, some 10,000 years ago, through the Industrial

Revolution of the past three centuries, we have reshaped our landscapes on an ever-larger and lasting scale. By consuming ever more of nature's resources, we have gained more abundant food and better shelter, sanitation and health care, but these gains are often accompanied by increasing environmental degradation that may be followed by declines in local economies and the societies supported by this environment. (Modified from CBD, 2000)

As we have seen previously, human economic development is driving environmental degradation and the consequent biodiversity loss we are witnessing.



Source: WWF Living Planet Report 2014

The Global Biodiversity Outlook is the most important publication of the CBD. It provides a summary of the latest data on the status and trends of biodiversity and draws conclusions relevant

to the further implementation of the Convention. The third edition of the GBO report highlighted that the increasing major pressures on biodiversity included direct and indirect drivers.

Direct drivers

- Loss, degradation and fragmentation of natural habitats
- Overexploitation of biological resources
- Pollution, in particular the buildup of nutrients such as nitrogen and phosphorus in the environment
- The impacts of invasive alien species on ecosystems and the services they provide to people
- Climate change and acidification of the oceans, associated with the buildup of greenhouse gases in the



According to the 4th GBO Report (2014), the analysis of the major primary sectors shows that the agriculture sector is responsible for 60% of world's deforestation and 70% of the projected loss of terrestrial biodiversity.

These are the direct drivers of bio-

diversity loss, but it is also essential to identify and address the underlying factors that are indirectly driving the loss of biodiversity causes.

Indirect drivers

- 
Demographic drivers: e.g.: growth of human population and demand for resources
- 
Economic drivers: e.g.: lack of proper recognition and valuation of services and goods provided by biodiversity and ecosystem; subsidies and incentives that maintain current unsustainable production and consumption patterns
- 
Sociopolitical drivers: e.g.: weak governance, lack of political will and lack of awareness on biodiversity
- 
Cultural and religious drivers: i.e.: how cultural, religious and social values and beliefs can influence consumption patterns and behaviour change
- 
Science and technology: i.e.: influencing development; contributions to efficiency improvements in production systems

Impacts of direct drivers of biodiversity loss

	Habitat change	Climate change	Invasive species	Over-exploitation	Pollution (nitrogen, phosphorus)
Forest <small>Photo: Andrew Hendry/Kispiox, Columbia Británica, Canadá</small>	Boreal	↗	↑	↗	→
	Temperate	↘	↑	↑	→
	Tropical	↑	↑	↑	↗
Dryland <small>Photo: Andrew Hendry/Africa</small>	Temperate grassland	↗	↑	→	→
	Mediterranean	↗	↑	↑	→
	Tropical grassland and savannah	↗	↑	↑	↗
	Desert	→	↑	→	→
Inland water <small>Photo: Andrew Hendry/Uganda</small>	↑	↑	↑	→	↑
Coastal <small>Photo: Andrew Hendry/Galapagos</small>	↗	↑	↗	↗	↑
Marine <small>Photo: Andrew Hendry/Galapagos</small>	↑	↑	→	↗	↑
Island <small>Photo: Pixabay</small>	→	↑	→	→	↑
Mountain <small>Photo: Andrew Hendry/Chile</small>	→	↑	→	→	↑
Polar <small>Photo: Pixabay</small>	↗	↑	→	↗	↑

Driver's current trends ↘ Decreasing impact ↗ Continuing impact ↗ Increasing impact ↑ Very rapid increase of the impact

Driver's impact on biodiversity over the last century Low Moderate High Very high

Source: Adapted from the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, 2005

Future of biodiversity

The conclusions of future predictions for biodiversity by the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment are alarming. If we continue with “business as usual” practices, there will be dramatic losses for biodiversity and a consequent decrease in the provision of ecosystem services.

How much biodiversity will remain a century from now under different value frameworks?

The outer circle in the figure represents the present level of global biodiversity. Each inner circle represents the level of biodiversity under different value frameworks. Question marks indicate the uncertainties over where the boundaries exist, and therefore the appropriate size of each circle under different value frameworks.

With consideration to non-utilitarian values:

Additional amount of biodiversity that should be conserved for non-utilitarian values such as intrinsic values and the equitable distribution of biodiversity

With consideration to the biodiversity role in ecosystem services:

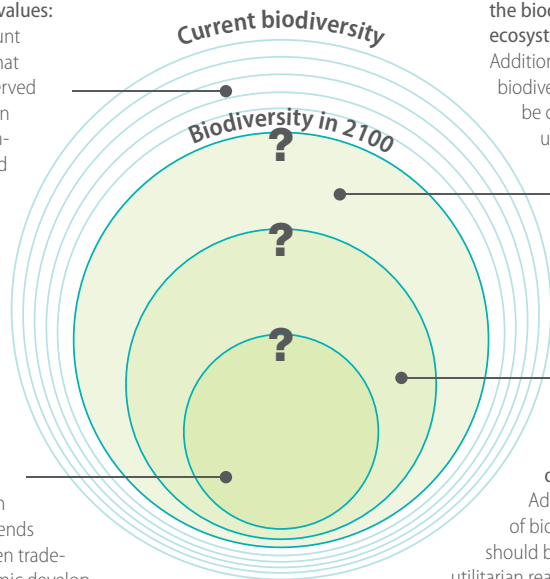
Additional amount of biodiversity that should be conserved for utilitarian reasons because of its role in providing and sustaining ecosystem services

With consideration to resilience, thresholds, and option values:

Additional amount of biodiversity that should be conserved for utilitarian reasons because of its role in maintaining capacity to adapt to change, as precaution against thresholds, and for option and existence values

Business as usual:

What will remain under current trends and policies given trade-offs with economic development, agriculture, etc.



Please note that the circle sizes are only conceptual and do not correspond to any calculation or estimate

Source: Millennium Ecosystem Assessment

The nine planetary boundaries

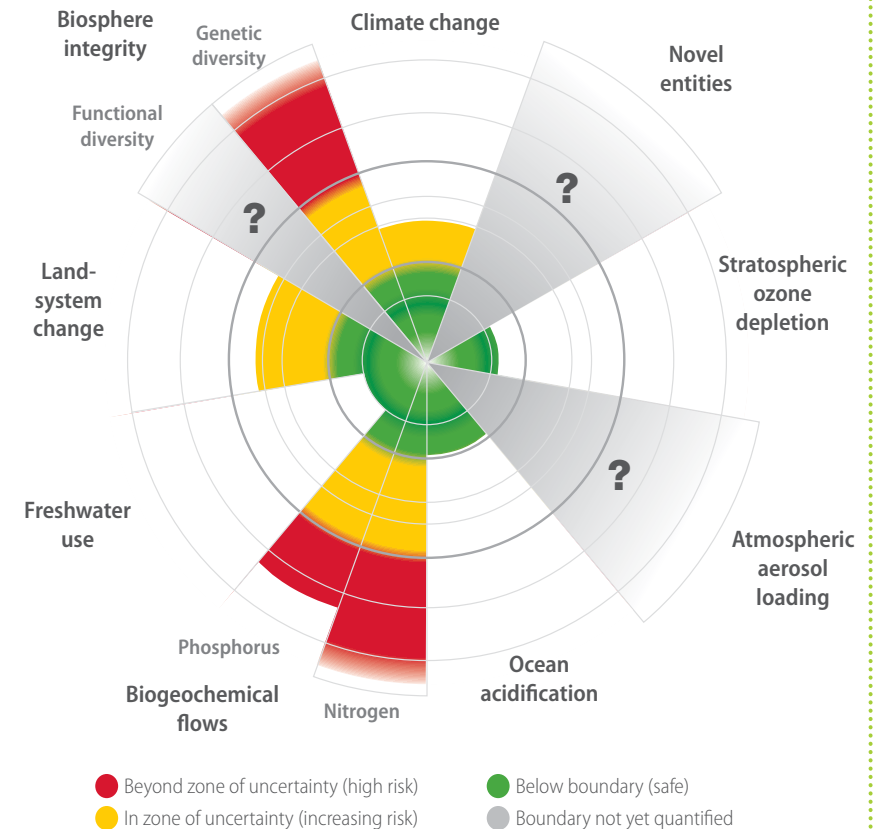
The Planetary Boundaries framework, developed by scientists from the Stockholm Resilience Center, identified thresholds within nine essential earth system processes that indicates a “safe operating zone” for survival in the planet.

This framework is still being heavily debated within the international community, and its influence is still being questioned due to methodological limitations

and the difficulty in establishing adequate indicators to identify thresholds.

Nevertheless, it manages to convey a powerful message to people everywhere that our way of living is compromising our future and the future of the planet.

According to this framework, 4 out of 9 essential processes are already over the safe operating zone, and have surpassed their planetary boundaries.



Adapted from the Stockholm Resilience Centre, 2015

Tackling The Environmental Crisis

Photo: Andrew Hendry/Uganda

Chapter 2

Tackling The Environmental Crisis

Chapter two provides the background in which the Convention on Biological Diversity was established as a Multilateral Environmental Agreement.

The world decides to take action

Major pollution problems

Beginning in the mid 20th century, many developed countries were experiencing severe pollution problems, which were direct consequences of their industrial activities. In 1952, London was severely affected by airborne pollutants, an incident named the "Great Smog". Los Angeles, Pennsylvania and other large cities suffered from similar extreme smog events in the following years. Multiple severe public health and contamination disasters also occurred in Japan in the 1910's, 1950's and 1960's with grave consequences.

Science warns: humans are overexploiting the planet

These environmental disasters were followed closely by scientists that would confirm suspicions that man-made economic activities were causing the disruption of the environment. The famous 1974 Molina-Rowland report on the impacts of chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) in the ozone layer profoundly affected public opinion in the US, Canada and the Nordic countries, resulting in a ban on CFCs.

Around the same time, several influential

political groups issued publications increasing awareness on these emerging environmental issues. The Club of Rome's "Limits to Growth" (1972) report highlighted the impacts that economic activities have on the environment and the correlation between the world's economic growth and environmental deterioration.

Public outcry

With environmental pollution in the lime-light, public opinion and awareness began to grow. Fuelled by publications such as Rachel Carson's Silent Spring (1962), civil society started to mobilise themselves and take a stand on issues such as pollution and wildlife exploitation, pushing environmental activism forward. Earth Day was first celebrated on 22nd April 1970, to promote the importance of keeping our planet clean and healthy. This step towards taking ownership over Earth's health inspired many organised groups to create non-governmental organisations to channel society's response to environmental problems. Several

of today's most influential Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) were established during this period (IUCN in 1948, WWF in 1961, Friends of the Earth in 1969, Greenpeace in 1972, etc).

Transboundary challenges

Trying to fix any large scale environmental problem is no easy task, and it didn't take long for scientists to soon realize that dealing with the problem itself was not the only challenge. What makes these issues incredibly complex and difficult to resolve is their transboundary nature.

The environment has no borders, meaning that air/water pollution and climate change cannot be contained in defined areas and can easily spread across countries and regions. Many of the driving factors at the root of these problems could have consequences and impacts everywhere.

Faced with complex environmental challenges on a global scale, governments in many countries were pressured to take action.



UN Conference on the Human Environment

Stockholm, Sweden

Main outcomes:



Stockholm Declaration and Action Plan



26 principles to guide governments on the environment



Creation of the United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP) in Nairobi, Kenya



World leaders



Agreed to safeguard wildlife and natural resources



Recognised the importance of biodiversity protection



Strong participation in an international conference



Global conference on the environment

Birth of Global Environmental Governance

1972



Stockholm Declaration and Action Plan is **not legally binding**

BUT

Shaped the agenda and priorities of many organisations including UNEP

Influenced many countries to establish Ministries of Environment

"Global response"

In 1972, world leaders from 113 countries convened in Stockholm, Sweden for the first UN environmental conference.

The United Nations Conference on the Human Environment (UNCHE) marked the first time that countries came together to collaborate on a plan to manage environmental issues. This is often credited as the beginning of modern international environmental governance.

At the conference, world leaders agreed on the need for "an international entity to catalyse the necessary environmental action at the international level, and this led to the creation of the United Nations Environmental Programme - UNEP" (Speth & Haas 2006). Furthermore, in its "Stockholm Declaration" the delegates also agreed for the first time to safeguard wildlife and natural resources, thereby recognising the protection of biodiversity as an important issue.

After this conference, several landmark environmental treaties were created, marking the beginning of the current period of increasingly intensive treaty-making in the form of Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs).

Throughout the 1970's, momentum to tackle environmental problems on the international level was growing and this led to the adoption of a number of MEAs. The first generation of MEAs were mainly sectoral, single issue agreements: focusing on very specific problems such as trade of endangered species (CITES) or migratory species (CMS). Consequently, by the 1980s the governance of biodiversity presented itself in a very fragmented way. It became apparent that an umbrella MEA with a more holistic approach was needed to complement the growing number of MEAs, which were only covering specific aspects of biodiversity.

1970

First Celebration of Earth Day (USA)

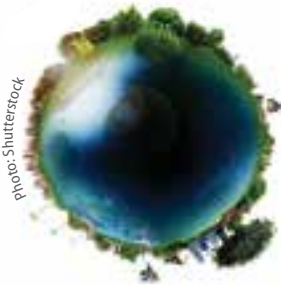


photo: Shutterstock

1971

RAMSAR Convention on Wetlands



1972

1972

GREENPEACE

Limits to Growth Report
Club of Rome

World Heritage Convention



World Heritage Convention

1973

Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES)



1979

Convention on Migratory Species



photo: Pixabay

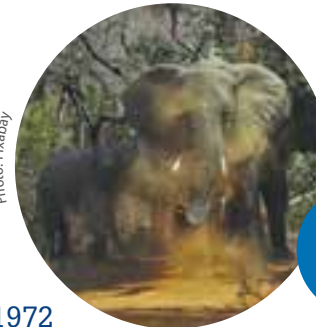
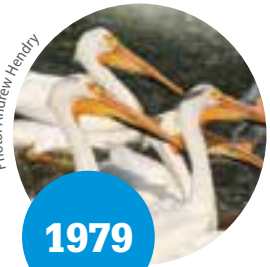


photo: Pixabay



photo: Andrew Hendry



Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs)

MEAs are international agreements that focus on environmental issues. They are considered to be a legally binding agreement between several states. Since the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment in 1972, many MEAs have been created to deal with specific aspects of the environment. The first generation of MEAs focused

on single-use oriented issues, and were mainly sectoral agreements. After the UN Convention on Environment and Development and the Rio Summit in 1992, the second generation of MEAs were produced and took a more holistic approach, focusing on sustainable development and the sustainable use of natural resources.

Examples

First generation: Sectoral



Ramsar
Convention on
Wetlands (1971)



Convention on the
International Trade of
Endangered Species -
CITES (1973)



Convention
on Biological
Diversity



United Nations
Convention
to Combat
Desertification



United Nations
Framework
Convention on
Climate Change

Second generation: Holistic

1985

Society for
Conservation Biology



1987

Conservation
International (CI)



Our Common Future

World Commission on Environment
and Development (WCED)
"Development that meet the needs
of future generations"



1991

Global
Environment
Facility (GEF)



Rewind the clock: A short history of the conservation movement in Western society

The origins of environmental conservation can be traced back thousands of years when indigenous and local people included it within their community practices. However, the conservation movement in Western society only came into existence in the past 150 years. Needless to say, biodiversity was not a dominant motivating factor of this movement.

Conservation was documented through the work of environmental historians, early ecologists and advocates who wrote about the impacts of human activities on various elements of nature. Philosophers who contemplated nature's capacity for spiritual healing in their philosophical theories became highly influential.

All of these ideas and opinions about nature had a common theme: the benefits of spending time outdoors and the need to conserve natural areas.

National parks and public lands were established across Europe to create recreation-

al areas for the upper class and in North America to preserve the wild natural beauty of nature.

Two groundbreaking publications set the stage for modern environmentalism:

- "Land Ethic" by Aldo Leopold emphasized the relationship between people and nature, and the existence of an ecological conscience.

- "Silent Spring" by Rachel Carson, which is considered the underlying foundation of North America's environmental revolution as it exposed the actual and potential consequences of using the insecticide DDT (dichloro-diphenyl-trichloroethane).

Following this, international conservation organisations such as the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) and The International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) were founded and have become particularly active in the advocacy for and the establishment and management of conservation areas worldwide.



Claus, C.A., Chan, K.M. and Satterfield, T. (2010)

Photo: Designed by kjpgareter / Freepik



Earth Summit



United Nations Convention on Environment and Development - UNCED

In June 1992, the Earth Summit was held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. The conference brought together over 178 States including 118 heads of state, nearly 1400 NGOs, which included representatives of indigenous groups, women's groups, environmental groups and activists to

discuss the environment.

The scale of the Earth Summit was unprecedented, and was the largest inter-governmental gathering in history dedicated to environmental issues. This generated profound impacts in international policy as well as civil society mobilisation.

Main outcomes of the Rio Earth Summit

- Rio Declaration on Environment and Development
- Agenda 21 and the creation of the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD)
- Forest principles – a non-binding set of principles for forest management

Environmental treaties (MEAs) – Which are called today the Rio Conventions



Convention on Biological Diversity



UN Framework Convention on Climate Change



UN Convention to Combat Desertification

178
Nations

8000
Official delegates

1400
NGOs

3000
Observers

9000
Journalists



Photo: UN Photo, Michos Tzavaros

Photo: Youtube



The Rio Earth Summit was the birthplace of youth participation at UN environmental conferences.

Severn Suzuki - then 12 years old, delivered a powerful speech that moved all delegates and received widespread media coverage.



Unprecedented Scale

Photo: Pixabay



Forest Principles



Looking at the **Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)**

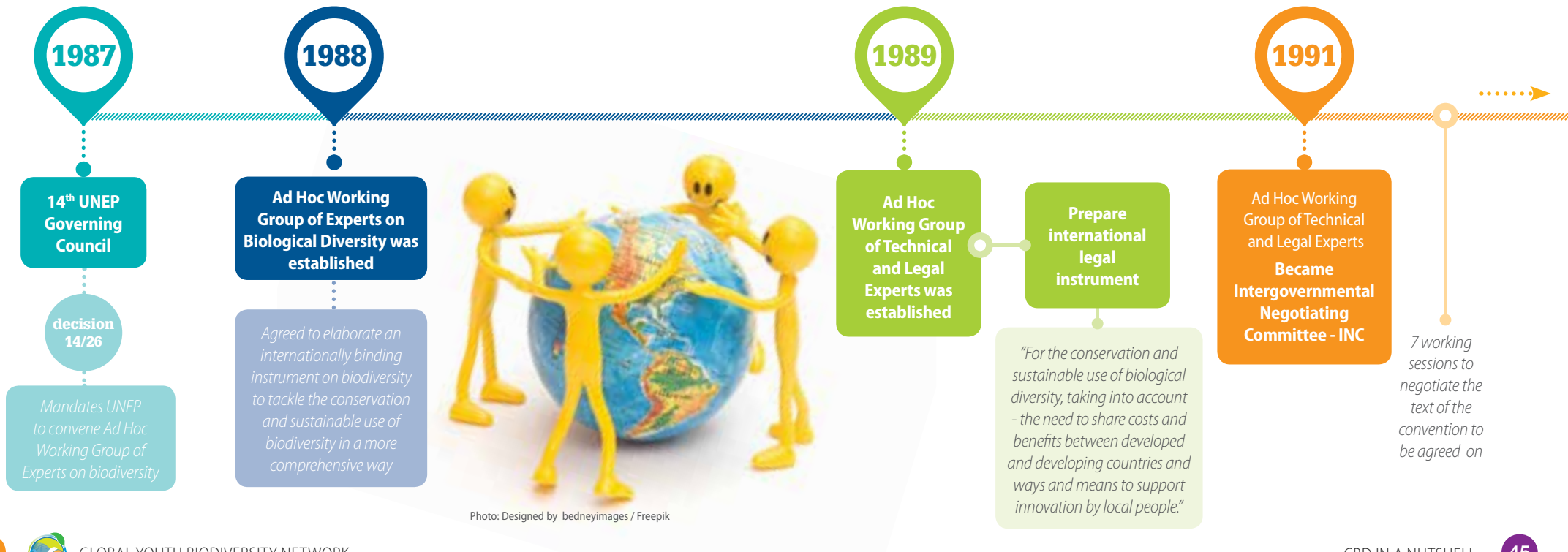
As an example of how environmental agreements are created

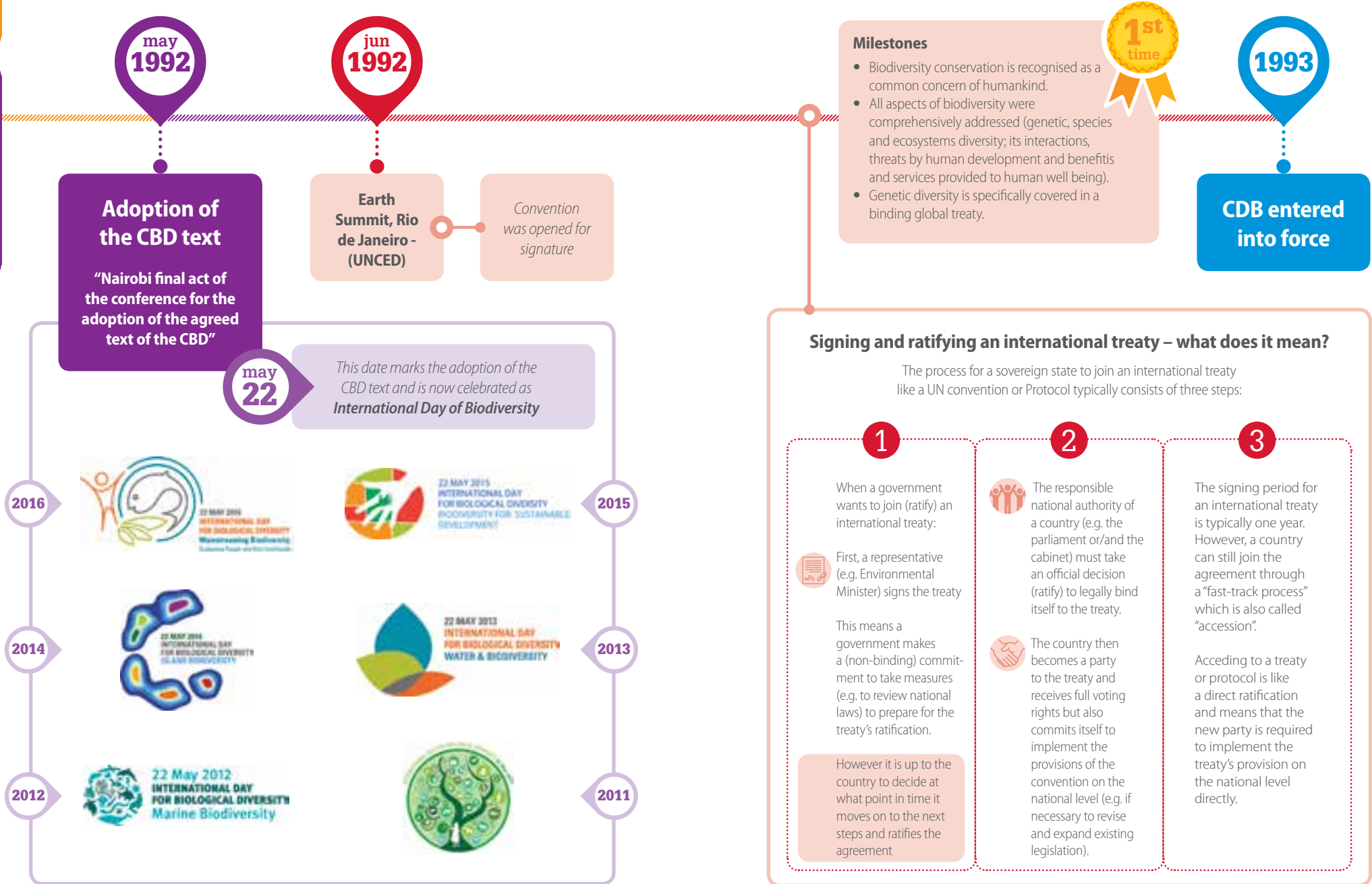
In 1987 the UNEP Governing Council adopted a decision that led to the creation of an expert group on biodiversity. The group was named the Ad Hoc Working Group of Experts on Biological Diversity, and was tasked to explore synergies between existing biodiversity treaties. In its first session in 1988, it was agreed upon to start preparations for the creation of a legally binding agreement on biodiversity.

To continue the negotiation process, in

1989 an Ad Hoc Working Group of Technical and Legal Experts was created to develop a UN Convention on biodiversity. Two years later, in 1991, this Ad Hoc Working Group evolved into the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC). On 22nd May 1992, the INC concluded with the adoption of a legally-binding CBD text following seven working sessions in Nairobi. Thus, today the 22nd of May is celebrated as the International Day of Biodiversity.

Photo: Pixabay





Biodiversity **Related** Conventions

Seven International Conventions
focused on biodiversity issues

Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), 1992

www.cbd.int



The CBD covers all ecosystems, species and genetic resources and its objectives are the conservation of biological diversity, the sustainable use of its compo-

nents and the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from commercial and other use of genetic resources.



Photo: Shutterstock

International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC), 1951

www.ippc.int

The International Plant Protection Convention is an international treaty that has been developed to secure coordinated, effective action to prevent and to control the introduction and spread of plant pests and plant products. The Convention extends beyond the protection of cultivated plants to the protection of natural flora and its products.

It takes into consideration both direct and indirect damage by pests. It also covers vehicles, aircraft and vessels, containers, storage places, soil and other objects or material that can harbour or spread pests. It aims to prevent the introduction and spread of plant pests and promote the appropriate measures for their control.



Photo: Pixabay

Convention on Conservation of Migratory Species (CMS), 1979

www.cms.int/



The Convention on Conservation of Migratory Species is the only global and UN-based intergovernmental organisation established exclusively for the conservation and management of terrestrial, aquatic and avian migratory species throughout their range. Parties to the CMS work together to conserve migratory species and their habitats by providing strict protection for the most endangered migratory species, by concluding regional multilateral agreements for the conservation and management of specific species or categories of species, and by undertaking co-operative research and conservation activities.

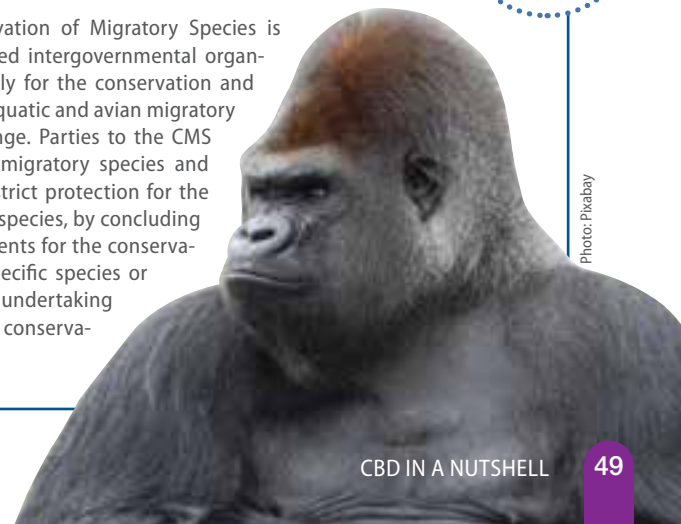


Photo: Pixabay

Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES), 1973

www.cites.org

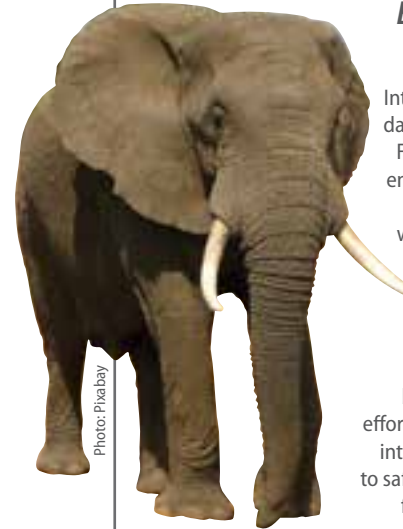


Photo: Pixabay

The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora aims to ensure that international trade in specimens of wild animals and plants does not threaten their survival. Because the trade in wild animals and plants crosses borders between countries, the effort to regulate it requires international cooperation to safeguard certain species from over-exploitation.

CITES is one of the most effective international treaties which has attempted to conserve biodiversity. Through its three appendices, the Convention accords varying degrees of protection to approximately 33,600 species so far, which are placed under different Appendices based on the level of threat they face. Species in Appendix I are completely banned from trade, Appendix II are those species whose trade is regulated through permits and licenses and Appendix III comprises species which countries need assistance on in order to control their trade.

Photo: Designed by evening_tao / Freepik

International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resource for Food and Agriculture (ITPGRFA), 2001



The International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resource for Food and Agriculture (ITPGRFA) facilitates the exchange of seeds and other building blocks of the genetic diversity of the world's food crops, stimulating research that is essential in the development of climate-smart agricultural

culture, and therefore also essential to food security. In a world where most countries depend strongly upon crops originating elsewhere, the Treaty facilitates the exchange and conservation of crop genetic resources amongst member nations, as well as the fair sharing of benefits arising from their use. It covers all plant genetic resources for food and agriculture, while its Multilateral System of Access and Benefit-sharing covers a specific list of 64 crops and forages. The Treaty also includes provisions on farmers' rights.

www.fao.org/plant-treaty



Ramsar, 1971

www.ramsar.org/

The Ramsar Convention on Wetlands is an intergovernmental treaty that is dedicated to the conservation of wetlands and paving the way towards their sustainable utilisation.

The convention provides the framework for national action and international cooperation for the conservation and wise use of wetlands and their resources.



Photo: Pixabay



Photo: Pixabay

World Heritage Convention (WHC), 1972

<http://whc.unesco.org/>



The primary mission of the World Heritage Convention is to identify and conserve the world's cultural and natural heritage, by drawing up a list of sites whose outstanding values should be preserved for all humanity and to ensure their protection through a closer co-operation among nations.

By signing the Convention, each country pledges to conserve not only the World Heritage sites sit-

uated on its territory, but also to protect its national heritage. The Parties are encouraged to integrate the protection of the cultural and natural heritage into regional planning programmes, set up staff and services at their sites, undertake scientific and technical conservation research and adopt measures which give this heritage a function in the day-to-day life of the community.

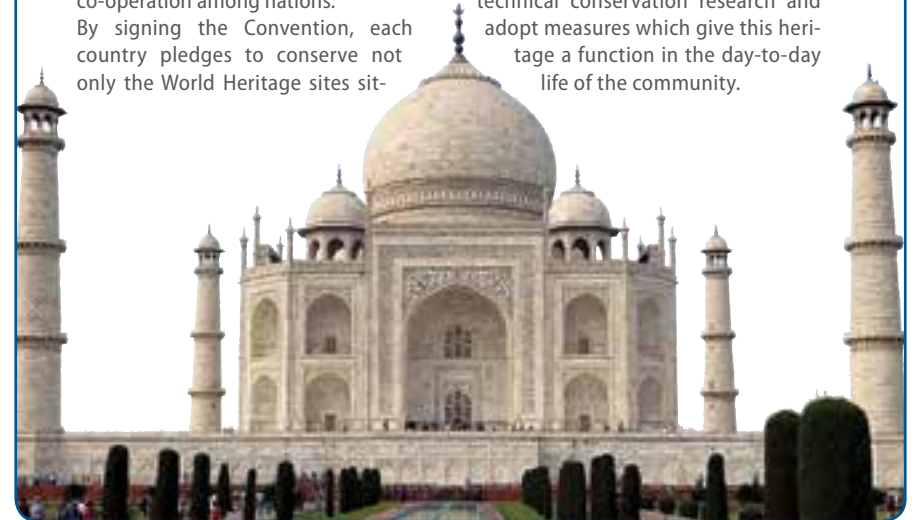


Photo: Pixabay

Rio Conventions

Rio Conventions

Three Rio Conventions were established at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (the Rio "Earth Summit") in 1992. These are the Conventions on Biodiversity, Climate Change and Desertification. Each of these conventions aims to contribute to the sustainable development goals of Agenda 21. The three conventions are intrinsically linked, operating in the same ecosystems and addressing interdependent issues.



1 CBD Convention on Biological Diversity Montreal, Canada

The objective of the CBD is the conservation of biological diversity, the sustainable use of its components, and the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from commercial and other use of genetic resources. The agreement covers all ecosystems, species, and genetic resources.

www.cbd.int



2 UNCCD UN Convention to Combat Desertification Bonn, Germany

The UNCCD aims to combat and mitigate the effects of serious drought and desertification, particularly in Africa. It promotes effective actions at all levels and is supported by international co-operation and partnership agreements.

www.unccd.int

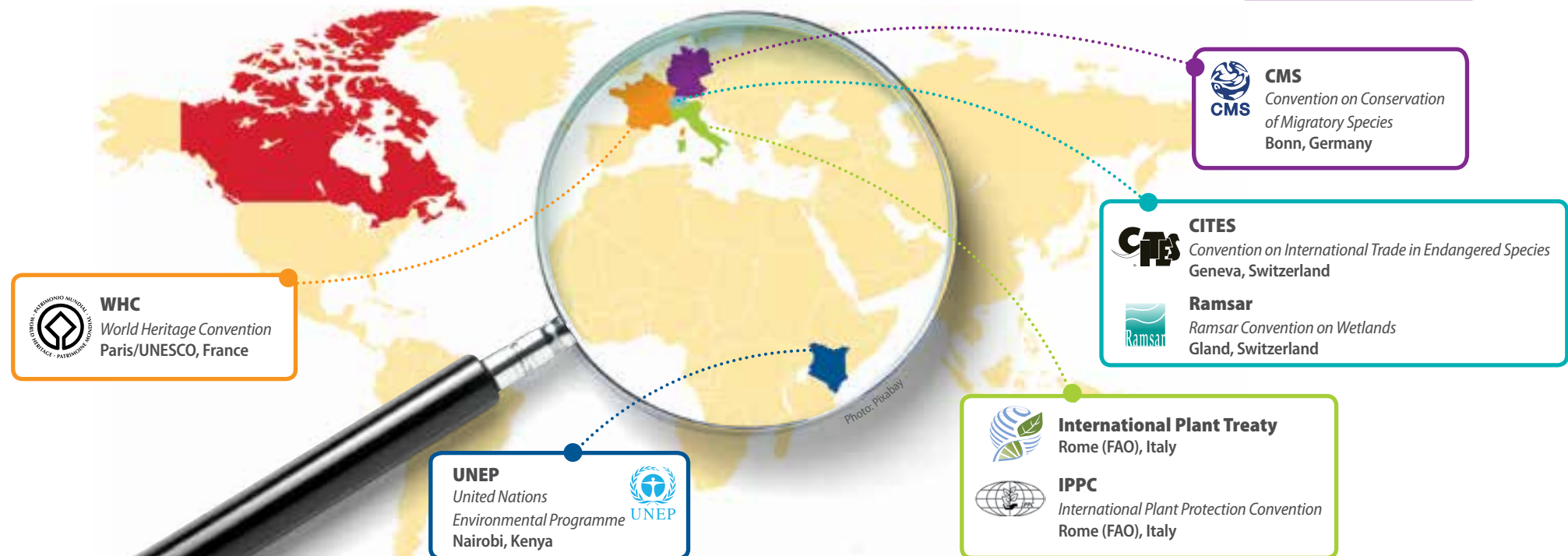


3 UNFCCC UN Framework Convention on Climate Change Bonn, Germany

The UNFCCC sets an overall framework for intergovernmental efforts to tackle the challenges posed by climate change. It aims to stabilise greenhouse gas concentrations at a level that would prevent interference with the climate, within a time period sufficient for ecosystems to adapt to climate change; to ensure that food production is not threatened; to enable economic development to proceed in a sustainable manner.

<http://newsroom.unfccc.int/>

Secretariats of the conventions



3 The Convention On Biological Diversity (CBD)



Photo: Pixabay

Chapter 3

The Convention On Biological Diversity (CBD)

Chapter three covers the main provisions of the Convention, its institutional arrangements, operational framework and main actors involved.

The Convention on Biological Diversity (**CBD**)

In the last chapter we learned that nations around the world agreed that a more comprehensive international agreement on biodiversity was needed in order to complement and harmonize existing agreements and ultimately provide a framework for governments to

conserve and sustainably manage biodiversity. The response to this decision was the creation and the adoption of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) which was open for signatures during the Rio Summit in 1992 and entered into force in 29th December 1993, 90

days after the 30th country ratified it.

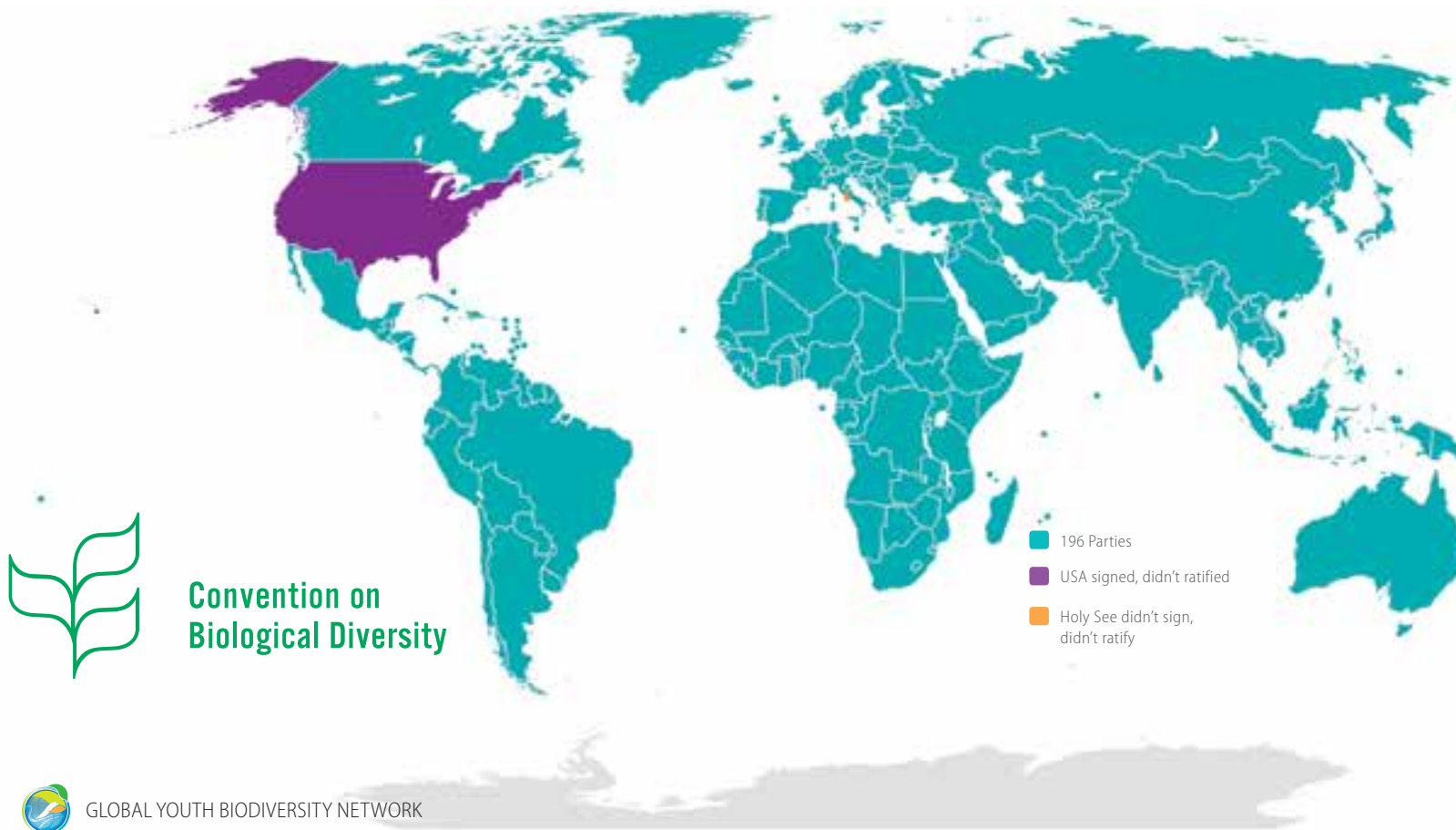
The CBD is part of the 2nd generation Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) created after the Rio Summit for its comprehensive and holistic nature. It is considered to be a **framework convention**.



Convention on
Biological Diversity

A **framework convention** is a legally-binding international treaty that establishes a set of **general guidelines and principles** for the international governance of a particular issue. These general guidelines provide a decision-making and organizational framework that acts as first steps toward the adoption of much more specific obligations (e.g. targets, timetables, mechanisms) or subsequent protocols on the same issue.

In this sense, the CBD is an agreed upon consensus among the world's nations to conserve biodiversity. It provides guidelines and an actionable framework, and it enables the adoption of further agreements on more specific issues (ex.: Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety and the Nagoya Protocol on access and benefit sharing). As a framework convention, it places the responsibility of decision-making at the national level: **It is up to the parties to determine how most of its goals and guidelines should be implemented.**



Why the USA didn't ratify the CBD

It is worth noting that it was IUCN and the USA who, independent of each other and with different concepts, proposed the establishment of the CBD in 1987 in the first place. Recognising the fragmented nature and the large number of MEAs which were governing biodiversity at this time, the goal of the United States was to create an international convention which would act as an umbrella and streamline existing conservation agreements.

While the USA was very supportive at the beginning of the negotiating process, the focus of the negotiations quickly moved away from the USA-proposal and towards developing a general convention on biodiversity. The majority of countries involved in these negotiations were of the opinion that such a global treaty should be more ambitious and focus also on social and economic aspects of biodiversity, including the issue of biotechnology.

This was a crucial aspect for developing countries, as most of the genetic resources that serve as raw materials for biotechnology products in agriculture and pharmaceuticals are located within their territories. However, the majority of biotechnology companies that are using these genetic resources, are located in developed countries and the profits would not be shared with the provider countries. Acknowledging this issue, the CBD was to contain provisions on access and benefit sharing as well as on prior informed consensus between users and providers of genetic resources. For this reason, developing countries made clear that they would not support any new treaty if biotechnology would not be

included. While a number of other developed countries were also critical of this issue, the USA was strongly opposed to the inclusion of any provisions related to biotechnology and threatened to withdraw its support for the Convention. From this point on the USA turned from the initiator of the process into one of its most vocal opponents.

However the most dividing issue between developed and developing countries during the intergovernmental negotiating process of the CBD turned out to be the agreement on the financial mechanism. The USA criticised the proposed mechanism, which they viewed as an instrument that would force them to provide permanent mandatory financial support for conservation measures in developing countries. However, the USA's concerns were not shared by most other countries and until the end of the negotiations on May 22 1992, several compromise solutions could be found for the issues mentioned above and were acceptable to all countries – with the sole exception being the USA. Consequently the USA refused to sign the CBD when the treaty was opened for signature at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in June 1992.

Eventually, after a change in government, the then President Bill Clinton signed the CBD on June 4th 1993. However, in the USA, all international treaties need to be ratified by a two-third majority in the Senate. Following a lobby campaign by different interest groups in 1994, the Senate indicated that they would not support the ratification of the CBD. Since then no USA-administration has brought this issues back on the agenda of the Senate.

The Vatican and the CBD

The Vatican City State or "Holy See" – As it is being officially referred to in international law – is one of only two countries that are not a party to the CBD.

As the universal government of the Catholic Church, the Holy See has a long history of maintaining a policy of neutrality in political matters. For this reason the Holy See has never applied for membership in the United Nations and traditionally participates in UN-processes as an observer state. Since 1964 the Holy See is officially recognized by the United Nations as a so called "permanent observer state" and has, for example, the right to speak during sessions of the General Assembly, meetings of the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council. However, as a non-party the Holy See cannot cast votes in UN-procedures.

In line with this policy, the Holy See has also never signed nor ratified the CBD.

However, as a permanent observe state, the Holy See has the right to observe all meetings of all subsidiary bodies of the General Assembly as well as other UN-organizations. With regards to Multilateral Environmental Agreements, the Holy See has exercised this right for instance in the UNFCCC, where the Vatican is frequently participating as an observer.

Most recently, in the context of the release of Pope Francis's encyclical *Laudato si'* (May 2015) and the adoption of the Paris Climate Agreement (December 2015), top-diplomats of the Holy See have expressed their interest in taking over a more proactive role in UN processes and did not even exclude the option to become a full-fledged member of the UN.

So perhaps at some point in the future the Holy See might also become a party to the CBD, leaving only the United States of America behind as the only non-Party.

On the Distinction between Vatican and Holy See

In international law there is a distinction between the Vatican City State and the Holy See: The Holy See is defined as the universal government of the Catholic Church while the Vatican City State is the name of the independent territory in Rome over which the Holy See is sovereign.

Photo: Pixabay



The Convention Text

The Convention text is very comprehensive in its goals: to promote the conservation and the sustainable use of biodiversity resources. The CBD stresses that the conservation of biological diversity is a common concern of humankind, but recognizes that nations have sovereign rights over their own biological resources, and will need to address the overriding priorities of economic and social development and the eradication of poverty.

It covers all ecosystems, species and genetic resources, setting principles for the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising

from the use of genetic resources, and it also covers the rapidly expanding field of biotechnology, addressing technology development and transfer, benefit-sharing and biosafety.

The text also contains provisions that establish implementation and funding mechanisms as well as rules and guidelines for the operation of the convention with its institutional arrangements.

Below you can see more details on the Convention text which is the main document guiding the negotiation on biodiversity issues at the international level.

Preamble

In any convention, the preamble is part of the legal agreement where the Parties set out their concerns and motivations. In particular, it is where they outline the issues to be addressed and justify the need for a convention. For example, it is in the preamble of the CBD that the Parties affirm *"that the conservation of biological diversity is a common concern of humankind"* and are *"determined to conserve and sustainably use biological diversity for the benefit of present and future generations"*.

Objectives

Set out the goals for the convention



Objectives

The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) has 3 main objectives:



Conservation of biological diversity



Ensure sustainable use of biodiversity and its components



Ensure fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the utilisation of its genetic resources

Use of Terms

Establishes the definitions for all terms to be used in the convention. For example, "Ecosystem" means a dynamic complex of plant, animal and micro-organism communities and their non-living environment interacting as a functional unit.



Use of Terms

General Provisions and Scope

This determines the general parameters of the scope and operations of the convention with key rules of broad application that generally govern the rest of the convention. For example, article 3 emphasize the sovereign rights of States over their natural resources, stating that *"States have the sovereign right to exploit their own resources pursuant to their own environmental policies."*



Principle



Jurisdictional Scope



Cooperation

Commitments

The guiding objectives of conservation, sustainable use and equitable sharing of benefits are translated into binding commitments in its substantive provisions. It contains key provisions on measures and incentives for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity; research and training; public awareness and education; impact assessment; regulating access to genetic resources; access to and transfer of technology; and the provision of financial resources.



General Measures for Conservation and Sustainable Use



Identification and Monitoring



In-situ Conservation



Ex-situ Conservation

Commitments

Art. 10

Sustainable Use
of Components of
Biological Diversity

Art. 11

Incentive
Measures

Art. 12

Research and
Training

Art. 13

Public Education
and Awareness

Art. 14

Impact Assessment
and Minimizing
Adverse Impacts

Art. 15

Access to Genetic
Resources

Art. 16

Access to and
Transfer of
technology

Art. 17

Exchange of
Information

Art. 18

Technical
and Scientific
Cooperation

Art. 19

Handling of
Biotechnology
and Distribution
of its Benefits

Art. 20

Financial
Resources

Institutional Arrangements

The Convention establishes institutional arrangements which provide a mechanism for further development and monitoring the implementation of the Convention through meetings, work programmes, reviews and negotiations.

Art. 21

Financial
Mechanism

Art. 22

Relationship with
Other International
Conventions

Art. 23

Conference of
the Parties

Art. 24

Secretariat

Art. 25

Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical
and Technological Advice

Art. 26

Reports

Treaty Mechanisms and its Annexes

Sets out the machinery for the operation of the convention and its annexes (protocols).

Art. 27

Settlement of
Disputes

Art. 28

Adoption of
Protocols

Art. 29

Amendment of
the Convention
or Protocol

Art. 30

Adoption and
Amendment of
Annexes

Art. 31

Right to Vote

Art. 32

Relationship between
this Convention and its
Protocols

Art. 33

Signature

Art. 34

Ratification,
Acceptance or
Approval

Art. 35

Accession

Art. 36

Entry Into Force

Art. 37

Reservations

Art. 38

Withdrawals

Art. 39

Financial Interim
Arrangements

Art. 40

Secretariat
Interim
Arrangements

Art. 41

Depositary

Art. 42

Authentic texts

Annex I

Identification
and Monitoring

Annex II

Part 1.
Arbitration

Annex II

Part 2.
Conciliation

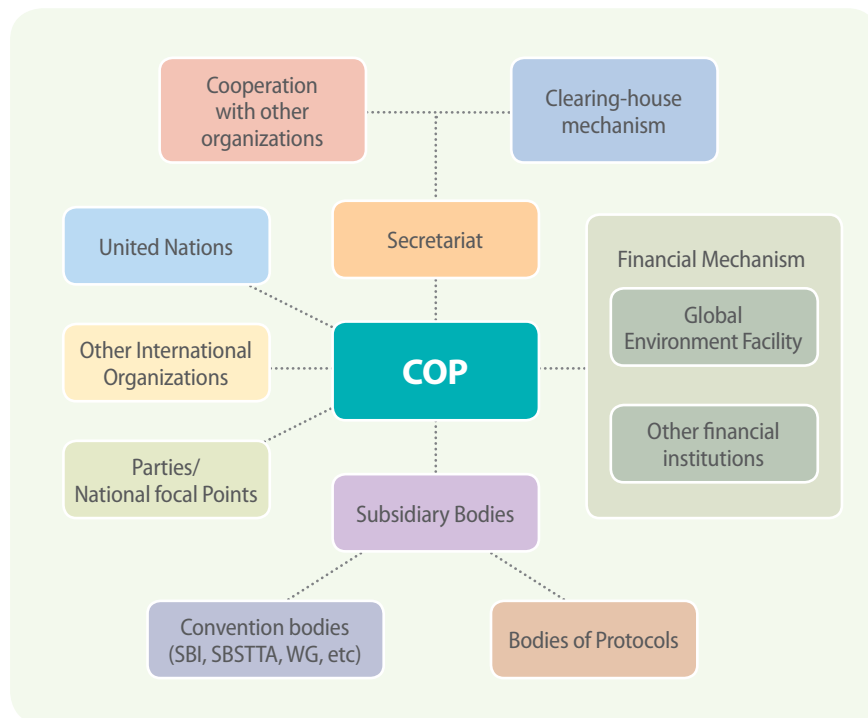


How the CBD works

Institutional arrangements

To understand how the CBD works, we need to look into its operations and institutional arrangements.

It is important to understand which convention body is responsible for what, and what are the relationships between all the bodies.



Source: Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (2005). Handbook of the Convention on Biological Diversity Including its Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, 3rd edition, (Montreal, Canada).

The Conference of the Parties (COP)

Is the Convention's highest organ and its main governing body. Because the Convention is a framework treaty, many of its provisions require further elaboration in order to provide a clear set of norms to guide States and stakeholders in their management of biodiversity. This set of norms are developed through decisions made by the COP: (COP Decisions).

The COP was established under the first paragraph of Article 23, which also defines

the self-governing nature of the COP, and states that the responsibility of developing rules of procedures through consensus lies within the COP.

Meetings

It was decided by COP5 that the Conference of the Parties (COP) should convene every two years, or as needed.

Main functions



Rules of Procedure

The very first decision that was adopted by COP1 are the so called "Rules of Procedures". The Rules of Procedures contain guidelines for the organization of all processes at meetings of the Conference of the Parties.



PURPOSES

Set the scope of the rules of procedure
Rule 1



DEFINITIONS

Define the terms to be used in the document
Rule 2



PLACE OF MEETINGS

Rule 3



DATES OF MEETINGS

Rule 4



OBSERVERS

Rules for the admission of observers
Rules 6 and 7



AGENDA

Rules for the agenda setting
Rules 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, and 15



REPRESENTATION AND CREDENTIALS

Rules for party delegations and representatives
Rules 16, 17, 18, 19, and 20



OFFICERS

Rules for the officers that facilitate the work during meetings: Chairs and Bureau
Rules 21, 22, 23, 24, and 25



SUBSIDIARY BODIES

Rules for the establishment and operations of subsidiary bodies
Rule 26



SECRETARIAT

Rules for the Secretariat and its role during meetings
Rules 27 and 28



CONDUCT OF BUSINESS

Rules for the conduct of work during the meetings
Rules 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, and 38



VOTING

Rules 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, and 51



LANGUAGES

Rules 52, 53, and 54



SOUND RECORDS OF THE MEETINGS

Rule 55



AMENDMENTS TO RULES OF PROCEDURE

Rule 56



OVERRIDING AUTHORITY OF THE CONVENTION

Rule 57

COP Bureau

In most MEAs, a Bureau is established to **oversee the running of a COP or its subsidiary bodies**. It consists of ten members, two from each of the five regional groups. The members of the COP-bureau are elected by the COP for a two-year term of office.

The Rules of Procedure of the COP sets the

rules for electing the Bureau and its roles. It states:

"At the commencement of the first session of each ordinary meeting a President and ten Vice-Presidents, one of whom shall act as Rapporteur, are to be elected from among the representatives of the Parties. They shall serve as the bureau of the Conference of the Parties."



Bureau officers

Chair

Is the COP President and the officer responsible to oversee the conduct of the meetings.

Rapporteur

Bureau member elected to prepare or oversee the preparation of the report of a meeting.

Vice-Chairs

Two Representatives elected from each UN region.



Functions of the Bureau

Inter-sessional Period

- To work closely with the Secretariat to provide administrative and operational direction to respond to requests made by the COP or any subsidiary body.

- To plan for the upcoming meetings, including setting the agenda items and meeting structure with the secretariat.

- Check reports that are prepared by the secretariat, including budgetary reports.

During meetings

- The Bureau normally meets daily to discuss how the meeting is proceeding and what to anticipate for the next day.

- The members usually consults regularly with their own regional group in order to keep the Bureau aware of particular concerns raised in the regions.

Hosting of CBD meetings

In accordance with Rule 3 of the Rules of Procedures, meetings of the Conference of the Parties – as well as any other CBD-meeting – are by default taking place at the seat of the Secretariat (Montreal, Canada). However, any party to the CBD can offer to host meetings in their own country at their own expense.

To ensure equal representation and political leadership by all regions, meetings of the Conference of the Parties should normally rotate among all five UN-regions (Rule 21 of

the Rules of Procedures). However, since COP host-governments are required to bear all additional costs for the hosting of the meeting in their country rather than at the seat of the Secretariat, in practice only few countries possess the financial and human resources to host COP meeting. For this reason, the distribution of COP meetings among UN-regions has been unequal in the past. While five COP-meetings took place in the Asia-Pacific and four in the Latin-American region, only one COP was hosted in Africa and Eastern Europe.

Regional distribution of COP meetings 1994-2014



- Africa,
- Asia (which includes the Pacific),
- Central and Eastern Europe (CEE),
- Latin America and the Caribbean (GRULAC),
- Western Europe and others (WEOG - 'others' include Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and the US).

The United Nations have established guidelines for the organization and hosting of meetings that countries are required to follow. Further, to formalize a country's offer to host a meeting, a so called "host-country agreement" needs to be signed between the host government and the CBD Secretariat.

COP Presidency

Perhaps the most important position at a Conference of the Parties is the COP-president, a position typically filled by the Minister of Environment of the host government. Alternatively, if the Minister of Environment should not be available to fill this position, he or she can also name another representative, e.g. the Vice-Minister or State-Secretary. As the name suggests, the COP-president is the highest official at a Conference of the Parties. He or she works with the chairs of the working

groups, as well as the chairs of other negotiating groups, to lead the process to a successful outcome. At least by definition, the COP-president is required to carry out her or his duties in a neutral and impartial way and must act as an official of the meeting, rather than as a representative of his or her government.

The President works in consultation with the Bureau, with support from the Secretariat, to manage the meeting. In practice, the Bureau plays a similar role to an executive board.

In particular, the responsibilities of the COP-president include:



Opening and closing of the meeting



Determination of the order of speakers



Rules on points of order



Acts as a facilitator among all Parties to move negotiations forward

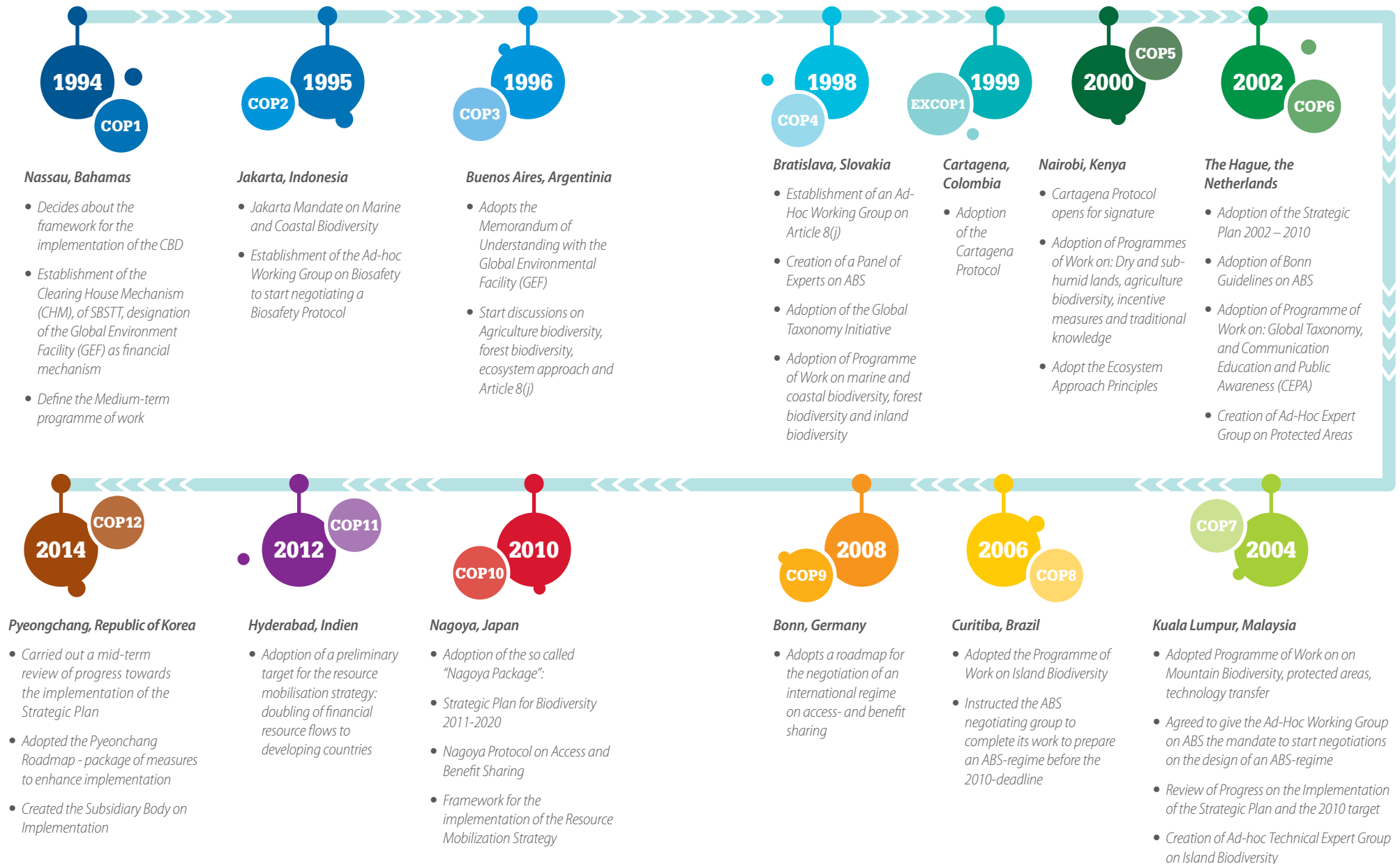


Sets the tone for the next biennium or intersessional period

The COP-presidency's term of office begins with his or her election during the opening-plenary of the Conference of the Parties. He or she then holds this position for a two-year period that ends with the commencement of the next Conference of the Parties. During this period, also called the intersessional period, the COP-president works with the COP-bureau to ensure the implementation of the COP's decisions and steers efforts by parties towards the achievement of the Convention's objectives. In this capacity, the COP-presidency has the potential to influence the direction and the priorities of the process.

The President provides political leadership, acts as a facilitator among all Parties to the negotiations, consults on the issues, moves negotiations forward, sets the tone for the next biennium and steers efforts by the international community towards meeting the objectives of the Convention.

CBD COP meetings



COP Participants

A COP meeting is open to all Parties to the CBD. Non-parties (e.g. the USA) can also participate as observers but do not have voting rights. UN agencies as well as other Intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) can also join the meetings

as observers. In the same way, Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLCs) as well as representatives of women, business, farmers, research, youth organisations, can take part in COP meetings as observers.



Parties

When a country has ratified a treaty it becomes a Party and receives full voting rights in all processes but also commits itself to implement the convention on the national level. As of 11/2016 196 countries have ratified the CBD, making it one of the few multilateral environmental agreements that has been ratified by almost every country in the world.



Non-Parties

Any country that has not signed or/and ratified the CBD. They have no voting power and - unless CBD-parties decide otherwise - are being treated like any other observer. Since almost all countries have joined the CBD, only two states fall into this category: the USA and the Holy See (Vatican State).



Observers

Unlike Parties, observers do not have voting rights in the CBD-process. However, observers play a very important role when it comes to the implementation of the Convention. In general, the CBD distinguishes between the following types of observers:



While the CBD has created several categories for observers, some observer organisations fall into more than one category. In such cases it is up to the observer organisation to decide which category they would like to join and that will be printed on their badge, e.g. the United Nations University can either be categorized as a UN organisation, Education or Science organisation.



Observers

NGOs

The UN defines non-governmental organizations (NGOs) as associations of citizens that work on a non-profit basis and operate on the national, regional or international level.

While the main responsibility to implement the CBD lies with the Parties, NGOs play a key role in supporting the implementation of the Convention by raising awareness, promoting sustainable practices and carrying out conservation measures on various levels.

NGOs can apply for observer status with the Secretariat and upon approval receive the right to nominate representatives to attend CBD meetings like all other Observers, NGOs do not have any voting rights but can - provided parties don't decide otherwise - participate in all negotiating sessions, speak during sessions, hold side-events and press conferences or organize exhibitions, e.g. WWF, BirdLife, Friends of the Earth, etc.

IGOs

Unlike NGOs, Intergovernmental Organizations are entities whose membership is primarily being composed of sovereign states.

Examples for regular IGO participants in the CBD-process are: International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN), International Council for Scientific Unions (ICSU) and Global Biodiversity Information Facility (GBIF).

UN Organisations

UN agencies, commissions, treaties, etc. E.g.: CITES, Ramsar, CMS, UNESCO, UNEP-WCMC, UNCCD, UNFCCC.

Education / University

Universities, academic organisations and education institutions also have their own observer category.

Business and the Private Sector

Business institutions, companies, for profit NGOs, etc.

Engaging the private sector in biodiversity conservation activities has become a key priority for the CBD in recent years. Several countries have created national Business and Biodiversity initiatives to facilitate private sector engagement. In addition "Business and Biodiversity" summits are being held during every COP-meeting. Consequently, the number of Business representatives and for-profit NGOs in the CBD-process has increased.

Youth

Youth organisations are a relatively new player in the CBD-process. While youth participation in the CBD can be traced back to at least 2002, it was only following the establishment of the Global Youth Biodiversity Network that a new observer category for Youth was created in 2012. Previously, youth organizations would mostly be categorized under NGOs.

Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLCs)

IPLCs have a unique relationship with Biodiversity and therefore play a special role under the Convention.

High levels of Biodiversity often occur within the territories of Indigenous Peoples and IPLCs typically possess a vast amount of traditional knowledge with regards to sustainable use and management techniques of Biodiversity. On the other hand, IPLCs rely heavily on access to their traditional lands and resources.

The CBD is one of the few international agreements that recognizes this relationship. Several articles of the CBD directly refer to IPLCs, for example Article 8(j) on traditional knowledge. Close collaboration with IPLCs is therefore essen-

tial for the implementation of the CBD.

For these reasons, other than the types of Observers listed before, IPLCs are not seen as Stakeholders but as Right holders.

However in practice, there is almost no difference in the treatment of IPLCs compared to other Observers: One example of this is how IPLC participation in the CBD-process is financially supported by a species Voluntary Fund. However, as the name suggests this fund entirely depends on voluntary contributions by parties and quite often parties only contribute very little or at a very late point in time. Other than this IPLCs enjoy the same rights like any other Observer.



Photo: GYBN

Civil Society participation in the CBD

Civil Society enjoys a relatively privileged position within the CBD. While accreditation processes in other UN-conventions can be very cumbersome and many negotiating sessions are closed to Observers, the CBD facilitates the accreditation process accepting all qualified Observer organisations, which results in a fairly transparent negotiation process.

Furthermore, the CBD recognizes the important role that Civil Society Organizations as well as Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLCs) can play in the implementation of the Convention.

Indeed, while the primary responsibility to implement the Convention lies with the parties, many of the CBD's objectives can only be achieved in partnership with NGOs.

Legal basis for the participation of Observers in the CBD-process



Stakeholders can take part in CBD-meetings as Observers. Their participation is being governed by rules 7 and 29 of the rules of procedures that have been adopted by the COP.

Rule 7.1 specifies that observers shall be notified by the Secretariat of any meeting of the COP.

Rule 7.2 determines that observers may participate in COP-meetings without any voting rights. Observers can be stripped of their right to participate if at least one third of all Parties objects to their admission.

How to receive observer organisation status in the CBD?

The admission of observer organisations is governed by rule 7.1 of the rules of procedure. Any organizations "that is qualified in the fields of biodiversity conservation and

sustainable use" can apply for observer organization status. To request accreditation as an observer organisation, it is important to follow the procedure outlined below:



Send an official letter addressed to the Executive Secretary requesting accreditation for the respective CBD meeting



Attach relevant information that proves that your organization exists/is legally registered, e.g. statute/by-laws of your organisation, document of establishment, the website



Attach relevant information that demonstrates your organisation's qualification in the field of Biodiversity (e.g. brief information/overview about relevant projects/activities on Biodiversity, articles in media and press)

It is important to note that individuals that are not affiliated with any organization or other institution (e.g. a university) cannot be admitted as Observers.

How to send representatives to CBD meetings

Once the accreditation request has been approved, the organisation receives the right to nominate representatives for CBD meetings. The organisation then needs to send an official letter to the Executive

Secretary to nominate their representatives. Alternatively, the organisation receives a link to an online registration system through which it can submit the details of their representatives.

NGOs, Civil Society or Major Groups – what’s the difference?!

Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs)

A large number of very different forms of non-governmental organizations have developed over the years, which makes it difficult to come up with a universal definition. Typically, NGOs are being defined as associations of citizens that work independent of governments and operate on a non-profit basis on the local, national or international level. NGOs normally work on a wide range of topics, including environmental, development, social or cultural, hu-

man-rights or other issues. They encourage political participation through the provision of information, bring the concerns of citizens to governments and monitor the implementation of policies.

There are also some NGOs which operate on a for-profit basis and for example represent private sector or business interests. Under the CBD, these groups are not being considered as NGOs and are normally categorised under Business.

Civil Society and Civil Society Organisations (CSOs)

Used almost interchangeably with NGOs, the term civil-society or Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) is distinct as it is used to describe the entirety of all non-governmental organizations and other institutions that represent the interests of citizens.



Photo: Shutterstock

Major Groups

The concept of “Major Groups” was introduced by Agenda 21 and adopted by governments at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in 1992. Under Agenda 21 nine sectors of society are identified as Major Groups that play an important role in sustainable development. These sectors include:

- Women
- NGOs
- Business and Industry
- Children and Youth
- Local Authorities
- The scientific and technical community
- Indigenous Peoples
- Workers and Trade Unions
- Farmers



Agenda 21 calls upon governments and other authorities to involve these groups in decision making processes. Consequently, many MEAs and other UN-conventions structure civil society participation along the lines of the Major Groups. However, it is important to mention that this Major Group approach has its limitations. Important sectors, such as for example education or senior citizens, are left out. Also with regards to NGOs, the Major Groups approach is complicated as many NGOs fall into more than one category.

The CBD is therefore using a more flexible approach and categorises observer organisations along the following lines:

- United Nations and other intergovernmental organizations
- Non-governmental organizations and civil society
- Indigenous organizations
- Scientific and technical assessment bodies
- Industry and the private sector
- Children and youth
- IGOs
- Universities



Stakeholders

Another frequently used term, especially in the CBD-context, is “Stakeholders”. Stakeholders are defined as all entities that have a “stake” or interest in a particular issue. Stakeholders can either be individuals or representatives of a group or organisation. It includes both persons that influence a decision and those that are affected by it.

The concept of stakeholders is much more inclusive as it does not only encompasses NGOs or Civil Society but the entirety of all organisations and other groups that are in one way or another affected by an issue.

Right holders

Other than stakeholders, right holders is a term that refers to a person or a group of people that holds the legal rights to something. In the context of the CBD, this term is often used to distinguish Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities from other stakeholders.



Photos: GYBN



The Secretariat

All Multilateral Environmental Agreements make provisions to establish a Secretariat that will ensure that the COP and all of its bodies are functioning and supporting the

objectives of the treaty. In the case of the CBD, the Secretariat and its main functions are established under Article 24 of the Convention text.

Art.
24

Paragraph 1

A secretariat is hereby established. Its functions shall be:

- (a) To arrange for and service meetings of the Conference of the Parties provided for in Article 23;
- (b) To perform the functions assigned to it by any protocol;
- (c) To prepare reports on the execution of its functions under this Convention and present them to the Conference of the Parties;
- (d) To coordinate with other relevant international bodies and, in particular to enter into such administrative and contractual arrangements as may be required for the effective discharge of its functions; and
- (e) To perform such other functions as may be determined by the Conference of the Parties.

Appointment of the Executive Secretary

As the host agency of the CBD, UNEP is responsible for the recruitment of the Executive Secretary (ES). Following a public call for nominations, governments can nominate qualified individuals for the position. An independent committee led by the Executive Director of UNEP then selects a suitable individual in consultation with the COP-bureau and recommends her or him to the UN Secretary General. If the UN Secretary General agrees with the recommendation, he or she can then officially appoint the person as the CBD Executive Secretary.

Executive Secretaries typically serve three-year terms in office and can apply for renewal of their term.

Between 1993 and 2016, five people have served as Executive Secretary to the CBD:



1993-1995

Angela Cropper

Trinidad and Tobago 

Interim Executive Secretary



1995-1998

Calestous Juma

Kenya 

First permanent Executive Secretary



1998-2005


Hamdallah Zedan

Egypt 



2005-2012

Achmad Djoghla

Algeria 



2012-2017

Bráulio Dias 

Brazil



Convention on
Biological Diversity

Host institution

UNEP



UNEP

Location

Montreal,
Canada since 1996



Executive Secretary

Bráulio Ferreira
de Souza Dias



Staff

around 120 staff



Main functions

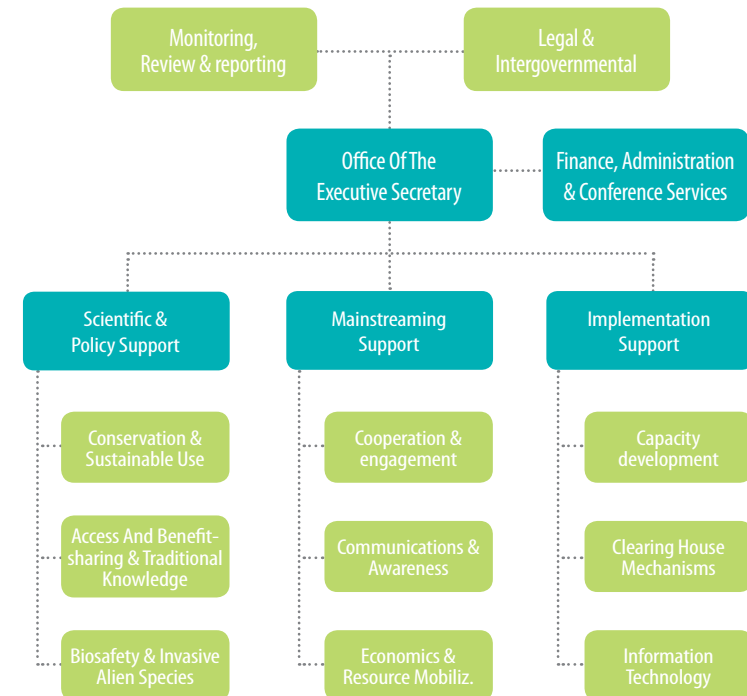
In other words, the CBD secretariat is the administrative body of the Convention. It is accountable to the COP and its bodies and carries out all the daily matters of the Convention:

- 1 Organize meetings**
It organizes all CBD meetings including COPs, SBSTTAs, SBIs, Working Group meetings, as well as a large number of other expert meetings and workshops.
 - 2 Prepare documentation and draft text**
The Secretariat prepares all the background documents needed for the meetings and develops the draft texts that are then form the basis for all negotiations during CBD meetings.
 - 3 Reporting**
The Secretariat also undertakes all the reporting after every meeting and is also collecting and monitoring the submission of all National Reports developed by each member state. They are important mechanisms to monitor and review the implementation of the Convention at the national level.
 - 4 Coordination**
The Secretariat also plays a significant role in coordinating the work carried out under the Convention with other relevant institutions and
 - 5 Support the implementation of the CBD, information-sharing and capacity building**
The Secretariat also assists CBD parties in the implementation of COP-decisions, organize and facilitates capacity building workshops and prepares information-sharing tools and outreach materials. Through its Clearing House Mechanism (CHM), the Secretariat provides a global database that contains information about all aspects of Biodiversity conservation and governance. The Secretariat is strengthening its information dissemination activities on public awareness, information and training, in order to facilitate the implementation of Article 13 of the Convention on Public Education and Awareness.
- conventions, and represents the Convention at meetings of other relevant bodies. The Secretariat collaborates with other UN agencies, the Rio Conventions as well as other Biodiversity-related conventions, such as CITES, CMS, Ramsar, and has created a large number of partnerships with NGOs, scientific organisations and other key actors.

Apart from the main functions mentioned above, the COP can always assign further relevant functions or tasks to be executed by the Secretariat, such as the preparation of reports or the collection of information on a specific issue.



Secretariat Internal Structure



Financial Mechanism

How is the operation of the Convention being funded?

During COP1, the Parties decided to establish a Trust Fund to meet the administration costs of the Convention, including the maintenance of the Secretariat and financial rules for its use (Decision I/6). The budget for each cycle is adopted by the COP, and all parties, non-parties and other organisations can provide the Trust Fund with financial contributions to cover the expenses for each cycle.

For each meeting of the Conference of the Parties, the Executive Secretary prepares a detailed budget for the operation of the Secretariat for a two-year period. This budget needs to be approved by the COP. A budget committee is created at each COP meeting to decide the allocation of funds. The Budget Committee functions like an ad-hoc working group and is open to all parties.

This budget is primarily coming from two sources:

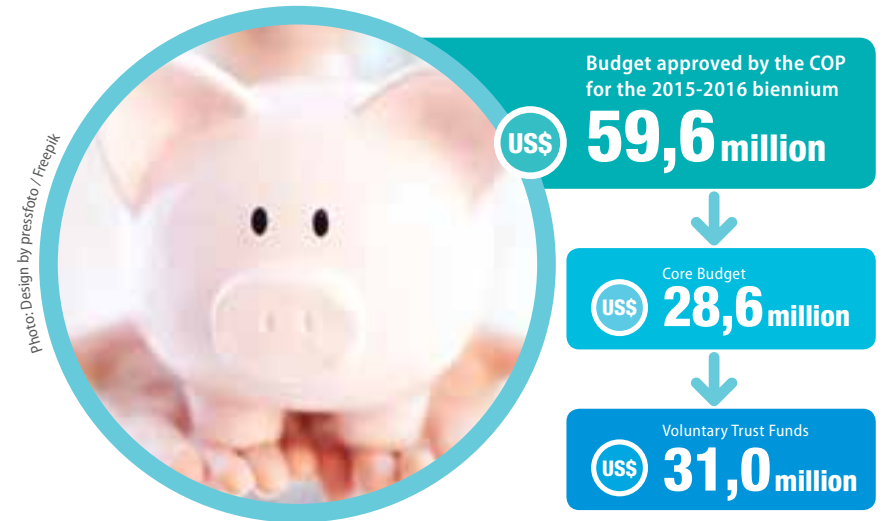
Assessed Contributions

Mandatory “membership fees” that all parties to the CBD are required to pay. These mandatory contribu-

tions are calculated based on a scale of assessments that are agreed upon by the UN General Assembly every three years. The assessments are based on a country's gross national income, adjusted for its per capita income. This way richer countries have to pay more while poorer countries need to contribute less. However, the maximum contribution by developed countries is capped at 22% of the total budget and the contributions of Least Developed Countries are capped at 0.01% of the budget.

Voluntary Contributions

In addition to their mandatory contributions, parties can provide additional financial resources on a voluntary basis, and so called “In-kind Contributions”. In-kind contributions are non-financial contributions, e.g. logistical support, the provision of a meeting venue free of charge or the provision of additional staff (secondments).



Funding the CBD Secretariat

The operation of the CBD Secretariat is being financed through four different Trust Funds.

- 1 General Trust Fund of the Convention on Biological Diversity (“Core Budget”):**
 The core budget only supports the basic costs of the Convention. It is used to cover the costs for the Secretariat's 59 staff members and the basic costs of major meetings. For the period 2015-2016, the COP has approved a Core Budget with a volume of 28,6 million USD.
- 2 Special Voluntary Trust Fund for additional approved activities**
 Most of the activities that derive from requests by the Conference of the Parties, e.g. studies or capacity-building activities, need to be financed by the Voluntary Trust Fund. Funding is being provided through voluntary contributions by parties.
- 3 Special Voluntary Trust Fund for Participation of Parties in the activities of the Convention**
 This fund serves to support the participation of developing countries and countries with economies in transition in activities of the Convention.
- 4 Special Voluntary Trust Fund for Participation of Indigenous People and Local Communities in the activities of the Convention**
 This fund has been created to provide financial resources to support the participation of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities in the CBD-process.

The Assessed Contributions feed the Core Budget, while the other three voluntary trust funds are being filled by Voluntary Contributions.

Subsidiary Bodies and working groups

In the CBD, the Convention text initially established three institutions: The Conference of the Parties (COP), the Secretariat and the Subsidiary Body on Scientific Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA), and includes provisions to establish other bodies if needed.

A subsidiary body is a permanent body, usually established by the governing body of an international agreement, assist with the

negotiations of agreements decided by the COP. The COP can also establish other ad-hoc bodies, such as working groups, expert groups and committees, if the parties decide it is necessary. The COP decides how often these bodies will meet. In general, much of the work of subsidiary bodies takes place during the intersessional period and is considered at the following COP.

In the CBD there are currently two subsidiary bodies:



Subsidiary Body for Scientific Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA)



Subsidiary Body on Implementation (SBI)

Working Groups

Parties may wish to create Working Groups to discuss issues they consider a priority to facilitate their negotiation process. These Working Groups are more temporary

bodies that serves very specific purposes. Several Working Groups were created in the CBD but currently only the Ad-Hoc Working Group on Article 8(j) is active.

Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA)

The Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice is one of the CBD's two permanent subsidiary bodies and is meeting on an annual basis.

SBSTTA's mandate is to provide:

- assessments on the status of biodiversity
- assessments on the efficiency of measures taken under the CBD
- advice on any question that the COP may direct at it
- identify new and emerging issues and decide whether these fall under the scope of the Convention or not
- advice on scientific programmes and international cooperation in research and development related to biodiversity
- Support for the implementation of the programmes of work of the COP and the Strategic Plan

Although SBSTTA was originally conceived as a purely scientific advisory body, with the expanding workload and scope of the CBD, it has evolved into a platform for political negotiations that plays a crucial role in the preparation of COP. At the end of each SBSTTA session, delegates agree on so called SBSTTA-recommendation, which are suggestions for decisions to be adopted at COP. SBSTTA normally comes together twice during the intersessional period. As of 2016, SBSTTA has met 20 times and adopted 216 recommendations for the COP.

SBSTTA-Bureau

The work of SBSTTA is being assisted by a Bureau, which is composed of ten members representing all five regional groups. The main function of the SBSTTA-Bureau is to facilitate the continuity of the SBSTTA work. It prepares the agenda and coordinates the organization of work.

The members of the SBSTTA-bureau are in office for a term that spans over two SBSTTA-meetings, (typically ca. two years). One representative per regional group is elected at each SBSTTA-meeting, ensuring staggered terms of office.

Subsidiary Body on Implementation (SBI)

The creation of the CBD's second permanent subsidiary body has only been recently agreed by parties at COP12 in Pyeongchang in October 2014. The Subsidiary Body on

Implementation (SBI) is the successor of the Ad-Hoc Open-ended Working Group on the Review of the Implementation (WGRI), which existed from 2004 to 2014 and met five times.

SBI's mandate:

- Review the implementation of the convention and the progress towards the implementation of the Strategic Plan 2011-2020
- Provide advice on how the implementation of the CBD can be enhanced
- Develop recommendations on how obstacles to the CBD's implementation can be overcome and how mechanisms that support the CBD implementation can be strengthened
- Review the effectiveness of existing process:
 - Resource Mobilisation
 - Financial Mechanism
 - Capacity-Building
 - National Reporting
 - Technical and Scientific Cooperation
 - Clearing-House Mechanism (CHM)
 - Communication Education and Public Awareness (CEPA)

SBI is also responsible to provide advice on the implementation of the CBD's protocols, namely the Cartagena Protocol and the Nagoya-Protocol.

Unlike SBSTTA, SBI does not have its own bureau. In decision XII/26, the functions of the SBI-Bureau have been given to the COP-Bureau.

Working Group on Article 8(j)

The CBD recognises the dependency of indigenous and local communities on biological diversity and the unique role of indigenous and their unique role in conserving life on Earth. This recognition is enshrined in the preamble of the Convention and in its provisions.

It is for this reason that in Article 8(j) Parties are encouraged to adopt the conservation and sustainable practices of indigenous and local communities, whilst at the same time engaging with these communities to promote their knowledge.

Furthermore, because of its relevance to the work of the Convention, considerations relating to the traditional knowledge of indigenous and local communities are also being incorporated in all the programmes of work under the Convention.

The Working Group was established in 1998 by COP4, and in COP5 adopted a pro-

gramme of work to implement the commitments of Article 8 (j) of the convention to enhance the role and involvement of indigenous and local communities, and in doing so achieve the objectives of the Convention.

Significant work has been accomplished as part of the work programme on Article 8(j). In this regard, Parties to the Convention adopted the **Akwe: Kon Guidelines**. These Guidelines are intended to provide a collaborative framework ensuring the full involvement of indigenous and local communities in the assessment of cultural, environmental and social concerns and interests of indigenous and local communities of proposed developments. Moreover, guidance is provided on how to take into account traditional knowledge, innovations and practices as part of the impact-assessment processes and promote the use of appropriate technologies.

Article 8 – In-situ Conservation

Each Contracting Party shall, as far as possible and as appropriate:

(j) Subject to its national legislation, respect, preserve and maintain knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous and local communities embodying traditional lifestyles relevant for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity and promote

their wider application with the approval and involvement of the holders of such knowledge, innovations and practices and encourage the equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the utilization of such knowledge, innovations and practices.

Amendments of the Convention

An amendment is an instrument to change the core provisions of the treaty or its annexes. Articles 28, 29 and 30 of the Convention make provisions for the adoption of protocols and amendments.

So far the parties have adopted two protocols on key issues for the objectives of the Convention that were priorities for parties since the first negotiations to establish the CBD:

- The issue of biosafety and the risks posed by living modified organisms and other new biotechnologies is being dealt under the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety
- The issue of access and benefit sharing arising from genetic resources, which is directly related to the third objective of the Convention is being negotiated through the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit-Sharing



Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocols (COP-MOP)

Protocols have a Meeting of the Parties (MOP) as the main governing body, which performs the same functions set out for the COP. The MOP is composed of all Parties to the Protocol in question. States, not Parties to the agreement, the United Nations and its specialized agencies, as well as other intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations may attend these meetings as observers.

In the CBD, both Protocols established the Conference of the Parties (COP) serving as the Meeting of the Parties (MOP) as their main governing body. The Protocol texts also

establish the CBD Secretariat as the Secretariat to the Protocols and the COP Bureau as the MOP Bureau (when a Bureau member is from a State that is not a Party to any of the Protocols, he/she should be replaced by an elected representative from a Party).

The COP-MOP of the Cartagena Protocol usually convenes one week prior to the COP meetings, but following the adoption of the Nagoya Protocol, parties decided to hold **concurrent meetings** in order to reduce costs. Therefore, from COP13, COP-MOP negotiations will happen concurrently with COP negotiations.

Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety

The benefits arising from biodiversity and its uses are widely recognized, but so are the potential adverse effects of the technological application of biodiversity, which have raised biosafety issues especially after the development of recombinant DNA techniques in the 1970s. The term 'biosafety' refers to efforts to reduce and eliminate potential risks to biodiversity and human health resulting from biotechnology, and relies deeply on the **precautionary approach**, whereby the lack of scientific certainty shall not be used as an excuse to postpone the adoption of preventive measures.

CBD's Article 19 calls upon parties to consider the need for a protocol establishing appropriate procedures for **safe transfer, handling and use of Living Modified Organisms (LMO)** resulting from biotechnology that may have adverse effects on biological diversity, also taking into account human health. After several years of intense negotiations, the **Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety** was adopted on 29 January 2000 as the first supplementary agreement to the CBD and entered into force on 11 September 2003, 90 days after the date of the submission of the 50th instrument of ratification. As of November 2016, there were 170 Parties to the Protocol.

The Protocol establishes a series of rules and procedures, including the Advance In-

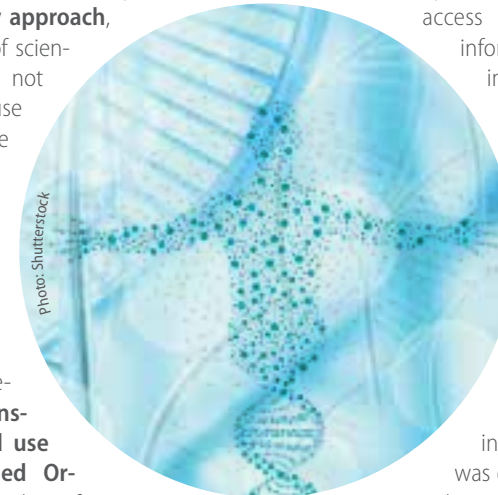
formed Agreement (AIA) for the first intentional transboundary movement of LMOs that are to be intentionally introduced into the environment, and a simplified procedure for the transboundary movement of LMOs intended for direct use as food, feed or processing. There are specific provisions to ensure that LMOs are handled, packaged and transported safely. These provisions also aim

to certify that importing parties have access to all the necessary information for making informed decisions on whether or not to accept LMO imports.

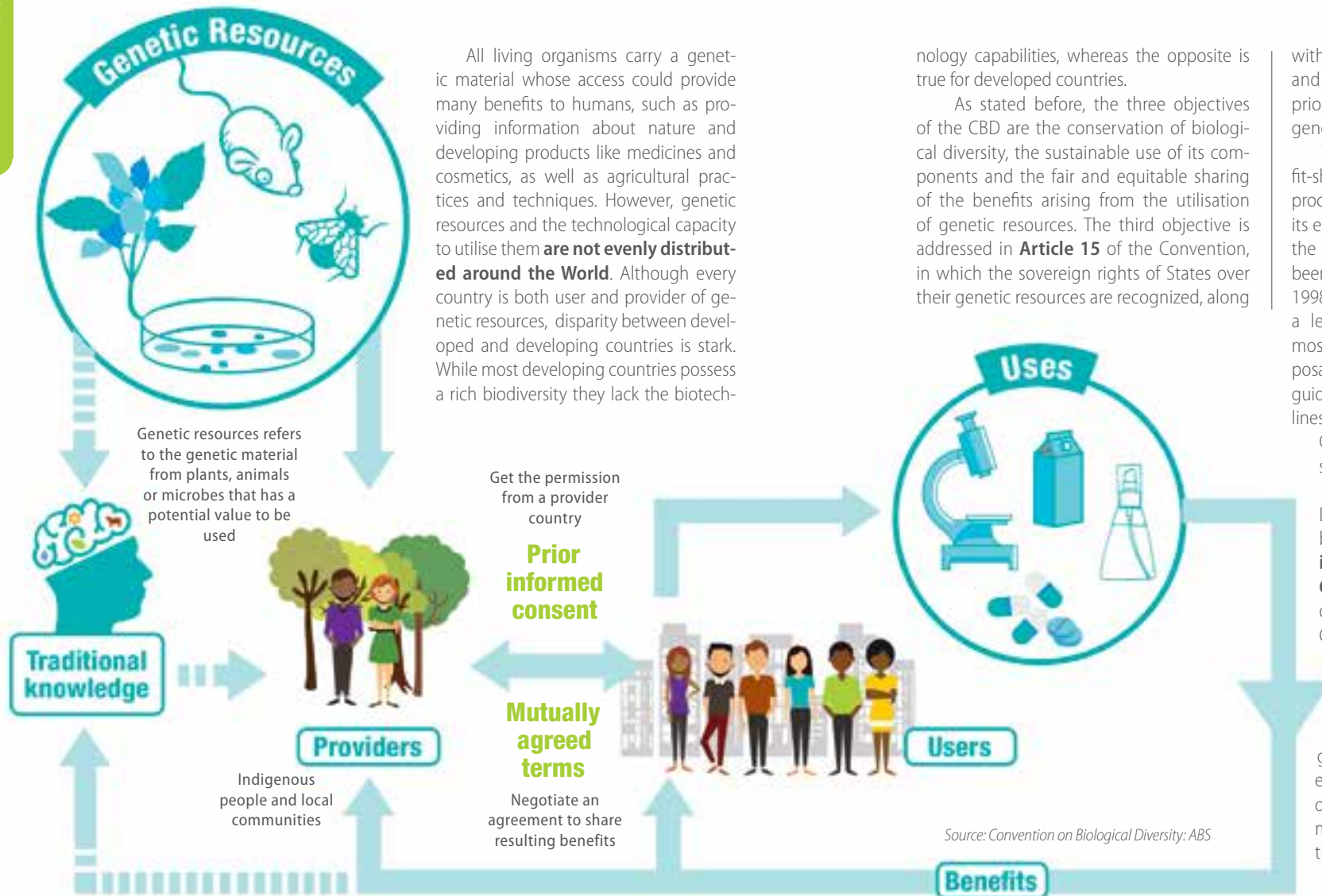
Furthermore, mechanisms for risk assessment and risk management are contemplated by the Protocol and, to assist in its implementation, a Biosafety Clearing-House mechanism was established to facilitate exchange of information among

Parties.

While most of developed countries that are in the centre of the biotechnology industry have domestic biosafety regulations, developing countries are only now starting to establish their national biosafety rules. Thus, the Cartagena Protocol is particularly important for those developing countries that lack a national regulation on the issue, once it establishes an international legally-binding framework including measures to ensure that informed decisions are taken on the import of LMOs.



Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit-sharing



All living organisms carry a genetic material whose access could provide many benefits to humans, such as providing information about nature and developing products like medicines and cosmetics, as well as agricultural practices and techniques. However, genetic resources and the technological capacity to utilise them **are not evenly distributed around the World**. Although every country is both user and provider of genetic resources, disparity between developed and developing countries is stark. While most developing countries possess a rich biodiversity they lack the biotech-

nology capabilities, whereas the opposite is true for developed countries.

As stated before, the three objectives of the CBD are the conservation of biological diversity, the sustainable use of its components and the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the utilisation of genetic resources. The third objective is addressed in **Article 15** of the Convention, in which the sovereign rights of States over their genetic resources are recognized, along

with the call for parties to facilitate access and the need for mutually agreed terms and prior informed consent to allow the access to genetic resources.

The negotiation of access and benefit-sharing (ABS) under the CBD was a long process that started in 1998, at COP4 and had its end in October 2010, with the adoption of the Protocol by COP10. The issue has always been controversial under the convention. In 1998, while developing countries urged for a legally binding benefit-sharing protocol, most developed countries opposed the proposal and suggested the development of ABS guidelines. The proposal of voluntary guidelines was carried out and resulted in the Bonn Guidelines, which apply to all genetic resources under the CBD.

The World Summit on Sustainable Development (Johannesburg, September 2002) called for the negotiation of an **international ABS regime under the CBD**. As a result, in 2004, the COP mandated its Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group on Access and Benefit-Sharing to elaborate and negotiate an ABS international regime based on **Articles 15 and 8(j)** of the Convention.

After six years of negotiations, the Nagoya Protocol, was adopted at COP10 and entered into force on 12 October 2014, 90 days from the deposit of the 50th instrument of ratification. As of November 2016, there were 79 Parties to the Protocol.



Photos: Shutterstock

The Protocol advances CBD's third objective by providing a **legally binding framework**, and thus legal certainty, to users and providers of genetic resources. The Nagoya Protocol applies to genetic resources covered by CBD and to Traditional Knowledge (TK) associated to such resources.

The core obligations established by the Nagoya Protocol regarding access:

- Ensure that **prior informed consent or approval** is obtained
- Provide for legal certainty, clarity and transparency of domestic ABS legislation or regulatory requirements
- Ensure that rules and procedures are fair and non-arbitrary
- Establish clear rules and procedures for obtaining prior informed consent and establishing mutually agreed terms
- Provide for issuance of a permit or equivalent document when access is granted.

In regards to benefit-sharing:

- The Protocol states that benefits arising from the utilisation of genetic resources and its subsequent applications and commercialisation shall be shared in a fair and equitable way with the provider of such resource, **through mutually agreed terms**
- Benefits can be both monetary (e.g. royalties) and non-monetary (e.g. sharing of research results), according to what was negotiated under the mutually agreed terms.

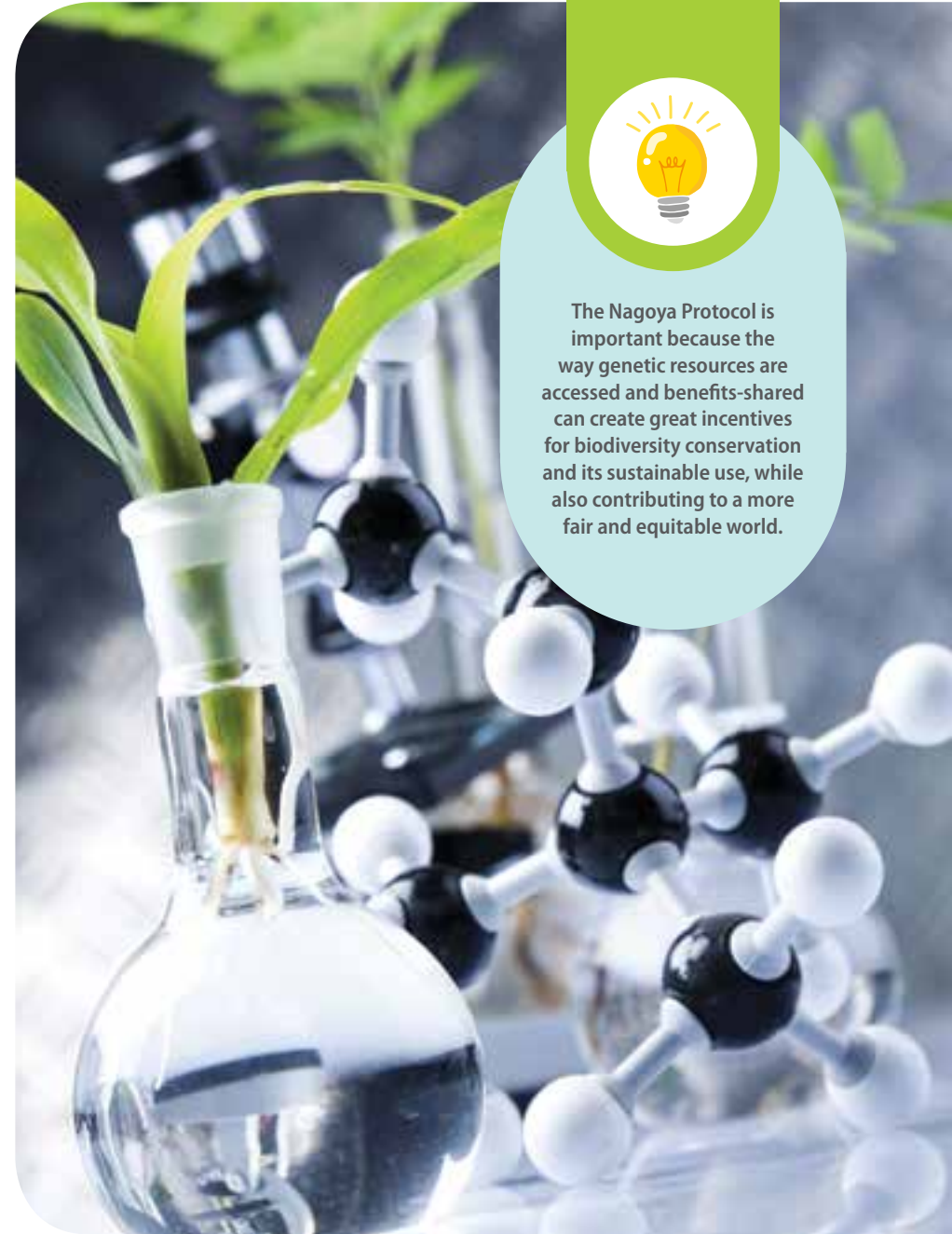
In order to assist the implementation of the its provisions, the Nagoya Protocol innovates in establishing compliance obligations:

- Adoption of measures to ensure that genetic resources used under the jurisdiction of the party were accessed according to the rules and procedures of the Protocol
- Cooperation in cases of alleged violation of other Party's requirements
- It encourages contractual provisions on dispute resolution in mutually agreed terms
- It ensure access to justice
- Undertake monitoring measures of genetic resources.

A Clearing-House mechanism to promote exchange of information among Parties and assist the implementation of the Protocol was also adopted



The Nagoya Protocol is important because the way genetic resources are accessed and benefits-shared can create great incentives for biodiversity conservation and its sustainable use, while also contributing to a more fair and equitable world.



4 Following The CBD Process

Photo: Andrew Hendry/Quebec, Canada

Chapter 4

Following the CBD process

Chapter four provides a colorful picture of how a CBD meeting works, from initial pre-meeting preparation to the adoption of COP-decisions: covering logistics arrangements, rules of procedure, tips to understand the texts and links to external resources.

Getting your bearings

As we saw in the last chapters, an international treaty like the CBD has a complex framework that reflects the great number of institutions, organisations, governments and stakeholders engaged in the process.

The decision-making process to ensure an enabling environment for negoti-

ations at the international level is equally complex and requires a fair amount of rules and protocols.

To be able to follow this process, track the negotiations and understand its implications is therefore not an easy job. This chapter will give you some insights.

As explained in the last chapter, in the CBD, the Conference of the Parties (COP) is the main decision making body, so a good way to figure out where the process is currently standing is to find out when the next COP meeting is taking place.

The COP convenes every 2 years, and is organised by the CBD Secretariat together with the Host Country. This is where all parties come together to negotiate and agree on a set of commitments that should be implemented by every country at the national level.

Intersessional Period

The period in between COP meetings is called the Intersessional Period. It is during this time that the parties, the CBD Secretariat and all relevant organisations are engaged in a series of activities to carry out:

- 1 Implementation of commitments made at previous meetings
- 2 Preparation of the negotiations in upcoming meetings

3 Meetings of Subsidiary Bodies, Working Groups, Regional Consultations and other official expert groups

During the Intersessional Period, Subsidiary Bodies (e.g. SBSTTA and SBI) and Working Groups (WG8(j)) of the convention convene to advance their work and provide recommendations that will be then negotiated at COP meetings.



Host Country

In order to ensure regional balance, most UN Conventions aim to have a regional rotation system to select Host Countries for their meetings. However since hosting a meeting is voluntary and requires substantial financial resources, this regional balance is not always achieved. For example, the CBD had 3 consecutive COP meetings in Asian countries (COP10 in Japan, COP11 in India and COP12 in The Republic of Korea).



CBD Calendar

You can also check the CBD Calendar of upcoming meetings on the CBD webpage.
www.cbd.int/meetings

COP 10



COP 11



COP 12



COP 13





Even though observer organisations don't have voting rights, there are many opportunities for them to enhance their work at a CBD meeting:



Lobbying & advocacy
Influence the text that will be negotiated, advocate for issues that are important to your organization



Partnerships
Expand your network, form alliances and collaborations, be part of new projects and initiatives in your areas of interest



Increase visibility
Present results or successful examples of your organisation's work, or issues faced by your community



Knowledge
Understand how intergovernmental negotiations work and how it can support the work of your organization



Fundraising
Raise funds for your work



Reporting
Report back to your community what happened at the meeting and how this will be important for your organization's work

Are you interested in attending a CBD meeting or do you have confirmation that you are joining the meeting as part of a delegation?

CBD meetings are very large conferences, with many other meetings and events happening simultaneously.

They function like **ecosystems** – bringing together many organisations, institutions, stakeholders and governments. They all have specific niches, each with different roles in this comprehensive political process. This process establishes a framework containing political mechanisms and implementation tools to mobilize our society to conserve biodiversity and use it sustainably.

The CBD has several layers of complexity reflecting the many actions that can be taken by all the of stakeholders.

Therefore, in order to have an effective performance at those meetings, it is important to decide on a role you would like to play,

set desired outcomes and plan strategically which actions you will need to carry out to achieve your goals.

When you go as part of a delegation, there are usually coordination sessions and strategic meetings organised by the organisation or head of delegation to discuss and plan ahead for the meeting. But when you are the sole representative of your organisation, the sheer size and scope of the meeting is definitely a challenge and you will require preparation and strategic planning to be able to be effective.

If you are part of a **party delegation**, most likely you will have a very specific role in line with the strategy adopted by the party and will be given specific instructions and guidelines.

★ Don't forget

Your course of action may be different, depending on the roles that you prioritise, so focus on your desired outcomes and research how you can be more effective in each role.

In the following pages you will read more about some of the strategies you can use to make the most of this opportunity!



Photo: GYBN

Preparing for a CBD meeting

Let's take the COP meeting as an example

Before attending the meeting, you will need to look into the following:

Accreditation

Although civil society representatives have no voting rights, they are allowed to participate in all CBD meetings as observers.

NGOs and other civil society organisations can **get accredited** with the CBD. To receive this status, they must send an official letter addressed to the Executive Secretariat requesting accreditation as an **observer organisation**.

Include in your request:

- Any relevant information that proves that your organisation exists or is legally registered (statute/by-laws, etc)
- The website of your organisation
- Information that proves your organisation is actively engaged on biodiversity issues (overview about relevant projects/activities relating to biodiversity)

Registration

After accrediting your organisation, you can **register** to join CBD meetings!

An accredited observer organisation, it can nominate representatives to join CBD meetings through the CBD's online registration process.

To register representatives, the **following information** from representatives needs to be submitted to the secretariat by writing to secretariat@cbd.int

- full name
- date of birth
- position in organisation
- postal address
- phone number
- e-mail address

Remember

As an observer you can join most events, exhibits and sessions during the meeting, but during negotiating sessions, you don't have voting rights and you are only allowed to speak when the president or chair of the session **opens the floor for observer organisations**.

Meeting Documents

After securing your participation, you should get familiar with the meeting documents. They will contain all the logistical information necessary, the text that will be negotiated and all the relevant background information.



UN Language

The language used in UN documents can be very complicated as it contains many references to past decisions and documents and reflects sensitive political issues, making its comprehension very challenging!

Don't worry, just take your time and start with the topics that you are most interested in.



Pre-sessional documents

A couple of months prior to any CBD meeting, the Secretariat begins to release on their webpage all pre-sessional documents: relevant notifications, official documents and information documents. Most of the pre-sessional documents are prepared by the Secretariat in consultation with the COP Bureau, and following previous recommendations by

the COP or any subsidiary body. Some of them may be submitted by Parties and circulated by the Secretariat as information papers.

In order to prepare for a meeting, it is essential to read the official documents. They will contain the logistics information, the agenda and all the issues that will be negotiated during the meeting.

The documents are usually:

Notifications:

Formal communication channel between the Secretariat and the parties and other relevant organisations. (e.g.: Official Invitation, requests, announcements, press releases, etc.)



Official Documents

Documents that will be negotiated during the meeting.



Information Documents:

Background information on issues that will be negotiated during the meeting.

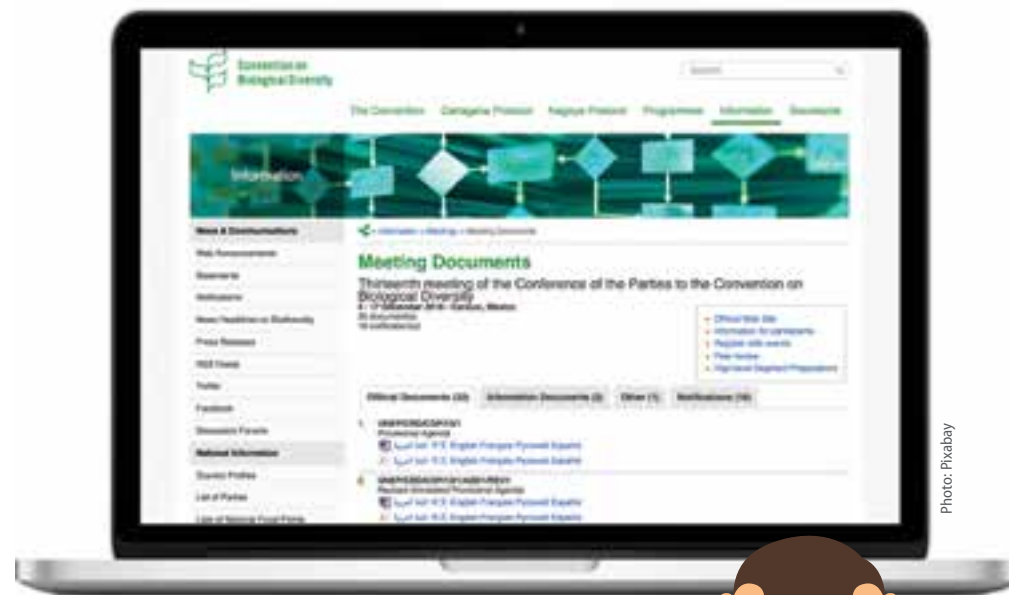


"Outcome" Documents:

All documents approved during a meeting. It can be recommendations from subsidiary bodies, or decisions from COP meetings.



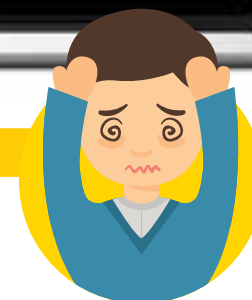
All documents are prepared by the CBD Secretariat based on parties' previous decisions, recommendations and guidelines.



Source: <https://www.cbd.int/doc/?meeting=cop-13 date: 28 oct>

Photo: Pixabay

Decoding Document's Names



All UN documents have a standard naming procedure to make it easier to identify them.

It works like a code with each acronym referring to a type of information:

UNEP/CBD/COP/13/1/ADD1/REV1
UNEP/CBD/COP/DEC/XII/1
UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/19/1
UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/REC/XX/1
UNEP/CBD/SBI/1/1

Host organization / convention name / meeting name (COPs, SBSTTAs, SBIs, WGs)/ meeting number / type of document (decisions, recommendations, information documents) / document number / modification to the document (addendum, revisions)

The issuing body is the UN Environment Programme

This is document number 1

UNEP/CBD/COP/13/1/ADD1/REV1

Revision number 1

The meeting is the 13th session of the Conference of the Parties to the CBD

Addendum number 1

Meeting Agenda

The provisional agenda for each meeting is prepared by the Secretariat, with the agreement of the Chair of the meeting.

The Provisional Agenda and the Provisional Annotated Agenda will introduce the main issues and the order in which they will be negotiated during the meeting.

After the opening of the meeting, parties usually proceed with adopting the provisional agenda.

Most meeting agendas will have the following structure with all agenda items allocated in one of the sections below:



ORGANISATIONAL MATTERS

Opening of the meeting, Adoption of the agenda and organisation of work, Election of officers, Report on the credentials of representatives



REPORTS

Reports of intersessional and regional preparatory meetings.



ISSUES

All agenda items that will be reviewed and negotiated during the meeting



CLOSING

Adoption of the report / Closure of the meeting.

The agenda also includes instructions and guidelines for all items, including a list with all the official documents and information documents relating to each item and the draft decisions that may arise from each item.

Preparing for your role



Lobbying & advocacy

If you want to influence the text that is being negotiated to defend, criticise or push forward certain positions, you need to prepare in advance for it:

- Understand the issue(s) you are focusing on: Check the background documents, re-search the countries positions on the issue
- Read the official documents: Check whether you can add specific text that would support your position in the draft decision related to your item
- Prepare a policy brief: You can summarise your position on the item, including supporting arguments and the possible text you would like to be included in the final decision



Partnerships

Identify organisations you would like to get acquainted with, or develop partnerships with:

- Prepare a brief of your organisation or the project idea you are seeking partners for
- You can also try to pre-schedule meetings with interesting organisations



Increase visibility

- Host a side event to showcase the work of your organisation
- Organise an action or campaign during the meeting
- Prepare publications related to the work your organisation is doing which is relevant to the issues being discussed at the meeting



Fundraising

- Identify potential donor organisations
- Prepare a brief of the project you would like to get support for
- Pre-schedule some meetings with representatives of potential donor organisations



Reporting & outreach

- Research the background information about the agenda items that are interesting to your community
- Define and set the outreach tools you would like to use: blogs, policy papers, publications, social media, etc.

Tips

Documents



Don't forget to read:

- Agenda: items that will be discussed during the meeting
- Annotated agenda: all the relevant document names and background information of all agenda items
- Organization of work: Schedule of the meeting and how the negotiation will be organized
- Information note for participants: Important logistic information on venues, transportation, registration, visas and practical information on the host country and services provided
- The official documents relating to your topic of interest

Visas

Check the visa requirements to enter the COP host country.



After you complete your online registration process for the COP meeting, you should receive a confirmation from the CBD Secretariat, containing an invitation letter from the CBD Secretariat confirming your participation and your priority pass. The priority pass will enable your on-site registration to access the COP venue.

Both documents will facilitate your visa application process in case you need it.

Accommodation



The host country usually makes agreements with hotels surrounding the COP venue to facilitate the participation of delegates. Information on official hotels and deals can be found on the Host Country's official COP website a few months before the COP meeting.

You can also stay in a non-official hotel and make your own arrangements.

COP meetings attract many people, filling hotels very quickly, so try to book your accommodation early in order to avoid complications.

DON'T
FORGET

Photo: Pixabay

More resources:

Preparatory Webinars:

**CBD
ALLIANCE**

Network of civil society organisations active on CBD issues



**Global Youth
Biodiversity
Network**

Network of youth organisations on biodiversity issues and the international coordination platform for youth participation in the CBD

The CBD Alliance and GYBN organise preparatory webinars open to the public covering the background of the CBD, its operations and main issues that are being negotiated during the meetings.

The webinars aim to facilitate the engagement of civil society in the CBD issues and strengthen their influence within the CBD.



You can find recordings of previous webinars on their webpages:

gybn.org
cbdalliance.info

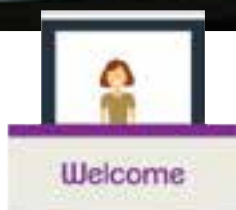


Photo: Pixabay

Arrival at a COP meeting



Photo: GYBN



Welcome Desks

Most Host Countries set up welcome desks at the airport to assist delegates during arrivals and departures, and also assist in directing delegates to their respective transfer shuttle busses.



Transportation

Transfers between the airport and the COP venue or official hotels are usually provided.

Shuttle buses are usually provided between the COP venue and the official hotels. Information on shuttle bus routes and timetables are available at the Host Country's official webpage.



Accommodation

Official hotels are usually served by a transfer, but if you are not staying in an official hotel, you can try going to the nearest official hotel and take the shuttle there.



Security

Security in all UN meetings is tight and in COP meetings you need to go through security and metal detector in all entrance points to the COP venue.

The display of conference badges is mandatory at all times to gain access to the venue and meeting rooms. Any loss of a conference badge should be reported immediately to the staff at the registration desk.



On-site Registration

To access the COP venue, you need to show a valid conference badge.

Your conference badge will be issued to you at the registration desk usually located close to the venue's main entrance. You need to present your passport together with the priority pass issued by the Secretariat after your online registration.

Registration usually starts one or two days before the COP opening.



Civil society preparatory meetings

CBD ALLIANCE

One or two days before the Opening of the COP meeting the CBD Alliance (Civil Society Network for the CBD) typically organises a preparatory session to give participants a brief overview of the meeting and to create opportunities for collaboration, joint statements and networking.

It usually has an introductory session covering the key positions on each agenda item of the COP meeting and a strategy session to discuss lobbying strategies and priority issues for civil society organisations.



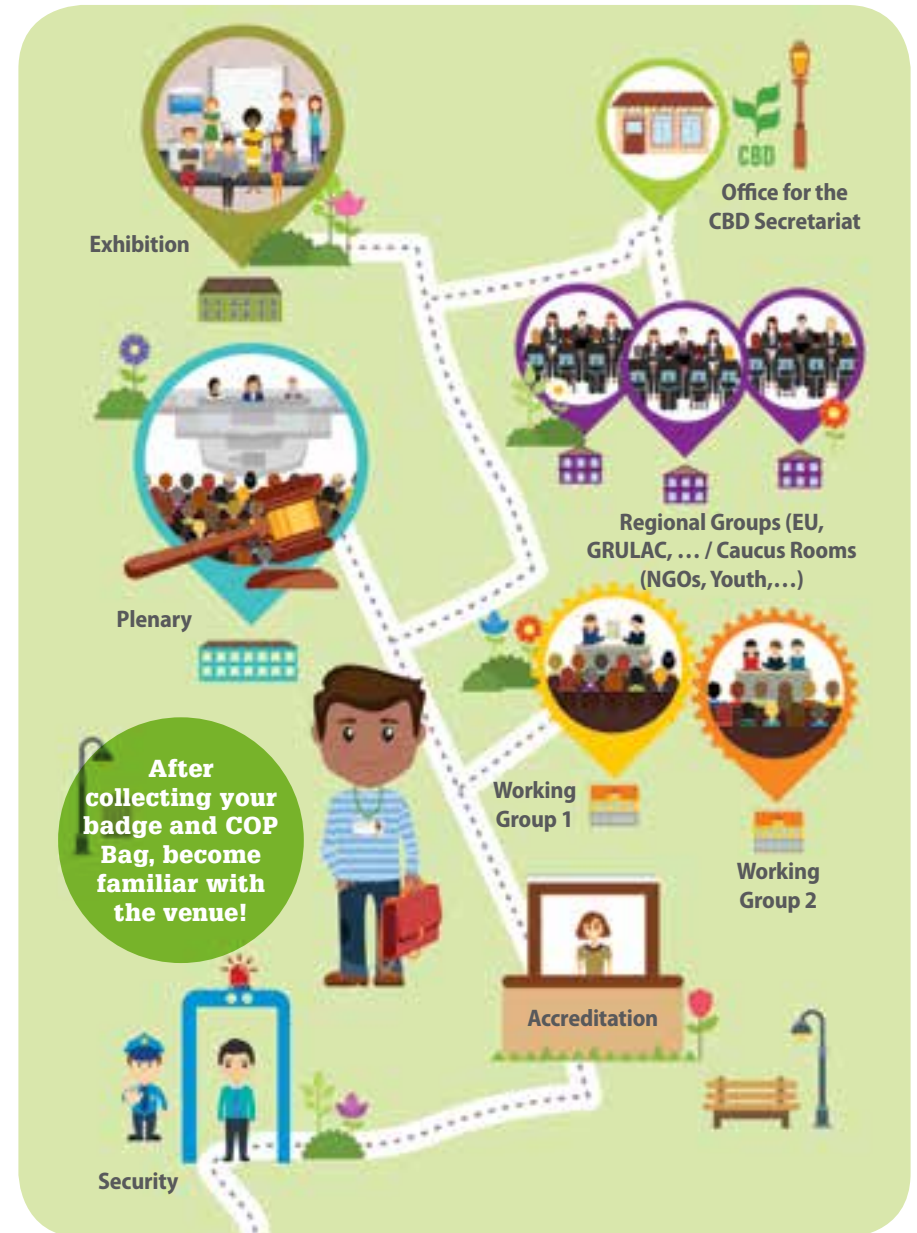
Global Youth Biodiversity Network

The Global Youth Biodiversity Network (GYBN) also organizes a “Youth preparatory session” targeted at youth and young professionals with little or no experience with CBD meetings.

The session provides more details on the procedures of the meeting, and focuses on the different tasks so that young people can have an effective participation at the COP. It also has a strategy session to coordinate the youth activities at the meeting, such as preparing actions, side events, statements and outreach materials.



The COP venue



The COP meeting



Daily Schedule

This is a basic daily schedule indicating the time of the formal negotiating sessions. For a detailed schedule, you should check the Annotated Agenda which usually contains a section called “proposed organisation of work”.

8am – 9am	Internal meetings: Parties Stakeholder meetings (NGOs, ILCs, Women, Youth, ...)	
9am – 10am	Internal meetings: Regional groupings (EU, GRULAC, ...) and other groupings (LMMC, G77)	
10am – 1pm	Formal negotiating session Plenary (on specific days – usually the opening session, review of progress of working groups and closing session)	
	Working group 1	Working group 2
1pm – 3pm	Side events (Time for informal meetings and consultations, networking and checking out side events and exhibitions)	
3pm – 6pm	Official negotiating session Plenary (on specific days – usually the opening session, review the progress of working groups and closing session)	
	Working group 1	Working group 2
6pm ~	Side events (Time for informal meetings and consultations, networking and checking out side events and exhibitions)	

Organisation of work

The negotiations within a CBD meeting are organised in Plenaries and Working Groups.

The plenary is the main meeting format. Parties and observers meet in the plenary for reporting and to approve decisions or recommendations.



To optimize the negotiating process, at the beginning of each COP meeting, two working groups will be created to deal with different sets of agenda items. They will review and consider more specific issues on the agenda and address the text that will be reported and approved by the plenary.



Tip

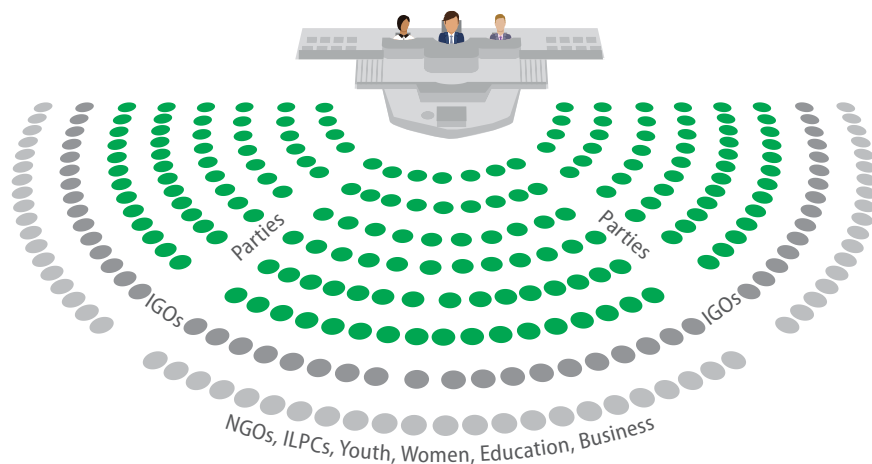
Real time daily schedule

Several monitors spread around the COP venue will be showing the daily schedule with information on time, room number and access (whether the meeting is open or restricted). These can be:

- Formal sessions
- Informal meetings
- Coordination meetings
- Side events
- Special events (receptions, exhibitions, etc)
- Press conferences



The link to the online version of the daily schedule is available during the meeting on the CBD webpage.



Plenary

The first formal session at a COP meeting is the Opening plenary, which will consist of all the relevant formalities, set the organisational work for the meeting and present the reports from previous intersessional and regional meetings. During the evening of the first day of a COP meeting, a reception is usually offered by the Host Country.

After the Opening session, the plenary meeting will be adjourned, and the two

working groups will start their work.

The plenary will convene a second and a third time during the meeting to review the work of the working groups and adopt draft decision from agenda items with finalised discussions.

The fourth and last plenary (Closing plenary) convenes on the last day of the meeting, adopt all draft decisions presented by the working groups, and undertake all the relevant closure formalities.

Opening
Organise the work



Revise the work



Closing
Adopt all draft decisions



Working group sessions

Most of the agenda items of each of the meetings will be addressed within one of the two working groups. It is during the working group sessions that parties will present their positions, discuss and eventually reach a consensus on how to proceed with each agenda item. When a consensus is reached and the parties have agreed on a text, this text is presented during the plenary and is subjected to the approval by the plenary.

At the CBD, the division of agenda items between the working groups is decided by

the COP bureau.

Traditionally, Working Group 1 (WG1) considers most of the agenda items relating to the operations, finances, implementation and cooperation in the Convention and will mostly negotiate on recommendations made by SBI (Subsidiary Body of Implementation).

Working Group 2 (WG2) discusses most of the agenda items about technical and scientific issues, focusing mostly on recommendations made by SBSTTA (Subsidiary Body of Scientific Technical and Technological Advice).

A few examples:

WG1

- Capacity-building, technical and scientific cooperation and technology transfer
- Resource mobilisation
- Financial mechanism
- Cooperation with other conventions, international organisations and initiatives
- Review of progress towards the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and the achievement of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets
- Engagement of stakeholders and major groups, including business
- Gender mainstreaming

WG2

- Marine and coastal biodiversity
- Ecologically or biologically significant marine areas;
- Marine debris and anthropogenic underwater noise on marine and coastal biodiversity
- Invasive alien species
- Biodiversity and climate change
- Sustainable wildlife management
- Protected areas and ecosystem restoration
- Biodiversity and human health
- Climate-related geoengineering
- Forest biodiversity

Negotiating the text



The negotiation session within the working group is opened by the Chair. He introduces the agenda items that will be covered in the session and the official documents that will be discussed. The chair is assisted by the Secretary.

The Chair can ask the Secretary to give a brief overview of the agenda item to be negotiated and after that he will open the floor to parties.



Party delegates will then ask for the floor to present their position, by **pressing the microphone button**. Then the chair will give permission for them to intervene according to the order in which they requested the floor.



Parties can state their position individually or they can present their position as a group, in this case, one party will ask for the floor and present the position on behalf of the group.

The Working Group Chair:

A working group chair is the presiding officer of a working group. He or she is an officer of the meeting and does not represent his or her delegation. Working group chairs are usually COP or SBSTTA Bureau members (although this is not compulsory).

A working group chair's primary role is to facilitate a working group's consideration of an issue in order to achieve consensus and report back to the plenary.

The Secretary

The working group chair is assisted by a Secretary who is a staff member of the Secretariat. It is usually a Secretariat division head or a programme officer acting as the primary focal point for a particular thematic or cross-cutting area or both.

The Secretary assists the working group chair by:

- Providing advice on the conduct of the meeting
- Taking notes, summarising and synthesizing the contributions from delegations
- Preparing draft decisions and recommendations
- Responding and providing clarification when requested
- Liaising with the Executive Secretary, another working group, smaller breakout groups and their presiding officers, and with the conference services unit for meeting room allocation, interpretation and the production of documents including their translation and distribution.

Regional Groups and other Coalitions

Regional Groups

There are a number of major negotiating groups and regional interest groups in major MEAs. In the CBD, parties are usually coordinate themselves through their Regional

Groups (in some cases, on the basis of shared interests with States from a particular region - Australia is part of the Western European and Others Group)

There are five UN regional groupings that are based on established UN practice. These are:



Negotiating Blocs

Apart from the Regional Groups, parties with shared interests have constituted negotiating blocs in order to strengthen their negotiating position. While these groups are effectively very important and very active during meetings, their status is general-

ly informal, as opposed to the formal status of parties and regional groups. There are many negotiating blocs as they are created as a response to how certain negotiations develop. The main negotiation groups in the CBD are as follows:

European Union (EU)

The EU is recognised as a regional economic integration organisation, which allows the EU to negotiate in multilateral negotiations like the CBD alongside its member states. The EU frequently speaks on behalf of its members as a whole.

G-77 and China

The Group of 77 and China represents the largest coalition in the United Nations. The G-77 and China began in 1964 when 77 developing States signed the "Joint Declaration of the Seventy-Seven Countries."

Small Island Developing States (SIDS)

The Small Island Developing States (SIDS) coalition consists of small island and low-lying coastal states. The Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS), which operates under the auspices of SIDS, serves as an ad hoc lobbying and negotiating group for SIDS members.

JUSSCANZ

Developed countries that are not members of the European Union have also formed coalitions for negotiating purposes. The coalition represents usually Japan, the United States, Switzerland, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Norway, Iceland, Andorra, Korea, Liechtenstein, Mexico, San Marino, Turkey and sometimes Israel.

Least Developed Countries (LDCs)

The Least Developed Countries (LDCs) have also formed a coalition for negotiating purposes in some multilateral convention processes.

Like Minded Megadiverse Countries (LMMC)

The group of 19 megadiverse countries, collectively accounting for 70% of the world's biodiversity. The Countries are Bolivia, Brazil, China, Columbia, Costa Rica, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ecuador, Guatemala, India, Indonesia, Iran, Kenya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Mexico, Peru, Philippines, South Africa, Venezuela



During the beginning of negotiations, it is common to see regional groups presenting a joint position on an agenda issue.

After several parties or groups have intervened, the status of the agenda item starts to get clearer:



If most parties present similar views on the item, it is usually easier to achieve a consensus and agree on a common text

Or



If there are strong opposing views, a lot of discussion can be expected before the consensus is reached.



Normally only few agenda items can be resolved quickly, most are very complex and usually require further consultation among parties before any decision can be adopted.

When there are strong contrasting views on an item that could slow down the negotiations or block it, the Chair usually forms **smaller groups** with delegates from the Parties with opposing views to **work in parallel** in order to reach a consensus or a compromise between the opposing parties. These groups can be:



Contact groups

It is open to all delegations that wish to participate. Observers are usually permitted to participate.



Friends of the Chair

When issues are particularly sensitive, the Chair may create a "Friends of the Chair" group. This group is often smaller than contact groups and usually represents the Parties that have intervened the most on opposing sides of the issue. Observer organisations with relevant interests may also be invited, but inclusion in such groups may be a sensitive issue with some Parties or groups.



Informal consultations

In order to resolve some difficult issues, a number of Parties may meet in private, often with the participation, depending on the issue, of the Chair, in order to reach an agreement.

While Contact Groups and sometimes also Friends of the Chair groups are open to observers, Informal Consultations usually take place behind closed doors.



In these negotiating groups, government delegates, usually officials or experts from environmental ministries, will go through the draft text paragraph by paragraph and sometimes even line by line.



A text can only be adopted when parties have **reached consensus**. Therefore most of the time is being dedicated towards finding compromises. Delegates will change the text until all parties feel that their positions are being properly reflected.

If there should be diverging opinions over a paragraph, a line or even a single word, the text will be put into **square brackets**. When the text is free of square brackets it can be adopted. This process of editing the text spans over the whole two weeks of a COP meeting.



Interventions



During official negotiation sessions, delegates can voice their opinions through **interventions (oral statements)**. These oral statements will reflect the party's position on the item that is being discussed.

In CBD meetings, observers are also allowed to voice their positions through interventions during official negotiating sessions. It is at the chair's discretion to open up the floor to observers after all parties have intervened.

Basic Rules



- **Request permission to speak:** All delegates need to request the Chair's permission to speak. In CBD meetings, you can do this by pressing the microphone button in front of you (Plenary, Working Group sessions), or raise your "flag" (country or organization's name card) during smaller negotiating groups.



- **Content:** Interventions should be directly related to the item that is being discussed.



Language: In official negotiation sessions during CBD meetings, delegates may intervene in any one of the UN official languages. All interventions are interpreted in the other official languages (Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian or Spanish).



- **Time:** Interventions should be no longer than 2-3 minutes – the Chair has the authority to interrupt interventions if they are too long.

To continue a meeting after translation services have been discontinued, agreement of the Parties is required.



When making an intervention, it is better to speak slowly and very clearly, so that everybody can understand and interpreters have the time to translate it adequately.

Be ready to submit a written version of your intervention as the Secretariat usually collects it for reporting purposes and to keep it as a record.

Parties

Most initial interventions will present country or coalition positions. After most coalitions have introduced their initial position, parties will start to intervene to show support previous speakers with whom they have shared viewpoints, or to emphasize a position that is opposing previous speakers.



Interventions are key tools for effective participation of civil society representatives at a CBD meeting. They are official records of positions taken by delegates and even though observers don't have voting power, interventions by NGOs can be successful in **raising concern** on certain issues, in **finding**

allies among parties with similar perspectives and in **mobilising delegates** from parties. In the end, even if the final outcome of the meeting is not the expected one, interventions are records that showcase that civil society had different demands that were not taken into account.



In-session documents

As the negotiations progress in the Working Groups, the text starts to become shaped by the **interests** of the parties, leading to the creation of numerous **in-session documents**. These documents are usually temporary, reflecting the changes, compromise proposals and other text during the negotiations. The chair can use three types of documents: (1) Non-Papers, (2) Conference Room Papers (CRPs) and (3) Chair's Text (or Chair's Summary).



1 Non-papers can be created by a party, a bloc or directly by the chair. Non-papers are not official negotiating texts and are not subject to UN processing rules (e.g. translation into all six UN languages). For this reason non-papers can be used much more freely and quickly to record proposals by parties or to share compromise texts by the Chair. Parties often circulate non-papers when they want to test the waters for new ideas or seek support for alternative proposals. Used in a strategic manner and at the right time, non-papers can play a crucial role in capturing emerging, fragile compromises that can speed up the negotiating process.

2 Unlike non-papers, **CRPs** receive official numbers (e.g. CRP.1, CRP.2 etc.) but in principle they serve the same purpose. They usually contain new proposals or outcomes of in-session work and are often being used towards the end of a negotiating session. They are often used when there is not enough time for translation into the official languages.

3 Chair's text is a summary by the chair that outlines the current status of the negotiations. This document contains compromise proposals and ideally reflects the positions of all parties. A Chair's text can appear in the form of a non-paper or a CRP but always aims to consolidate multiple previous documents into a more final single negotiating text. A Chair's text is usually being introduced towards the end of negotiations or when the Chair wishes to accelerate the process.

As soon as the working groups are able to remove most of the square brackets and agree on a single negotiating text, a so called **L-document** is created. L-document is short for limited distribution document and is the **final version of a negotiating text that will be presented to the closing plenary for final adoption**. L-documents must be translated into all six UN languages.

All the documents approved by the plenary are then named COP-Decisions and must be implemented by all parties at the national level.

The negotiations can be very complex so here are a few initiatives that can help you out!

Earth Negotiations Bulletins (ENBs)

The ENB is an independent, impartial reporting service published by the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD). It provides daily coverage of major international envi-

ronmental meetings to various MEAs.

The ENB summarises a day of negotiation including party's positions and statements, in 2 or 4 pages. Reports are also available on the ENB website



ECO

ECO
Volume 52, Issue 1
Monday, 25 April 2016
www.cb dalliance.info
twitter: biodiversity

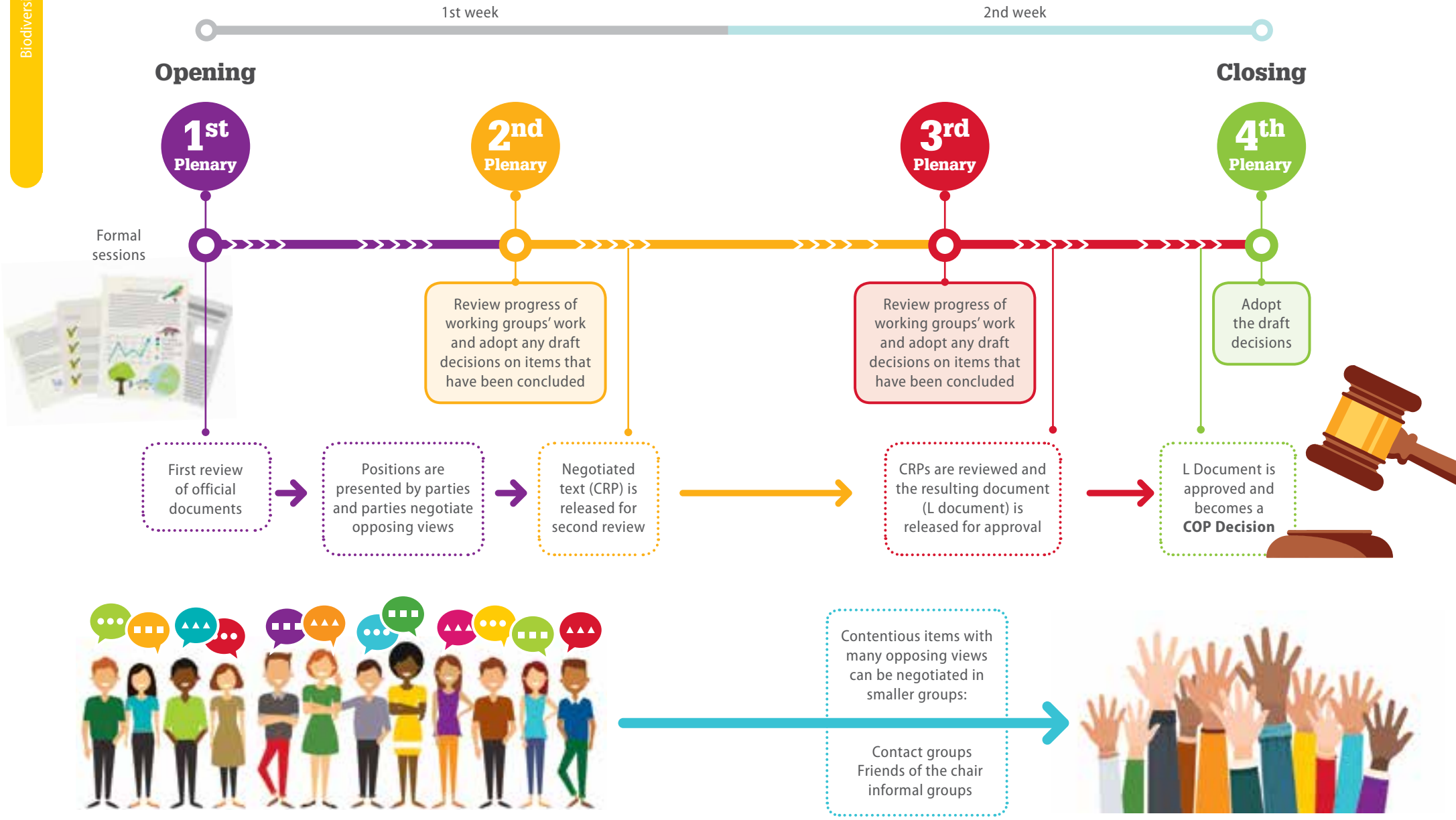
ECO is a newsletter produced by the CBD Alliance (network of civil society organisations) and it is distributed during the meetings featuring articles by several organisations on key issues that will be negotiated.

NGO position papers and policy briefs

Many NGOs prepare summaries on their positions on key issues or develop short publications briefing participants on the issues. This can be very helpful for becoming familiarised with issues and it is a good way to try to influence the negotiation as many party delegates read these publications.



Flow of negotiations



High Level Segment (HLS)

The High-level Segment is composed of the highest-level representatives of Parties attending the CBD meeting, typically the Minister or equivalent.

It is usually held during the last days of the COP meeting to facilitate negotiation of

difficult issues that require executive decisions by higher officials.

The HLS is organised by the Host Country, which is in charge of selecting an overarching theme for the HLS and, in consultation with the COP Bureau and the Secretariat, also defines the HLS Agenda and expected outcomes.

Participation is usually restricted to High Level Officials and Heads of Delegation, but other COP delegates can follow the discussions through an online live stream provided by the Secretariat on their webpage.

In 2016, the HLS was held before the COP13 aiming at steering the negotiations through a Ministerial Declaration, setting the tone for the whole COP meeting.

Concurrent organisation of meetings

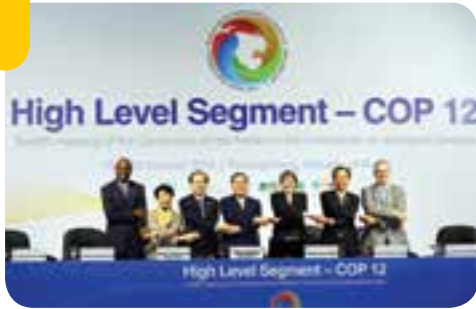
As a measure to cut costs and in order to improve the efficiency of structures and processes under the Convention, most recently Parties have requested the Executive Secretary to present a plan for the concurrent organisation of meetings.

Traditionally, the Conference of the Parties and the Meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol (CP-MOP) have been organised separately, with the CP-MOP taking place one week before the COP. This approach required a timeframe of three weeks for the organisation of both meetings. According to the new plan, which will be first implemented at COP13, the Conference of the Parties, the Meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol (CP-MOP) as well as the Meeting of the Parties to the Nagoya-Proto-

col (NG-MOP) will all be organised concurrently within a two-week timeframe.

Like at previous COP-meetings, this means that two working groups will be formed at the beginning of the meeting. One working group will mainly consider COP agenda items while the second working group will mainly deal with agenda items of the Protocols. Agenda items of the COP, the CP-MOP and the NG-MOP that are related to each other will either be considered jointly or in close proximity. For instance the budget of the COP, the Cartagena Protocol and the Nagoya-Protocol would be considered jointly in one session.

It is hoped that this approach will help to reduce costs for the organisation without compromising the ability of small delegations to participate in all sessions.



Parallel events

Most COP meetings attract a great number of participants from a variety of organisations. At most UN meetings, it also has an impact within the host city as it mobilises a great number of citizens that are involved in preparations or have been informed through national outreach campaigns. In most COP meetings many local students are involved and work as volunteers during the COP supporting the general organisation and logistics. So in order to take full advantage of the opportunities such a gathering provides, the Secretariat together with the Host Country and sever-



al different organisations, organise **many meetings and special events in parallel to the COP meeting.**

Side Events

These are usually in the form of discussion panels, workshops, seminars, etc. organised either by the Secretariat, States, international organisations or non-governmental organisations.

Side Events are usually 90-minute events that take place on the margins of large UN conferences.

During the COP meeting, the CBD secretariat allocates time slots and rooms within the COP venue with the purpose of hosting side events and invites all parties and observers to register a side event.



A few months prior to the meeting, the CBD Secretariat opens the registration for Side Events on their webpage.

Side Events are a good platform to:

- Increase visibility of: specific issues, organisations, projects, challenges
- Promote discussions that could support the negotiations
- Introduce success stories or new initiatives
- Expand networks and communities working on the same issues

For instance, parties usually organise Side Events to present their activities to implement the CBD on the national level. Think tanks, research institutes and universities often present scientific studies or results of research activities in fields related to the issues relevant to the meeting, while UN agencies usually to share information about specific aspects of the negotiations. Typically, NGOs and other stakeholders use **Side**

Events to present about relevant projects or share their position on the issues that are being negotiated.

Usually, the number of registrations exceeds the number of slots available, so it is at the Secretariat's discretion to select the Side Events that will be ultimately approved.



Rio Conventions Pavillion



The Rio Conventions Pavilion (RCP) is a platform for raising awareness and sharing information about the latest practices and scientific findings linking biodiversity, climate change and sustainable land management.

The Rio Conventions Pavilion was launched in 2010 at the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD COP10) in Nagoya, Japan.

The Rio Conventions Pavilion provides opportunities for parties and observers to highlight activities linking biodiversity, land management and climate change, especially

at national and sub-national levels. It brings together lecture series, web events and thematic displays, and it also provides opportunities to highlight a number of cross-cutting issues.

The CBD Secretariat together with the Secretariats of the other Rio Conventions (UNFCCC and UNCCD) and other partner organisations prepare the programme of the RCP and featured events.



More information can be found at riopavillion.org

Parallel events

CEPA Fair

CEPA stands for Communication, Education and Public Awareness and it is a Programme of Work of the CBD.

The CEPA Fair is a fair on experiences and best practices in Communication, Education and Public Awareness (CEPA) and is held throughout the COP meeting. It provides a unique opportunity for parties, other governments and organisations to showcase their work, national experiences, and contribution to the implementation of the Convention in the context of CEPA.

How participants benefit from the CEPA Fair:

- Promote your work, country or organisation
- Expand your network and increase collaboration opportunities
- Share knowledge, experiences and information

The CEPA Fair consists of two components:



Participants can submit proposals through the CBD webpage for one or both components, which are then selected by the CBD Secretariat and organised into a programme.

i More details are available at www.cbd.int/cepa/fair

Usually, the number of proposals exceeds the number of slots available, so it is at the Secretariat's discretion to select proposals that will be ultimately approved.

Exhibition

Traditionally the Host Country organises an exhibition, where local and national governments, international organisations, NGOs, academic institutions, private sectors and other organisations can showcase their projects, initiatives and ideas relating to the

integration of biodiversity in their activities.

The exhibition is **open to the public**, and is a good opportunity for organisations to engage with the public and raise awareness of biodiversity issues within a broader audience.

Biodiversity Summit Of Cities And Subnational Governments

The potential of cities and other sub-national governments to contribute to the achievement of the goals of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and its Aichi Biodiversity Targets has been recognised since decision IX/28, adopted at COP 9.

Since COP 9, the CBD Secretariat together with the Host Country and Partners

organises a Biodiversity Summit for cities and subnational governments, bringing mayors and relevant stakeholders from several cities to discuss means of implementing the Strategic Plan at the local level.

The focus of the summit follows the main theme of the COP meeting and the outcomes produced are considered during the main COP meeting.



Photo: GYBN

Events to promote the engagement of stakeholders

The CBD has increasingly been promoting the engagement of several stakeholders and Host Countries may wish to organise events to engage with specific stakeholders that are

particularly relevant to the theme of the COP. So even though it is not mandatory, most Host Countries will organise forums, conferences and dialogues targeting different stakeholders.



Youth



Business



Civil society



Women



Indigenous people and local communities



You can find more information on these events on the official website of the COP meeting. This website is activated a few months prior to the COP meeting.



Main Outcomes

The main goal of the COP meeting is to further advance negotiations between the parties of the CBD on issues that are relevant to the implementation of the three objectives of the Convention, so naturally, the main expected outcome is an agreement from the parties setting out **guidelines and actions** to be implemented by the parties at the national level with the assistance of the Secretariat.

This agreement comes when consensus is reached during the negotiation of the text prepared by the Secretariat (official documents), and a **set of decisions** for each

agenda item is approved by the plenary.

These sets of decisions are called **COP-Decisions** and they are the main outcome of the COP meeting.

COP-DECISIONS

COP-Decisions are legal texts that can contain concrete action plans, specific targets and other obligations that CBD member states **need to implement on the national level**. Since the first COP in 1994, more than 360 COP-decisions have been adopted. These decisions cover a wide range of topics: operations of the convention, establishing

guidelines for national strategic plans, mobilising financial resources, setting guidelines for protected areas, etc.

AMMENDMENTS/PROTOCOLS

In the context of framework conventions such as the CBD, there are some complex issues that need further commitments and provisions that are not set out in the Convention text. For these issues, the negotiations tend to evolve towards the amendment of the convention - meaning the adoption and ratification of protocols. **Protocols are international legal instruments** appended or closely related to another agreement. They constitute separate and additional agreements and must be signed and ratified by the parties to the convention concerned. Protocols typically strengthen a convention by adding new, more detailed commitments. The CBD has adopted 2 protocols, the Cartagena protocol on Biosafety, and the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit sharing of Genetic Resources, that were major outcomes of EXCOP1 and COP10 (2010).

Legal power of COP-Decisions:



Although COP-decisions have some legal force, unlike Protocols they are not legally binding. COP-decisions are considered as so called "Voluntary Law" and there are no sanctions for non-compliance. However, COP-decisions represent political commitments and coupled with a system of "naming and shaming" they can provide strong incentives for compliance. In this regard, civil society participation is of crucial importance to create public awareness and pressure to ensure the full implementation of COP-Decisions.

Closure of the meeting

The last day of the COP meeting ends with the closing plenary. It is during this time that **all documents and decisions are approved by the parties**, the final report of the meeting is adopted and all final announcements are made including the official announcement of the next COP meeting venue.

Once the meeting has ended, it is up to the countries to then implement the decisions that were agreed during the meeting!

How these countries can do this will be discussed in the next chapter.



5 Implementation Of The CBD

Photo: Pixabay

Chapter 5

Implementation Of The CBD

Chapter five explains how the CBD is being implemented on the ground and introduces key instruments such as the Strategic Plan and its Aichi Targets, NBSAPs the CHM and others.



How is the Convention being implemented?

As explained before, the CBD is a **framework convention** and as such, rather than giving specific provisions to achieve the Convention's objectives, it establishes an overarching framework with general principles, objectives and basic commitments. So it is up to the Conference Of the Parties to negotiate and adopt decisions that set strategic plans, with specific work programmes with detailed guidelines, targets and milestones that will enable the implementation of the Convention.

Organic development

Throughout the years the Convention has grown in an organic way, with commitments being made according to a confluence of factors, including, amongst other things, the gravity of issues, Parties interests, pressure from civil society and the constant development of scientific knowledge.

In the first years of the Convention, most decisions that were adopted focussed on creating an enabling environment for the Convention to fully operate, such as provisions for the establishment of the Secretariat and the Subsidiary Body on Scientific Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA). Medium-Term Programmes of Work for the 2-year period between COP meetings were also put in place, and some issues started to emerge as priority issues to be addressed (e.g. biosafety, biotechnology, marine and coastal biodiversity, access to genetic resources, agricultural biodiversity, etc).



Thematic Programmes of Work

Seven Thematic Programmes of Work were adopted as a direct result of negotiations developed for the issues relating to critical ecosystems. The Seven Thematic Programmes of Work address the issues via a more permanent framework for ac-

tion. Each thematic programme of work establishes a vision with basic principles to guide future work. It also defines key issues and identifies potential outputs with a timeline and provisions to deliver the outputs.

The Seven Thematic Programmes are:



<https://www.cbd.int/programmes/default.shtml>

Cross-Cutting Issues

Following a similar process, the COP has also initiated work on key issues that are relevant to all the seven thematic areas. These are cross-cutting issues which act as

links between the thematic programmes and the issues addressed in the Convention's Articles 6-20, bringing cohesion to the work of the Convention (CBD, 2016).

- Aichi Biodiversity Targets
- Access to Genetic Resources and Benefit-sharing
- Biological and Cultural Diversity
- Biodiversity for Development
- Climate Change and Biodiversity
- Communication, Education and Public Awareness
- Economics, Trade and Incentive Measures
- Ecosystem Approach
- Ecosystem Restoration
- Gender and Biodiversity
- Global Strategy for Plant Conservation
- Global Taxonomy Initiative
- Impact Assessment
- Identification, Monitoring, Indicators and Assessments
- Invasive Alien Species
- Liability and Redress - Art. 14(2)
- Protected Areas
- Sustainable Use of Biodiversity
- Tourism and Biodiversity
- Traditional Knowledge, Innovations and Practices - Article 8(j)
- Technology Transfer and Cooperation



Strategic Plans

In addition to COP-Decisions, roughly every ten years Parties to the CBD agree on a “**Strategic Plan**” which contains a set of specific goals and serves as a 10-year framework of action for parties, stakeholders and other organisations.

First Strategic Plan 2002-2010

During COP4, Parties started to voice the need to establish a longer term programme of work, to guide the work of the Convention in a more permanent and strategic way, including targets, milestones and specific review mechanisms.

At COP5, the Parties adopted a Decision (V/20) that initiated the process of developing a Strategic Plan for the Convention based on the previous longer-term programmes of work. It set the basic operational provisions, guidelines and the main goal of providing guidance to the implementation of the existing programmes of work.

After several consultation with parties and organisations, COP6 adopted the first CBD **Strategic Plan (2002-2010)**, where Parties committed to a more effective and coherent implementation of the three objectives of the convention, and to achieve by 2010 a significant reduction of the rate of biodiversity loss at the global, regional and national level.

COP5 also established to establish an **Ad-Hoc Open-ended Working Group on Review of Implementation of the Convention (WGRI)** to consider the progress in the implementation of the Convention and the Strategic Plan; review the impacts and effectiveness of existing processes under the Convention; and consider ways and means of identifying and overcoming obstacles to the effective implementation of the Convention.



Strategic Plan 2011-2020

Living in harmony with nature

The most recent Strategic Plan has been adopted at COP10 (Nagoya, Japan) and contains a long-term vision for 2050, a mid-term mission statement for 2020 and is structured into five Strategic Goals which contain a total of twenty concrete targets, the so called Aichi Targets.

Vision “Living in Harmony with Nature”

“By 2050, biodiversity is valued, conserved, restored and wisely used, maintaining ecosystem services, sustaining a healthy planet and delivering benefits essential for all people.”

Mission

“take effective and **urgent action to halt the loss of biodiversity** in order to ensure that **by 2020** ecosystems are resilient and continue to provide essential services, thereby **securing the planet’s variety of life**, and contributing to human well-being, and poverty eradication.

To ensure this, **pressures on biodiversity are reduced**, ecosystems are restored, biological resources are sustainably used and benefits arising out of utilisation of genetic resources are shared in a fair and equitable manner; adequate financial resources are

provided, capacities are enhanced, biodiversity issues and values mainstreamed, appropriate policies are effectively implemented, and decision-making is based on sound science and the precautionary approach.”

Strategic Goals

The goals and target set an overarching plan to be achieved at the global level, with a flexible framework allowing parties to take into account their own priorities and needs, as well as establish national and regional targets.

Implementation

The Strategic Plan is implemented primarily through activities at the national or subnational level, with supporting action at the regional and global levels through the programmes of work of the Convention, implementation of national biodiversity strategies and action plans (NBSAPs), and other national, regional and international activities.

Monitoring & Review

Reports: Parties will inform the Conference of the Parties of the national targets or commitments and policy instruments they adopt to implement the Strategic Plan, as well as any milestones towards these targets, and report on progress towards these targets and milestones, through their national reports.

Review: The Conference of the Parties, with the support of other Convention bodies, in particular the Subsidiary Body on Implementation (SBI), will review the progress of the implementation of the Strategic Plan.

There are the five Strategic Goals

Strategic Goal A

Address the underlying causes of biodiversity loss by mainstreaming biodiversity across government and society

Strategic Goal B

Reduce the direct pressures on biodiversity and promote sustainable use

Strategic Goal C

Improve the status of biodiversity by safeguarding ecosystems, species and genetic diversity

Strategic Goal D

Enhance the benefits to all from biodiversity and ecosystem services

Strategic Goal E

Enhance implementation through participatory planning, knowledge management and capacity building



The Aichi Biodiversity Targets

Strategic Goal A: Address the underlying causes of biodiversity loss by mainstreaming biodiversity across government and society



By 2020, at the latest, people are aware of the values of biodiversity and the steps they can take to conserve and use it sustainably.



By 2020, at the latest, biodiversity values have been integrated into national and local development and poverty reduction strategies and planning processes and are being incorporated into national accounting, as appropriate, and reporting systems.



By 2020, at the latest, incentives, including subsidies, harmful to biodiversity are eliminated, phased out or reformed in order to minimize or avoid negative impacts, and positive incentives for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity are developed and applied, consistent and in harmony with the Convention and other relevant international obligations, taking into account national socio economic conditions.



By 2020, at the latest, governments, business and stakeholders at all levels have taken steps to achieve or have implemented plans for sustainable production and consumption and have kept the impacts of use of natural resources well within safe ecological limits.

Strategic Goal B: Reduce the direct pressures on biodiversity and promote sustainable use



By 2020, the rate of loss of all natural habitats, including forests, is at least halved and where feasible brought close to zero, and degradation and fragmentation is significantly reduced.



By 2020 all fish and invertebrate stocks and aquatic plants are managed and harvested sustainably, legally and applying ecosystem based approaches, so that overfishing is avoided, recovery plans and measures are in place for all depleted species, fisheries have no significant adverse impacts on threatened species and vulnerable ecosystems and the impacts of fisheries on stocks, species and ecosystems are within safe ecological limits.



By 2020 areas under agriculture, aquaculture and forestry are managed sustainably, ensuring conservation of biodiversity.



By 2020, pollution, including from excess nutrients, has been brought to levels that are not detrimental to ecosystem function and biodiversity.



By 2020, invasive alien species and pathways are identified and prioritized, priority species are controlled or eradicated, and measures are in place to manage pathways to prevent their introduction and establishment.



By 2015, the multiple anthropogenic pressures on coral reefs, and other vulnerable ecosystems impacted by climate change or ocean acidification are minimized, so as to maintain their integrity and functioning.

Strategic Goal C: Improve the status of biodiversity by safeguarding ecosystems, species and genetic diversity



By 2020, at least 17 per cent of terrestrial and inland water, and 10 per cent of coastal and marine areas, especially areas of particular importance for biodiversity and ecosystem services,

are conserved through effectively and equitably managed, ecologically representative and well connected systems of protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures, and integrated into the wider landscape and seascapes.



By 2020 the extinction of known threatened species has been prevented and their conservation status, particularly of those most in decline, has been improved and sustained.



By 2020, the genetic diversity of cultivated plants and farmed and domesticated animals and of wild relatives, including other socio-economically as well as culturally valuable species, is maintained, and strategies have been developed and implemented for minimizing genetic erosion and safeguarding their genetic diversity.

Strategic Goal D: Enhance the benefits to all from biodiversity and ecosystem services



By 2020, ecosystems that provide essential services, including services related to water, and contribute to health, livelihoods and wellbeing, are restored and safeguarded, taking into account the needs of women, indigenous and local communities, and the poor and vulnerable.



By 2020, ecosystem resilience and the contribution of biodiversity to carbon stocks has been enhanced, through conservation and restoration, including restoration of at least 15 per cent of degraded ecosystems, thereby contributing to climate change mitigation and adaptation and to combating desertification.



By 2015, the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization is in force and operational, consistent with national legislation.

Strategic Goal E: Enhance implementation through participatory planning, knowledge management and capacity building



By 2015 each Party has developed, adopted as a policy instrument, and has commenced implementing an effective, participatory and updated national biodiversity strategy and action plan.



By 2020, the traditional knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous and local communities relevant for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, and their customary use of biological resources, are respected, subject to national legislation and relevant international obligations, and fully integrated and reflected in the implementation of the Convention with the full and effective participation of indigenous and local communities, at all relevant levels.



By 2020, knowledge, the science base and technologies relating to biodiversity, its values functioning, status and trends, and the consequences of its loss, are improved, widely shared and transferred, and applied.



By 2020, at the latest, the mobilisation of financial resources for effectively implementing the Strategic Plan 2011-2020 from all sources and in accordance with the consolidated and agreed process in the Strategy for Resource Mobilisation should increase substantially from the current levels. This target will be subject to changes contingent to resources needs assessments to be developed and reported by Parties.

All **196 Parties to the CBD** have committed to update their National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs) to reflect the goals of the Strategic Plan and to adopt national targets that must be implemented **until 2020**.

National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs)

The Convention in its Article 6(a) states that each Contracting Party should develop a **National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP)** or equivalent instrument in accordance with its particular conditions and capabilities. This creates an obligation for parties to carry out national biodiversity planning, defining a course of action with specific targets and plans to fulfill the objectives of the Convention.

In this context, NBSAPs are considered to be one of the strongest implementation mechanisms in the CBD.

Following the adoption of the 2010-2020 Strategic Plan, all parties were requested to revise and update their NBSAPs accordingly to incorporate the new goals and create means to implement it on the national level, e.g. through the creation of specific action plans, programmes or the adoption of new legislation.

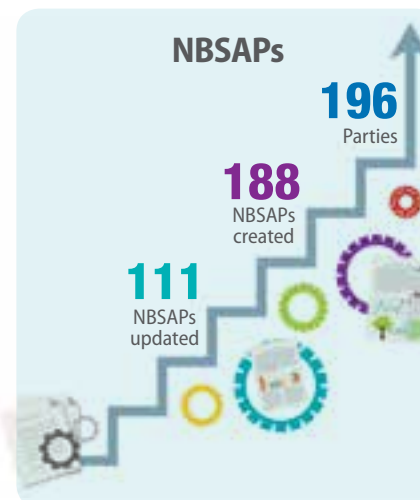
Biodiversity Mainstreaming

Further, Article 6(b) calls on parties to integrate the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity into relevant sectoral and cross-sectoral plans, programmes and policies. This process is being called “mainstreaming”.

With regards to NBSAPs, this means that biodiversity considerations should also be integrated into other sectors that have an impact on biodiversity, such as e.g. agriculture or urbanisation.



As of November 2016, 188 out of the CBD's 196 parties have created NBSAPs. However, since the adoption of the new Strategic Plan 2011-2020 only 120 countries have updated their NBSAPs.



Moving from COP-decisions in the CBD, to policy decisions on the national level and eventually to actual changes on the ground is a long and complex process.

Since there are no sanctions for non-compliance with COP-decisions, implementation processes on the national level primarily rely on **political will** as well as the availability of sufficient resources, both in terms of human resources and funding. The latter two elements, are often lacking in developing countries and therefore the provision of sufficient funding and the organisation of capacity-building activities is of fundamental importance for the implementation of the CBD.

Aichi Biodiversity Target 17

“By 2015, each Party has developed, adopted as a policy instrument, and has commenced implementing an effective, participatory and updated NBSAP.”



National Reports

In order to ensure that the Convention is being implemented following the NBSAPs, frequent monitoring and review of progress is essential.

As stated in Article 26 of the Convention, all parties are obliged to submit **National Reports** on the measures that they have taken to implement the Convention on a frequent basis.

These National Reports are public and a key tool to track the level of implementation by parties. Coordinated with the Strategic Plans, the COP has requested parties to submit National Reports every four to five years: One towards the middle of a Strategic Plan period and one towards the end.

The most recent National Reports (NR5) were submitted by parties until the end of March 2014 - serving as the basis for a

mid-term review of progress towards the Strategic Plan 2011-2020. The next reports are due in March 31 2019 and will be an important input for the CBD's next Strategic Plan 2021-2030.

National Reports support the implementation of biodiversity programmes on the national level: By providing monitoring and analysis, countries can better understand the effects of the measures taken and are able to take more informed implementation decisions. They are also serving as the basis for the CBD flagship publication, the **Global Biodiversity Outlook (GBO)**.

Guidelines for National Reports are discussed and adopted by the COP and have evolved since its first edition to reflect the progress being done by parties to achieve the targets reflected in the Strategic Plans.

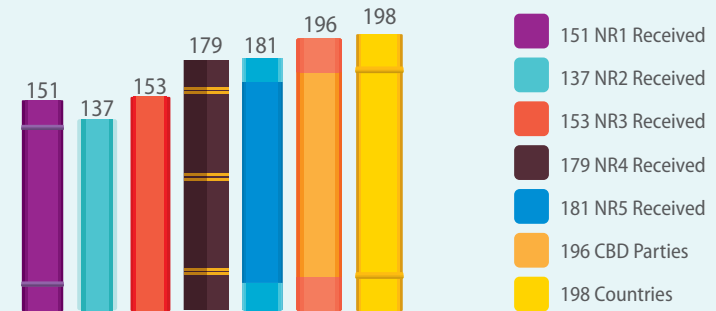
Participatory process

Parties are requested to prepare National Reports in an open and participatory process that also includes consultations with NGOs, civil society, indigenous peoples and local commu-

nities, business and the media. This can be a good opportunity for civil society to share their views on the level of implementation and to highlight shortcomings and obstacles.



National Reports Submissions



Global Biodiversity Outlook

During COP2, parties called for the preparation of a periodic report assessing the status of biodiversity worldwide and the status of implementation of the Convention - the Global Biodiversity Outlook (GBO). The report draws on a range of in-

formation sources, including National Reports, biodiversity indicators information, scientific literature, and existing assessments. Four editions of the report have been prepared and preparations for the fifth edition are currently underway.



GBO1 (Launched at COP6, 2002)

Summarises the status of biodiversity and provides an analysis of the steps being taken to ensure that the three objectives of the Convention are being achieved.



GBO2 (Launched at COP8, 2006)

Summarises the status of biodiversity and provides a mid-term assessment of the progress towards the 2010 Biodiversity Target (Strategic Plan 2002-2010) and its contribution to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.



GBO3 (Launched at COP10, 2010)

Summarises the latest data on status and trends of biodiversity, provides an analysis of the Strategic Plan 2002-2010 and draws conclusions for the next Strategic Plan (2010-2020) of the Convention.



GBO4 (Launched at COP12, 2014)

Provides a mid-term assessment of progress towards the implementation of the Strategic Plan (2010-2020) and its Aichi Targets.

Clearing-House Mechanism (CHM)



Biodiversity knowledge network for scientific and technical cooperation

To ensure that all parties have the information and technology needed for their biodiversity conservation measures, **Article 18.3** established the CBD's Clearing-House Mechanism (CHM).

The CHM's mission is to support the implementation of the Convention by promoting scientific and technical cooperation, knowledge sharing and information exchange.



Its main functions are:



Promote and facilitate technical and scientific cooperation within and between countries



Develop a global mechanism for exchanging and integrating information on biodiversity



Develop a human and technological network

It currently consists of:



The CBD website functioning as a central node for information and resource sharing



The network of national CHMs



Several partner institutions

Financing the implementation of the CBD

Over the years the CBD has adopted an impressive number of decisions, programmes of work and other action plans. However, in order to turn these political commitments into concrete action on the ground, it is absolutely essential that sufficient resources are being made available.

The CBD addresses the need for financial resources in Articles 20 (Financial Resources) and 21 (Financial Mechanism). In Article 20.1 the Convention commits all parties to pro-

vide financial support for the implementation of the CBD at the national level.

It can be said that the achievement of the CBD's objectives largely depends on the actions that are being taken by and in developing countries, as they host most of the world's biodiversity. However, developing countries often lack the financial, institutional as well as human resources to implement the CBD's decisions on the national level.

Article 20 (Financial Resources)

*"[...] developed country Parties shall provide **new and additional** financial resources to enable developing country Parties to meet the agreed full incremental costs to them of implementing measures which fulfil the obligations of this Convention [...]"*

In order to implement this provision, Article 20.2 also mandates the Conference of the Parties to establish a **list of developed countries who voluntarily take up the responsibility to contribute financial resources**. As of 2016, this list was last updated at COP8 (Curitiba, 2008).

Further, in acknowledgement of the principle of **"Common but differentiated Responsibilities" (CBDR)**, Article 20.4 also recognises that the extent of implementation by developing countries relies upon the **transfer of technology and the provision of sufficient financial resources** by developed countries. Importantly, the Convention also takes fully into account that *"[...] economic and social development and eradication of poverty are the first and overriding priorities of the developing country Parties."*

List of Developed countries



How much?

US\$ **74 billion** to **120 billion**

needed for the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and to achieve the 20 Aichi Targets.

These amounts might sound overwhelmingly high at first, but it is important to put them into perspective:



Subsidies for agriculture

261 billion USD
(annually)



Subsidies for energy

557 billion USD
(annually)



Global military budget

1753 billion USD
(2014)

Most importantly, the investment that is needed to conserve biodiversity is a fraction of the value that ecosystem services are providing.

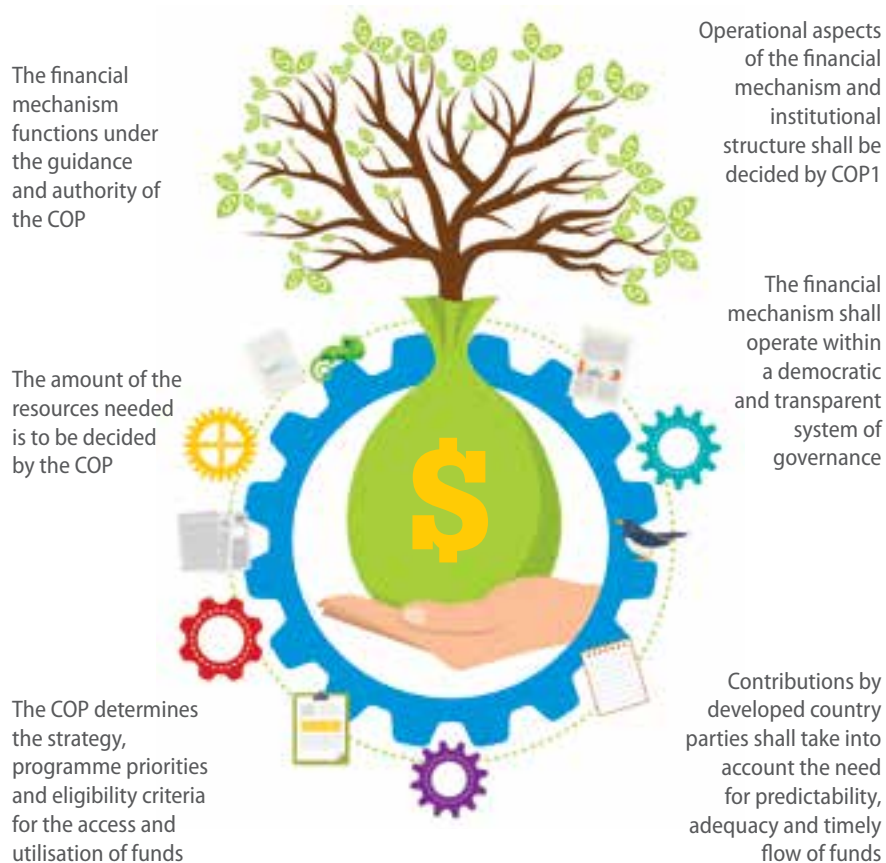
Source: GEF Needs funding Assessment, 2012; TEEB, 2009; Zentelis and Lindenmayer, 2015

Article 21 (Financial Mechanism)

While Article 20 of the Convention formulates principles and guidelines for the provision of financial resources, Article 21 deals with the operationalisation of these rules and establishes one of the key components of the Convention – the Financial Mechanism.

Article 21 of the Convention is born out of a compromise between developed

and developing countries and purposefully leaves a number of provisions rather vague or refers final decisions to the Conference of the Parties. Article 21 creates a financial mechanism for the CBD for the provision of financial resources to developing countries. The article contains the following guidelines for the operation and design of this mechanism:



How did the Financial Mechanism come into being?

During the negotiating process of the Convention between 1987 and 1992, agreement on the structure of the CBD's financial mechanism was one of the most dividing issues between developing and developed countries and almost

led to the failure of the negotiations.

The conflict focused on the institutional arrangements for the operation of the financial mechanism. More specifically, on the question of **who would decide about the use of the funds?**

Photo: Designed by Onlyyouqj / Freepik



Developing countries X Developed countries

Developing countries wanted to establish a new and independent fund that would be directly administrated under the authority of the Conference of the Parties, where they are in the majority. Developing countries would thus have been able to exercise more control over the use of funds.

Developed countries on the other hand, preferred an approach in which the Global Environmental Facility (GEF), which was established under the World Bank, would serve as the CBD's financial mechanism.

It was only during the last hours of the final round of negotiations in Nairobi that countries finally found a **compromise solution** that was agreeable to all (except of the USA). This compromise assigned the authority to control the financial mechanism to the Conference of the Parties. GEF on the other hand was given the mandate

to serve as the institutional structure for the operation of the CBD's financial mechanism on an interim basis. Following reforms in GEF's governing structure, which ensured a stronger representation of developing countries, this arrangement was later made permanent by a COP decision adopted at COP3 (Buenos Aires, 1996).

COP

Establishes funding, guidelines and priorities



GEF

Applies this guidelines and distributes the funding accordingly

The Global Environmental Facility (GEF)

Originally only an interim solution and on the condition that it would be fully re-structured, the Global Environment Facility (GEF) was appointed to serve as the institutional structure for the operation of the financial mechanism (Article 39). So let's take a closer look at how GEF actually works.

In anticipation of the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, GEF was established in 1991 as a pilot-programme under the World Bank to provide financial resources for the protection of the global environment and to promote sustainable development. Later on, GEF was restructured, left the World Bank System and became an independent organisation. Today, GEF is the largest public provider of funds for global environmental projects.

It brings together 183 countries but also other actors such as international institutions, civil society organisations as well as the private sector.

GEF serves as the financial mechanism for a number of multilateral environmental agreements, including the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

(UNFCCC) and the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD).

As designated institutional structure for the operation of the CBD's financial mechanism, GEF applies all finance-related policy decisions and guidelines that the COP agrees

upon for the disbursements of funds. GEF supports developing countries in the fulfilment of their commitments under the Convention by providing new and additional funding for projects and other initiatives related to Biodiversity. In particular, GEF funds the so called "incremental" or additional costs that are associated with transforming a project with national benefits into one with global environmental benefits.

GEF receives its funding from donor countries. Both developed and developing countries can contribute. GEF operates in four-year funding cycles, so called "replenishments". Currently, we are in the GEF-6 replenishment period, which runs from 2014 to 2018. For this period, 4.43 billion USD have been made available by donor-countries. This amount represents the total budget that GEF can use to support environmental projects, with biodiversity being one of six focal areas:



photos: Pixabay

Photo: Designed by Pressfoto/FreePik

Funding is usually provided in the form of co-funding. This means that GEF only covers parts of the costs for a project, while the remaining costs need to be covered from other sources.

In close collaboration with eligible governments and non-governmental organisations, so called GEF agencies are responsible for the

development of project proposals and the management of activities on the ground. Officially recognised GEF Agencies include UNEP, UNDP, the World Bank as well as Regional Development Banks such as the African Development Bank, the Asian Development Bank, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development and the Inter-American Development Bank.



Chapter 6

Youth In The CBD

Chapter six is dedicated to youth involvement in the CBD and explains what young people can do to make their voice heard. Furthermore, it includes a selection of best-practice examples that showcase what actions youth can take to protect biodiversity.



The **role of youth** in environmental agreements

Historically, young people have always been marginalised from major decision-making processes and have been traditionally perceived as “immature” and “not being ready” to take decisions by themselves. Children and youth around the world are also one of the most vulnerable stakeholders, frequently standing at the frontline in food & water shortages, war, environmental disasters, unemployment, crime and poverty.

Basically, even though today they are the ones mostly affected by all these threats, young people still don't have relevant representation in decision-making processes, meaning that as a stakeholder their concerns

and interests are almost never heard.

This reality started to change when the Civil Rights Movements started to grow in major developed countries in the 1960s. After decades of youth-led social activism, especially in human rights and intergenerational equity, young people are finally being successful in securing rights and gaining visibility and political influence.

Due to its key linkage to the intergenerational equity, youth activism naturally picked up the environmental agenda. They perceive their future to be threatened by all the major environmental challenges and in the future they will inherit all these challenges and the

responsibility for handling them will lie with today's young people.

This connection was also highlighted by the Brundtland Report (1987) where sustainable development is defined as “the development that meets the present needs without compromising the needs of future generations.” Since then, the relevance of youth in environ-

mental governance has been growing and was officially recognised in 1992 at the Earth Summit (United Nations Conference on Environment and Development). World leaders recognised that achieving sustainable development would require the active participation of all sectors of society and all types of people including children and youth.



The Agenda 21, one of the main outcomes adopted at the Earth Summit, drew upon this sentiment and formalised nine sectors of society as the main channels through which

broad participation would be facilitated in UN activities related to sustainable development. These are officially called “Major Groups” and Children and Youth was recognised as one of them.



Women



Children and Youth



Indigenous Peoples



Non-Governmental Organisations



Local Authorities



Workers and Trade Unions



Business and Industry



Scientific and Technological Community



Farmers

Agenda 21 became a very influential document and following its recommendations, many governments and organisations as well as major environmental treaties started including children and youth in their decision-making process.

Youth Climate Movement/ Youth Non-Governmental Organizations (YOUNGO)

Young people have been participating in the negotiations under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) at least since COP5 (Bonn, 1999). While youth participation was rather uncoordinated in the beginning and only consisted of a relatively small group of individuals and organisations, it became more organised when an informal youth caucus was created at COP10 (Buenos Aires, 2004). This youth caucus adopted a declaration and agreed to work towards the recognition of youth as an official constituency in the UNFCCC. Similar to the Major Group model in the UNFCCC, constituencies serve as functional groups to organise the participation of non-governmental organisations. Today YOUNGO brings together

hundreds of youth organisations from all parts of the world and has facilitated the participation of thousands of young people that join UNFCCC meetings every year. In partnership with youth organisations from the Host Country, YOUNGO also organises the official pre-conference for young people called "Conference of Youth (COY), which takes place before every COP meeting.

Major Group for Children and Youth (MGCY)

MGCY's main objective is to communicate the perspectives of youth and coordinate their participation in a number of UN processes that focus on different aspects of sustainable development. MGCY describes itself as an umbrella group under which different youth organisations, networks and young people have the opportunity to

gather, participate, advocate and act towards sustainability. Among other things, the MGCY represents youth in UN processes on the Post-2015 agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals, Disaster Risk Reduction, Small Island Developing States, as well as on Sustainable Urban Development and Housing (UN Habitat).



Youth in the CBD

In the CBD, a bottom-up process, led by young people across the world, with the support of the CBD Secretariat established an international coordination platform for youth engagement in the CBD.

The idea of establishing an international youth network to connect, and empower young people interested in biodiversity issues, has existed since at least 2008, and was raised by several youth groups at various

events and gatherings.

However, it was only in October 2010, when many of these groups came together at the **International Youth Conference on Biodiversity (IYCB)** hosted by the government of Japan in preparation for the CBD COP10, that a group of youth participants took leadership on turning this idea into reality and started an initiative to create a **Global Youth Biodiversity Network**.



With the support of the then CBD Executive Secretary Ahmed Djoghlaif and in close cooperation with the CBD Secretariat, an international interim steering committee led the preparations to establish a democratic, all-inclusive, transparent and globally representative youth network. These preparations

were concluded in 2012, with the support of the German Ministry for the Environment and the German Youth Association for the Protection of Nature (NAJU), and the **Global Youth Biodiversity Network (GYBN)** was officially established at a GYBN Kick-Off conference in Berlin in August 2012.



Photos: GYBN

2008

Biodiversity on the Edge

Bonn, Germany
60 participants from 25 countries

2009

The 2nd International Youth Symposium on Biodiversity

Ottawa, Canada
100 youth from 10 countries
Youth Accord on Biodiversity - Youth Action plan for biodiversity

Asian Youth Conference on Biodiversity

Nagoya, Japan
79 participants from 13 countries
Youth Statement and action plan

2010

European Youth Perspective Conference on Biodiversity

Olen, Belgium
130 youth from 36 countries
Youth Statement and action plan

International Youth Conference on Biodiversity,

Nagoya, Japan
100 youth from 62 countries
Action Plan to establish the Global Biodiversity Network

Establishing a youth platform

At CBD COP11 in Hyderabad, India (October, 2012) the GYBN assumed its role as the official youth coordination platform for the CBD. The newly appointed Executive Secretary, Mr. Bráulio Dias reiterated the CBD Secretariat's support for the GYBN, strengthening GYBN's position in the process.

The GYBN also closely collaborated with other caucuses, NGOs and governments, accommodating the diversity of all the different youth groups and initiatives in one united

voice. Through the GYBN, young people successfully captured the attention of delegates, media and governments, advocating for stronger youth participation in biodiversity-related decision-making processes on all levels.

The GYBN made history at COP11 - for the first time, youth participation was officially recognised and acknowledged for its importance in the decision-making process through a COP-Decision approved and adopted by all CBD parties.



Photos: GYBN

2010

An interim Steering Committee is formed and receives strong support from the CBD Secretariat

2011

The German government provides generous support for the initiative and GYBN is officially launched prior to COP11



GYBN coordinates the youth participation during COP11 and its activities successfully push parties to acknowledge the importance of Children and Youth (Decision XI/8 B)

Decision XI/8

B. Children and youth

The Conference of the Parties,

Acknowledging the importance of youth participation in decision-making process at all levels,

1. **Encourages** Parties and other governments to include youth fully in all relevant processes, and specifically in the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and in national biodiversity strategies and action plans, as activities under the United Nations Decade for Biodiversity; and

2. **Invites** Parties to continue to provide support for youth initiatives and other networks that support the three objectives of the Convention, such as the Global Youth Biodiversity Network.

COP 11

Parties officially recognised youth



Acknowledges the importance of youth participation



Encourages parties to fully involve youth in all relevant processes



Invites parties to continue to provide support for youth initiatives

Since then, through the GYBN platform, young people have been experiencing great success in engaging with the negotiations at the CBD:



Establish partnerships with other organisations and coalitions



Showcase youth-led activities and contributions to the work of the convention



Advocate for the rights of future generations in inheriting a healthy planet



Organise actions and campaigns to mobilise and engage delegates



Establish a communication channel between young people and national decision-makers



The Global Youth Biodiversity Network (GYBN)

GYBN is

A network of individuals and youth organisations from around the world with the goal to prevent and halt the loss of biodiversity.

The international coordination platform for youth participation in the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD).

GYBN is committed to bring youth's perspectives and positions into the negotiations so that they are heard and taken into consideration.

It promotes and facilitates collaboration between youth from diverse backgrounds to mobilise and empower young people to speak up for their rights and the rights of future generations within the biodiversity policy arena.

It supports the work of young people and youth organisation at the national and regional levels that are contributing to ensure that policies negotiated at the CBD are being implemented.



Vision

Our vision is to transform the world into one that does not experience human-induced biodiversity loss and where people live in harmony with nature.



Mission

Our mission is to build a global coalition of individuals and youth organisations to halt the loss of biodiversity through mobilising and empowering young people whilst raising global awareness on the importance of biodiversity.



Since 2012 GYBN has received three awards for its work from Canadian and German organisations and it is officially recognised by the United Nations Decade of Biodiversity

GYBN Structure



Alumni Community: Active GYBN members over thirty years old that wish to keep supporting the work of the network.

Alumni Board: Former SC members that wish to keep supporting the work of the network on an advisory position to the SC.

External community: Group of NGOs, advisors, UN agencies and funding agencies with which the GYBN may interact.

Steering Committee (SC): GYBN's main coordination and decision-making body. It consists of 8-15 representatives from all world regions (Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean, North America and Oceania), including indigenous youth representatives and COP presidency representatives.

General Membership: All registered individual members and organisations.

Task forces: Project-base group of active GYBN members working on specific projects, campaigns or activities that can be temporary (e.g.: GYBN Youth Voices). It can be overseen by the SC, the Alumni Board or both.

Focal Points (FP): GYBN's liaison with external community, especially the CBD Secretariat. It consists of 2 Steering Committee members internally appointed, one representing the Global South and one representing the Global North.

Working groups: Permanent groups of active GYBN members working on specific issues relevant to the work of the network (e.g.: Policy, Outreach, Capacity Building, etc.) that are overseen by the SC.

International Activities

Membership is open to all young people and youth organisations engaged on biodiversity issues. The GYBN has a passionate international Steering Committee (SC) with members representing all world regions serving on a voluntary basis during a two year mandate.

This team is responsible for facilitating the activities of the network and supporting its members. The network also counts on a pair

of focal points representing the Global South and the Global North that are responsible for liaising with the CBD Secretariat and other relevant organisations.

The Steering Committee takes care of the GYBN's internal organisation and oversees the work of working groups and project task forces. The SC also directly coordinates the following activities at the international level:

Operations



Voluntary work



Capacity building

Workshops, webinars and publications

Liaison

Coordinates inputs, Spreads information, Coordinates youth

Outreach and awareness

Spread information and opportunities

Coordinate youth participation in the CBD and other relevant processes

(actions, policy tracking, lobbying, outreach, side-events and workshops)

Mobilisation/ building networks

Supports the mobilisations of national and regional networks

Around **the world**



GYBN members and member organisations engage in several biodiversity conservation activities:

Awareness raising & campaigning, capacity building, education and research, conservation, lobby & policy



Photos: GYBN

Covering a very diverse range of topics:

agriculture, forests, marine, poverty & development, climate change, wetlands, protected areas, wildlife

Potential **to spread**



342,500
members

110
youth organisations

97
countries

»» national
»» regional
»» international

Youth in **CBD** meetings

As explained in previous chapters, observer organisations can be accredited by the CBD and even though they don't have voting rights, after all parties have finished intervening, observers have the possibility to speak up during official negotiations and voice their positions.

Support from the CBD Secretariat

Since the start of its establishment in 2010, the CBD Secretariat has recognised the importance of youth in the CBD and has been increasingly supporting the work of GYBN. The Secretariat also keeps direct communications with GYBN, designating

a staff member as a youth focal point that keeps GYBN's focal points informed on relevant information concerning youth engagement with the CBD and other relevant processes, and advises the network when needed or requested.

Youth role in the meetings

Young people are frequently portrayed as the “energetic and exciting” stakeholders participating in meetings, and have the important task to always remind delegates and other partici-

pants of their **commitment to the future generations** and what inheritance they would like to be remembered for.

Apart from this strategic political position, young people have a great opportunity to use their creativity and:



Come up with innovative campaigns and communication ideas to sensitise participants within the venue



Showcase the added value of youth activities and projects around the world to implement the convention



Raise awareness of the issues that are being negotiated and its implications among young people around the world through coverage of the meetings

Preparing for the meetings

A few months before a CBD meeting (usually a COP or SBSTTA/SBI meeting) the GYBN notifies its members on the upcoming meeting, the planned youth activities,

logistics and all necessary preparatory information. Official documents and notifications are shared within the network and an online coordination process begins.

Online Coordination

GYBN creates an online space with relevant documents, information and capacity building materials to support the preparation of youth delegates. Communication channels such as online groups and texting groups are also created to facilitate the coordination process.

GYBN can facilitate fundraising activities of member organisations and support members in securing funding.

Capacity building

Information packages with briefing notes and guides to help youth delegates understand the CBD process are shared with members prior to meetings.

Webinars featuring talks by NGO experts on specific negotiation topics and on the CBD process in general are organised by GYBN together with partner organisations.

Preparatory meetings are organised by GYBN and the CBD Alliance, one or two days

prior to the opening session of the meeting with workshops briefing participants on the issues that will be negotiated.

Accreditation

Please check chapter 4 to learn how you can get your organisation accredited in the CBD. GYBN has been officially recognised as the youth coordination platform at the CBD and is an accredited network, and can facilitate the process of accreditation for members and member organisations.

Funding

Participation in international meetings is always subjected to funding availability, and since the importance of young people is not widely recognised, securing funding to support youth participation in meetings is always a challenge.

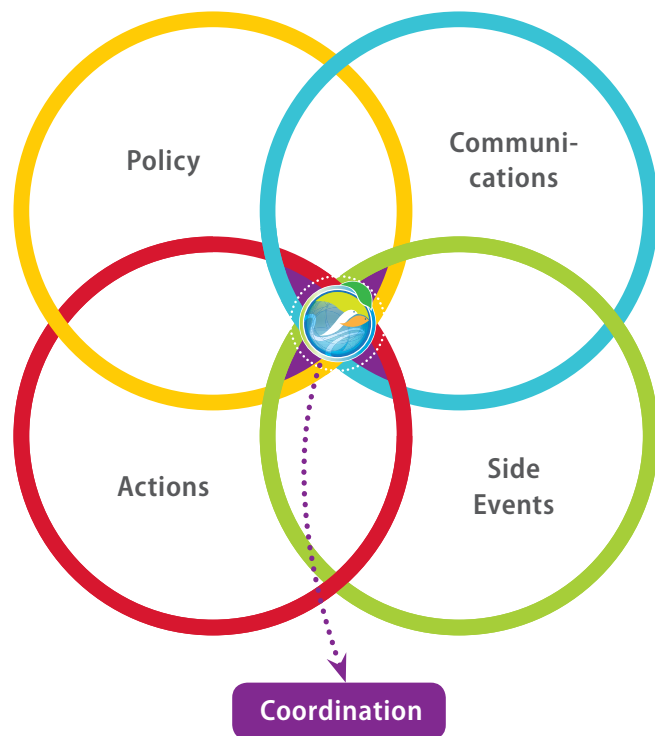
Policy & advocacy

Recommendations and inputs from members around the world are collected and compiled in order to prepare policy briefs containing key youth positions on relevant biodiversity issues.



During the meetings

Most youth activities during CBD meetings can be organised in 4 teams with a coordination team overseeing the all teams.



Coordination Team

Usually, the GYBN focal point take the lead on coordinating the youth together with partners from the host country. They support all other teams and ensure smooth communication and collaboration between them.

Daily coordination and strategy meetings are organised by the team and aim at bring all the activities together to make sure they are efficiently coordinated.

Most of the work is connected, so it depends on all teams working together, for example:

The policy team needs to share information on key positions and major trends in negotiations so that the communication team can share it through newsletters, blogs and social media.

The coordination team will also liaise with the Secretariat and partner organisations in order to organise joint events or activities.

Attention



A CBD meeting is a political meeting attended by many national authorities, so all participants need to follow security and diplomacy protocols. In this context, the coordination team is also responsible to ensure the integrity and credibility of GYBN's work, checking not only the quality of policy inputs, outreach materials and campaigns but also whether all youth activities and delegates are respecting the protocols.

GYBN, as the official international coordination platform for youth participation in the CBD, can be held responsible for any security or diplomacy breach committed by its youth delegates during the meeting.



Basic rules:

- Respect the security rules of the meeting
- Respect the rules of procedure for the meetings
- Don't directly attack countries during interventions
- Before publically criticising a country or organisation, consult the coordination team
- Before organising any action, demonstration or campaign within the meeting venue, consult the coordination team as security clearance is needed

Basically, use common sense and if you are unsure of something, please consult the coordination team before taking any action!

Representation

Don't forget that during these meetings, you will be representing not only your organisation but your country as well. You might not be a part of your government's delegation, but in international meetings people tend to form opinions about countries based on observed behaviour from their citizens. People are also likely to associate your image, positions and behaviour with that of the organisation and country you are representing.

So keep that in mind and do your best to leave a good impression of your country and organisation!

Wearing many hats

Many participants during these meetings are associated with more than one organisation, as you may also be (for example, your organisation and the GYBN). This is very common but if you are inexperienced it can potentially become a big challenge. So try to be aware of all the positions and interests you are aligned with and be careful in handling conflicts of interests.



Policy Team



Lobbying: With key issues related directly to youth rights within the negotiations, team members seek support from among country delegates in order to strengthen youth participation in the CBD process. Supporting coverage of the meeting, feeding the communications team with updates and relevant negotiation outcomes.



Interventions: During meetings, a policy team coordinates the drafting of statements reflecting the inputs from members and containing youth's views and concerns on the agenda items being negotiated.



Photos: GYBN

Communications Team

A great part of youth's role in CBD meetings is communications.

In our interconnected world, young people are frequently forerunners in the use of new technologies, innovative communica-

tion methods and engaging with an extensive range of social networks.

GYBN takes full advantage of youths' natural talents as effective communicators, being active in:



Information sharing: use of mailing lists, online groups, webpage and social media channels to spread and share relevant information on biodiversity and youth-related issues.

Covering the meeting: updates, summaries and newsletters are developed and shared online.

Campaigns: Together with the actions team, GYBN launches awareness raising campaigns online and on-site during meetings.

Actions Team



Another outlet for youth's creativity and energy is organising campaigns and actions.

Actions are great tools to catch the attention of not only delegates but of the media as well. It can create visibility for a contentious issue that is being negotiated and influence the process.

It can also create great networking opportunities as it increases interaction with participants.

The GYBN has always supported organisation of actions during CBD meetings especially through collaboration with local youth partners.

Some examples



Holding hands for biodiversity

GYBN and the local youth partner organisation organised this demonstration together with the students that were volunteering at COP11 in Hyderabad and formed a chain with around 60 youth holding hands for biodiversity as a symbol of young people's commitments in pushing for ambitious conservation targets.



Speak for a species

Together with the CBD Alliance, GYBN started this campaign in 2012 to engage participants about species and ecosystems, and asked them to speak on their behalf.

Don't forget that security clearance is needed to organise actions



Side Events Team

Side events are usually 90-minute events that take place on the margins of the meeting. They can be organised by NGOs, UN-agencies, research institutions, governments or other accredited organisations and are usually organised in order to showcase the work of the organisation, present best practices and project results, to present several different perspectives on certain negotiation topics or to share information.

It is a great opportunity for youth to show-

case their projects and activities on biodiversity. It is also a good platform to find potential partners and supporters.

GYBN coordinates with all youth delegates and youth organisations attending the meeting in order to reflect the interest of all partners in the side event programme.

The CBD Secretariat usually grants at least one slot for young people in their Side Event programme.



Busy Bee Award COP11



GYBN Side Event at WGR15

Photos: GYBN



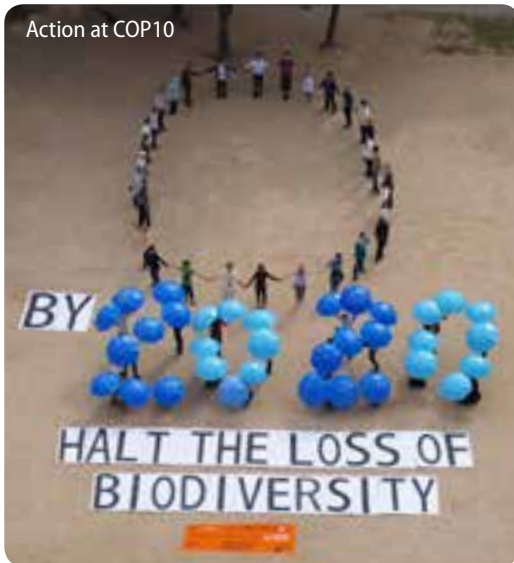
GYBN Side Event at COP12



GYBN COP11 Team with CBD Executive Secretary, Mr. Bráulio Dias



Action at COP11



Action at COP10

Photos: GYBN



COP11



Dodo Award at COP11



GYBN Team at COP12



COP12



COP11



Busy Bee Award COP11



Busy Bee Award COP11



Action at COP11

Building a **youth coalition**

GYBN started out of a collective desire of young people on the planet to have a voice in negotiations that will deeply affect the future of biodiversity in the planet and consequently their future. A small group of volunteers steered its development throughout many challenging

moments, giving life to that desire in 2012. Since then, the network has collected many success stories, and has finally managed to build a solid and credible basis for youth participation in the CBD. But Ensuring youth participation in the CBD, however, is not.

GYBN also aims to



Build a global coalition of youth and youth organisations working on biodiversity issues

&



Photos: GYBN

Support the work of national and regional members and organisations that are ensuring that these policies are being implemented

The network has been growing organically, accommodating the needs of the membership and the expanding responsibility to ensure democratic participation and transparency whilst advocating for the rights of future generations. During its establishment and consolidation process, especially due to limited capacity and experience, GYBN has focused on activities to ensure young people would have a dedicated place in the international negotiations within the CBD process.

Now the basis is consolidated, and, for the very first time, any youth that is interested in being active at international biodiversity negotiations can rely on a coordination platform to make the youth cause a stronger one.

So GYBN is able to move forward, a step closer towards its goal of building a truly global, relevant coalition of young people that ignites change in biodiversity policy and promotes the implementation of these policies on the ground.

Next Steps

It's time to spread our roots – expand regional and national activities and connect the negotiation process at the international level with the implementation work at the national level.



Get Active

Get active at the national or regional level

If you want to get involved and make a difference in your community and country, you can:

1



Join any member organisation active in your country or community that is working on issues near you

3



Support the establishment of regional and national chapters: GYBN has only recently started to engage more actively with regional and national initiatives, so a structure with specific guidance is currently being developed. If you would like to support this development process, please contact GYBN at gybninfo@gmail.com

2



If there are no member organisation in your area yet, you can:



- a** Look for an existing organisation in your area and see how this organisation can engage with GYBN

OR



- b** You can just start a small group of young people active on a biodiversity issues and contact GYBN to see how you can engage with the network, what kind of activities you would like to do and how you can get support

Get active at the international level

GYBN's activities at the international level are mostly focused on:



Coordinating youth delegations at CBD meetings and other relevant events to ensure effective engagement with the CBD



Showcasing youth-led activities and contributions to the work of the convention



Sharing information and raise awareness of biodiversity issues among young people through GYBN's online platforms and campaigns

So you can:



Nominate yourself to become a GYBN Steering Committee Member and run for the next SC elections to support the general coordination of all activities



Join any of the working groups and task forces that are doing the work you are interested in



Propose your idea to the GYBN SC and see how GYBN can help out

Best Practices

These are some initiatives from GYBN member organisations around the world

Organisation : Terre des Jeunes
Country: Haiti
Website: www.terredesjeunes.org

Terre des Jeunes Haiti is currently conducting a study with a Youth University "State University of Haiti" on various species of trees and birds in an effort to conserve and identify those on the brink of extinction in Haiti and its islands. Even though the project demands financial assistance it started on a voluntary basis, utilising the spread of awareness for implementation. Our mission is not for profit and has no political or religious affiliation and

aims to educate young people around the country in regards to environmental commitment and reforestation, particularly through the promotion of volunteer activities and local techniques, small-scale conservation and recreational enjoyment in nature.

Due to the continued deterioration of its ecosystems, unplanned urbanisation, loss of biodiversity, lack of natural resources management and deforestation, Haiti is one of the developing countries that bears the brunt of the adverse effects of climate change. One cyclone, heat wave or heavy rain is enough to destroy crops and flood residential areas. We are currently working on strengthening the dialogue between the Minister of environment and young people in the Haitian-Dominican border (where more than 500 hectares were planted in Haiti by the voluntary Land of Youth group) through supported meetings that could lead to the launch of the bi-national reforestation campaign of Hispaniola Island led by the two countries that have share the island for over 10 years.



Photos: Sent by Dieuseul Augustin

Organisation: IUCN Intergenerational Partnership for Sustainability (IPS)
County: Australia
Website: <http://wcpayp.org>

The Young Conservation Leader Capacity Development Workshop was a 5 day gathering of young global conservation leaders in the week leading up to the IUCN 2014 World Parks Congress. This workshop allowed 30 diverse young leaders to meet, share ideas, beliefs and knowledge, create friendships and build their leadership skills. This workshop was designed and delivered by the IUCN WPA and IPS Young Leaders to address the desire and appetite of global young leaders to network and engage in horizontal conversations and activities. Many young conservation leaders often feel isolated in the work they are delivering, with very few networks to engage with to share ideas and tips. If this Capacity Development Workshop had a measure for success, then it would have received a big tick. Key outcomes designed and delivered by young leaders from this workshop were: Our Pact for Parks, People and Planet (referred to as the Pact), an Interleadership Framework, a Leadership Workshop, an online platform to

share projects that align with the Pact, social media networking and the creation of a global young leader community where everyone is free and comfortable to share experiences, knowledge and create friendships.

Youth can get involved by using some of the following methods:

1. Get involved online and share your ideas and experiences with other young conservation leaders via <http://wcpayp.org>
2. Join an IUCN Commission Young Leaders group and volunteer your services.
3. Identify which environmental organisations within your country align with your objectives and either approach them for a job or, if they do not have any jobs, volunteer some of your time. You never know what you might learn.
4. If you feel somewhat isolated or need direction in your biodiversity journey, seek a mentor who aligns with your ethics and objectives. A mentor is a wonderful way to learn and work your leadership skills.
5. Create a LinkedIn profile and join/network with the large number of groups on this platform. Often it is who you know, rather than what you know.



Photo: Sent by Rebecca Koss

Organisation: Arab Youth Climate Movement - Bahrain

Country: Bahrain

Website: <http://aycm.org/>

In 2014, AYCM Bahrain was asked to take part in a major national project commissioned by the Supreme Council for Environment (SCE) the official environmental executing agency and the Arab Regional Center for World Heritage (ARCWH) to analyse various socio-economic aspects of the oyster beds using the Ecosystem Based Approach. The northern oyster beds (locally known as Al Hayrat Al Shamaliya) are believed to be the last remaining example of Bahrain's cultural tradition and wealth generated during the pearling era when the trade dominated the Gulf economy. Thus, in 2012 this site was declared as a UNESCO world heritage site and became Bahrain's second site to be added to the list. Bahrain has decided to incorporate an ecosystem based approach into its national policy on biodiversity. This project included conducting studies in regards to implementing this approach on Najwat and Hayr Bul Thamah, Hayr Shtayyah and Hayr Bu Am'amah. The study aimed to characterise the socio-economic drivers, local



stakeholders approach and dependence on the proposed Marine Protected Area (MPA) in addition to proposing decision-making mechanisms to ensure the use of the area resources sustainability. The project team worked on data collection through the engagement of all stakeholders (fishermen, pearl divers, pearl merchants, the recreational community and scientific institutions). The study resulted in addressing a number of elements that included most commonly caught species from the area, gear type used by fishermen, fishing and pearling habitats, main groups or communities benefiting from the area, socioeconomic characteristics of all stakeholders benefiting from the proposed MPA such as income, catch size, commercial values of pearls and local perceptions on the proposed MPA in addition to proposing several management mechanisms amongst others. Bahrain is one of the first countries in the region to adopt the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP)'s initiative which calls for an ecosystem based approach. Conducting this study was great experience for the whole team as it was the first collaboration between youth and the Supreme Council for Environment, thus we set an example for future collaboration with civil society.



Photos: Sent by Tamara Alhusseini

Organisation: Wildlife Information Liaison Development Society Amphibian Chytrid Project in India

Country: India

Website: www.zooreach.org

The Amphibian Chytrid Project of Wildlife Information Liaison Development (WILD) Society, India is the first of its kind project within the country. Chytridiomycosis, caused by the pathogen *Batrachochytrium dendrobatidis*, has resulted in the extinction of more than 200 species of amphibians across the globe and threatens 42% of the amphibian species with extinction. There is negligible information on diseases as threats, to amphibian populations in India. It was urgent to resolve this lacuna and bring light on the occurrence of emerging infectious diseases such as Chytridiomycosis. This project was initiated in 2012 with the objectives of gathering baseline data on the occurrence of Chytridiomycosis; standardising non-destructive field sample collection and molecular analysis protocols to allow for sample analysis within the country and understand the susceptibility of the endemic amphibians to infection by the disease. Presently, after three years of field work, we have collected samples from over 60 sites within the Western Ghats, standardised protocols to allow for field sampling and laboratory



Photos: Sent by Keerthi Knutha



work suitable to conditions in India and have allowed for the voluntary participation of 15 youth to assist in fieldwork. Apart from this, we have discovered the widespread occurrence of the fungus in the Western Ghats of India and found to occur on eight species of endemic frog species. The results of this discovery were published as scientific peer-reviewed articles in the journals PLoSOne and Diseases of Aquatic Organisms. During the field work the youth participants were able learn to survive in tough field conditions with leeches and ticks, without electricity and work in torrential rainfall; attend meetings with bureaucrats and on-ground forest staff and were educated on the importance and need to conserve biodiversity.

The major challenges faced by the project have been:

1. The continual availability of volunteers to conduct the field work, which we overcame by maintaining a database of volunteers and advertising on Facebook groups and environment-related mailing lists such as YETI.
2. Availability of continual funding, which we overcame by requesting funding to multiple grant agencies and resources and donors.

Organisation: NAJU (Naturschutzjugend - Youth Association for the Protection of Nature)
Country: Germany
Website: www.naju.de

Founded in 1982, NAJU (Naturschutzjugend - Youth Association for the Protection of Nature) is the youth organisation of NABU (Nature and Biodiversity Conservation Union) and works on the local, regional, state and federal level. With more than 80.000 members, 16 state associations and over 1.000 local groups, NAJU is the largest youth environmental organisation in Germany. NAJU works on a wide range of topics: From climate change and biodiversity via environmental education to practical nature conservation. In line with NAJU's commitment to support youth engagement on Biodiversity issues on the global scale, following COP10 (Nagoya 2010), NAJU decided to support the establishment of the Global Youth Biodiversity Network and hosted GYBN's Kick-Off meeting in 2012.

NAJU has a project under the title "Voice for Biodiv". This project includes the organization of youth delegations to COP12 (Pyongyang 2014) and COP13 (Cancun, 2016). The delegates are being selected through a nation-wide call for applications which is



Photo: Sent by NAJU

open to all young people who are under the age of 27. Applicants must have been active on Biodiversity issues before and should be a member of a youth organization and proficient in English.

To prepare the delegates for their participation in the COP, three preparatory seminars are being organized. Among others, speakers from different NGOs, BMUB, BfN as well other individuals with many years of CBD-experience, share insights about the process and allow the delegates to develop a deeper understanding of how the CBD-process works and how young people can influence the negotiations.

The project also places high value on engaging young people who cannot travel to the negotiations: Through different webtools, online meetings and live chats, the project seeks to include the perspective of other young people.

As another key-element of the project, before their participation in the COP, the members of the delegation go on a tour throughout Germany to give presentations and workshops about Biodiversity and the importance of youth participation in decision-making process. This way, the delegates raise awareness for Biodiversity and learn about the different youth activities that are being carried out in Germany, allowing them to better understand and represent the great variety of views and approaches towards Biodiversity conservation in the country.

Following the COP, the members of the delegation also actively disseminate their experiences by holding presentations in their universities and organisations. During the last years, publications suitable for youth were written and printed, explaining how young people can participate in political processes. They are available online and can also be ordered via mail.



Photo: Sent by Meghan O'Connell

Organisation: UBC Vancouver, Parks Canada campus clubs

Country: Canada

Website: www.facebook.com/parkscanadacubuc?fref=ts

The UBC Parks Canada Club connects university students to nature and encourages a healthy, active lifestyle through outdoor exploration. We accomplish this by running outdoor adventure trips, partaking in local conservation projects and organising speaker series that connect students to volunteer and job opportunities. In order to encourage participation for all UBC students, our events range in difficulty level from simple car camping trips to longer backpacking expeditions. We pride ourselves on being a welcoming campus club that shows the joy in nature and dispels the idea of nature as 'scary' or 'intimidating'. This year, we have held events nearly every weekend and have taken well over 100 students into the great British Columbia outdoors who otherwise may not have had the chance. Our events have included a camping/hiking trip to Manning Provincial Park, a shoreline cleanup at Kitsilano Beach, a camping trip to Birkenhead Provincial Park, a conservation volunteer weekend at Fort Rodd Hill and day

hikes to the Lions, Whistler and Garibaldi.

Social media has proved to be a fantastic tool to get the word out and help organise events. Our amount of 'likes' on Facebook has drastically shot up, as has the word-of-mouth awareness of the club around campus. Many of our trips have had participants that had never before been camping, hiking, or into the Canadian wilderness at all and we consider it a huge success to be facilitating their first experience! Smaller (but equally important) successes include watching students try smores around the campfire for the first time ever, successfully taking 18 students up Mount Frosty (six of which had never hiked before), witnessing a perfect moon gliding through the night clouds during 'reflection time' on a camping trip.

We have learned that accessibility is the toughest barrier to get around. Our trips this year have been filling up very quickly and we end up having waiting lists. In an ideal world, waiting lists wouldn't be necessary and we'd be able to bring everyone! The reality of university students is that we generally do not have cars or extra money. We've learned that partnering with organisations such as Parks Canada and BC Parks to get their services for free (or at a subsidised price) really enables us to fulfill our goals as best possible.

Organisation: Rwanda Biodiversity Media Group

Country: Rwanda

Website: <http://rbmg.weebly.com/>

Rwanda Biodiversity Media Group, a youth based organisation founded in 2012, aims at enhancing methods used for biodiversity conservation story-telling, and framing them in a way that makes sense to local communities. This came following the realisation that the children of Rwanda, who are the future decision makers are increasingly disengaged from their natural surroundings and often, they don't have tales that help educate them to gain knowledge for making good decisions regarding their natural resources. Therefore, we have developed the "CONSERVATION4KIDS" project as a strategic way to connect children with nature and increase their perception on biodiversity. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MYC9x-GkrAts>

Currently, this project has been implemented in fifteen primary schools and has provided educational resources and train-

ings for teachers. Additionally, this project has built conservation education capacity, increased stewardship and improved educational resources. Thirty workshops targeted at PreK-12 educators have taken place in project areas, covering topics such as: definition of biodiversity and its relationship with humans; ecosystem health and ecology; ecosystem goods and services. Each workshop has focused on enhancing opportunities for critical thinking and stewardship. Moreover, high-quality, non-biased, conservation education materials have been produced by the Rwanda Biodiversity Media Group. Teachers in primary schools have been invited for the presentation of these materials, such as documentary films, posters, pictures, burners amongst others which also have been distributed at each workshop. A Connections Guide, consisting of specific activities for PreK-12 has been developed and shared with educators. This guide contained five activities adapted for education in primary schools.

One two day outdoor program for children has been implemented twice at each school to ensure that taught activities are translated through field visits and practical work. On the first day, there is a short demonstration of important species, either plants or animals, preferably one each. Lectures are limited to 30 minutes and involve slide shows of colourful photos of important species. The second day provides the children with a good opportunity to be exposed to various aspects of nature through a one-hour tour within a protected area. In the field, children are given a chance to gain first-hand experience by being in contact with natural areas. After each activity children gather with their educators to share what they have learnt, what they liked, what they did not like and what they want to see next. This exposure to nature will increasingly create high sensitivity in children towards the conservation of natural resources.

Organisation: A SEED Japan and Japan Youth Ecology League

Country: Japan

Website: <http://biodiversity-youth-network.jimdo.com/>

The "Biodiversity on the Brink" Campaign was established to make policy proposals to the 10th Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (COP10), which was hosted in Nagoya, Japan in 2010. The campaign was launched on the basis of "activism to protect our future and the future of all biological beings, which are both on the brink." This campaign was conducted as a collaborative project between two Japanese youth NGOs, A SEED JAPAN and Japan Youth Ecology League.

Our group focused our advocacy on the Mission Statement of the Aichi Biodiversity Target as well as Targets 5 (loss of natural habitats, including forests), 6 (overfishing), 10 (vulnerable ecosystems impacted by climate change and ocean acidification) and 11 (conservation of biodiversity and ecosystem services through protected areas). We compiled a position paper calling for a more aggressive posture on those Targets and pursued that posture through our activism. Our two main activity practices were advocating to government delegations and broadcasting information to general citizens. This campaign involved more than 500 Japanese youth. 80 members of the campaign actually attended COP10.

At the Conference, in order to obtain the latest information and trends, we participated in the contact

groups. In addition, we prepared both Japanese and English versions of our position paper and with that we were able to precisely convey our group's opinions when lobbying to the various government delegations.

Furthermore we transmitted the voice of the youth by actively making remarks at Working Groups and reading out a statement at the Plenary in collaboration with youth from all over the world.

The campaign utilised various social media platforms in order to provide information. We also asked for help from traditional media outlets.

Similarly, we provided press briefings to the media as needed throughout the Conference where we communicated the points at issue concerning the Aichi Biodiversity Target, the opinions of each country and our views on the current discussions.

As a result of such initiatives, our opinions were published in 5 major Japanese newspapers a total of 10 times and broadcasted on 2 television programs on 3 separate occasions. We feel that we were able to convey our message to the public successfully.



Photo: Sent by Jean Claude DUSABIMANA



Photo: Sent by A Seed Japan

Support GYBN

Engage with GYBN as a member

Membership is open to individuals and organisations alike through the submission of an online membership registration form:

For individuals:



For organisations:



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Photos: Pixabay

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