

# Biodiversity: The foundation for sustainable development



directly constitute social safety nets and can mean the difference between misery and well-being.

- **Traditional knowledge** associated with biodiversity is also important and has value not only to those who depend on it in their daily lives but to modern industry and agriculture as well.

- Biodiversity is the cornerstone of the work, belief systems and basic survival of many **women**. Accounting for women's knowledge and role in biodiversity conservation and its sustainable use can ensure their full participation and thus substantially contribute to sustainable development.

- Biodiversity plays a major role in **mitigating climate change** by contributing to long-term sequestration of carbon in a number of biomes. Biodiversity also underpins ecosystem resilience and plays a critical role as part of **disaster risk reduction** and peace-building strategies. Forests, wetlands and mangroves play a critical role in reducing the impacts of extreme events such as droughts, floods and tsunamis.

- Even the built environments of our **cities** are linked to and affected by biodiversity. Ecosystem-based solutions to water provisioning and to urban water run-off, climate control and other

## Humanity's fate is tightly linked with biological diversity – the variety of life on earth. Biodiversity is essential for sustainable development and human well-being. The examples are plenty.

- Biodiversity is a vital asset in global and local **economies**. Biodiversity directly supports major economic activity and jobs in such diverse sectors as agriculture, fisheries, forestry, pharmaceuticals, pulp and paper, cosmetics, horticulture, construction and biotechnology.

- **Food production** depends on biodiversity and the services provided by ecosystems. The thousands of different crop varieties and animal breeds are founded in the rich genetic pool of species. Biodiversity is also the basis for soil fertility, pollination, pest control and all aspects important for producing the world's food.

- Clean and secure supplies of **water** also depend on biodiversity. Ecosystems function as natural water infrastructure, costing less than technological solutions. Forests protect water supplies, wetlands regulate floods, and healthy soils increase water and nutrient

availability for crops and help reduce off-farm impacts.

- Biodiversity and ecosystem functioning provide goods and services essential for **human health** – including nutrients, clean air and water and regulation of pests and vector-based diseases. Biodiversity is essential for the regulation of the immune response. Biodiversity is the basis of traditional medicine, and a large number of top-ranking global prescription drugs contain components derived from plant extracts.

- Biodiversity is the basis for **sustainable livelihoods**. Benefits of biodiversity are especially important to poor and vulnerable groups. To many, the goods and services derived from biodiversity

*People are an integral part of nature. The future we want needs to be based on living in harmony with nature so that it can sustain present and future generations.*

- Braulio Ferreira de Souza Dias, CBD Executive Secretary



## STRATEGIC PLAN FOR BIODIVERSITY 2011-2020

### THE VISION

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

### STRATEGIC GOALS

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

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

**Goal C:** To improve the status of biodiversity by safeguarding ecosystems, species and genetic diversity

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

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

more information:

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challenges can both protect biodiversity and be cost-effective. Green areas in cities reduce the incidence of violence, enhance human health and well-being, and strengthen communities.

Despite these facts, biodiversity is being lost at a greatly accelerated rate, largely due to human activities.

The **good news** is that governments have already made a number of commitments to protect biodiversity. A key achievement was the adoption of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and the Aichi Biodiversity Targets. But **to ensure that the Strategic Plan and Aichi Targets are achieved, biodiversity must be effectively addressed in the post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals.**

**The need to address biodiversity as a key element of sustainable development in the post-2015 period has been widely recognised in a variety of ways.**

The importance of the Strategic Plan and its Aichi Targets was reaffirmed by governments at Rio+20, and the United Nations General Assembly encouraged Parties to consider it in the elaboration of the post-2015 UN development agenda. The High-Level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda proposed a post-2015 goal on managing natural resource assets sustainably. The Sustainable Development Solutions Network proposed a goal on securing ecosystem services and biodiversity, and ensuring good management of water and other natural resources.

**Biodiversity is essential for achieving sustainable development and global priorities** including poverty eradication. It is important that any future post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals not erode, but embrace and build upon the Strategic Plan and its Aichi Biodiversity Targets.



**United Nations Decade on Biodiversity**