



Living in harmony with nature

Communication, Education and Public Awareness (CEPA)

People are interested in biodiversity. Zoos, aquariums, botanical gardens and nature shows are popular. Yet beyond the knowledge of a few charismatic species, the public is not aware of the critical role biodiversity plays in providing the essentials for our survival and well-being. This means less public support for actions and policies towards a more sustainable relationship between humanity and the biodiversity of the planet.

The programme of work on Communication, Education and Public Awareness (CEPA) helps create the tools needed to answer biodiversity and sustainability questions, raise public awareness and integrate biodiversity into learning worldwide.

CEPA encourages and supports collaboration with governments, civil society and others for developing public awareness programmes about biodiversity and its contribution to human well-being.

During the United Nations Decade on Biodiversity 2011–2020, CEPA will play an important role in building awareness amongst all stakeholders whose actions have an impact on the ecosystems of our planet.

The International Day for Biological Diversity, held every 22 May and organised around special themes, provides an excellent opportunity for countries and individuals to celebrate biodiversity.

The Green Wave is an ongoing worldwide campaign that uses social media and the internet to bring together children and youth to raise awareness about biodiversity.



United Nations Decade on Biodiversity

Fast Facts

- ▶ Most EU citizens had heard of the term biodiversity, but only 35% said that they also knew what biodiversity meant
- ▶ In 2009, a UK survey of 1,500 children aged 5 to 10 years and 1,500 parents to analyse children's knowledge of nature found that:
 - ▶ Four out of ten children can't tell the difference between a bee and a wasp
 - ▶ Almost two thirds struggled to tell a toad and a frog apart
 - ▶ 13% of children didn't know what a tulip looked like, with one in ten thinking it was a daisy or rose
 - ▶ Nearly 70% of parents worry that their child doesn't know enough about nature, wildlife and the environment
- ▶ The general public tends to understand biodiversity loss mostly as a species-focused concept
- ▶ A third of respondents are most motivated by alarming data about endangered species and the destruction of ecosystems. However, calls urging people to act now and do more are highlighted as the least useful (2011 Biodiversity Barometer). Many people are ready to make personal efforts to protect biodiversity, but do not know what they should be doing
- ▶ Deforestation continues as six million hectares of primary forest has been lost annually since 2000
- ▶ The average abundance of species is declining—40% loss between 1970 and 2000
- ▶ Unsustainable consumption continues as demand for resources worldwide exceeds the biological capacity of the Earth by about 20%
- ▶ In the North Atlantic, large fish have declined by 66% in the last 50 years, due to overfishing

Learn More

CEPA Toolkit ▶ www.cbd.int/cepa/toolkit/2008/doc/CBD-Toolkit-Complete.pdf

United Nations Decade on Biodiversity ▶ www.cbd.int/2011-2020

International Day for Biological Diversity ▶ www.cbd.int/idb

The Green Wave ▶ <http://greenwave.cbd.int/en/home>

Plant for the Planet Billion Tree Campaign ▶ www.unep.org/billiontreecampaign

Children and youth ▶ www.cbd.int/education/biodiv-edu/youth

Teacher's corner ▶ www.cbd.int/education/biodiv-edu/teachers-corner

Indigenous education ▶ www.cbd.int/education/biodiv-edu/indigenous

Article 13 of the CBD ▶ www.cbd.int/convention/articles.shtml?a=cbd-13

IUCN Commission on Education and Communication ▶ www.iucn.org/cec

UNESCO ▶ www.unesco.org/mab/biodiv/biodivEducation.shtml

The Decade of Education for Sustainable Development ▶ www.unep.org/Training/programmes/unesd.asp

UN Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) ▶ www.un.org/geninfo/bp/enviro.html

Agenda 21, Chapter 36 ▶ www.un.org/esa/dsd/agenda21/res_agenda21_36.shtml

Key policy issues ▶ www.cbd.int/education/policy

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