



Living in harmony with nature

Sustainable Use of Biodiversity

To use biodiversity in a sustainable manner means to use natural resources at a rate that the Earth can renew them. It's a way to ensure that we meet the needs of both present and future generations.

As the human population increases, so does the pressure on ecosystems, since we draw ever more resources from them. Our ecological footprint on the planet is unsustainable and will become unbearable unless we change our consumption patterns and our behaviour in general. In the past, humans have adapted to changing conditions by increasing productivity, but now we have reached the limits of the Earth's capacity.

Today our only option is to manage productivity and resources in a sustainable manner, reducing waste wherever possible, using the principles of adaptive management, and taking into account traditional knowledge which contributes to the maintenance of ecosystem services.

Within the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), sustainable use principles are applied to the sectors that most affect biodiversity, such as agriculture, forestry, fisheries, tourism, and water management. In 2004, CBD Parties adopted the Addis Ababa Principles and Guidelines for the Sustainable Use of Biodiversity, a set of 14 principles that apply to all activities and areas. In 2010 these principles were reaffirmed and their implementation assessed through an in-depth review.

By adopting the CBD, governments commit themselves to integrate conservation and sustainable use into their policies at the national level. By minimizing biodiversity loss and helping local populations restore degraded areas, together we can make this a new era of environmentally-sound economic development.



Convention on
Biological Diversity

www.cbd.int/sustainable



Fast Facts

- ▶ Despite the fact that sustainable use of biodiversity is widely included in national biodiversity strategies, unsustainable use and overexploitation remain major threats to biodiversity in several sectors, including fisheries, agriculture, and forestry
- ▶ Sustainable activities can be applied in many sectors, including: organic farming, environmental impact assessments, certification and eco-labelling, quotas for fisheries, not using large nets, management of protected areas, reduction of bush fires, sustainable tourism
- ▶ As human population increases, the demand for fish is expected to grow, especially in developing countries
- ▶ The 2010 Living Planet Report reveals that humanity's Ecological Footprint has more than doubled since 1966. In 2007, the most recent year for which data are available, humanity used the equivalent of 1.5 planets to support its activities (www.footprintnetwork.org)
- ▶ Mangroves protect coastlines from erosion, protect coral reefs from siltation and act as nurseries for a variety of fish and shellfish. The major causes of mangrove decline are conversion to aquaculture, agriculture, and urban, residential and tourism development
- ▶ About 300 million people depend on forests directly for their survival, including 60 million people of indigenous and tribal groups, who are almost completely dependent on forests
- ▶ Illegal logging and illegal harvesting of forest products are a serious problem, costing an estimated US\$15 billion per year. Rare tree species and those with high value for timber or non-timber forest products are in danger of becoming locally extinct

Learn More

The Addis Ababa Principles and guidelines for the Sustainable Use of Biodiversity

- ▶ www.cbd.int/sustainable/addis.shtml

Article 10 of the Convention on Biological Diversity

- ▶ www.cbd.int/decision/cop/?id=7749

COP decision VI/13 on sustainable use ▶ www.cbd.int/decision/cop/?id=7187

COP decision V/24 on sustainable use as a cross-cutting issue

- ▶ www.cbd.int/decision/cop/?id=7166

COP decision VIII/21 on marine and coastal biological diversity: conservation and sustainable use of deep seabed genetic resources beyond the limits of national jurisdiction ▶ www.cbd.int/decision/cop/?id=11035

COP decision X/32 on sustainable use of biodiversity

- ▶ www.cbd.int/decision/cop/?id=12298

Desertification ▶ www.greenfacts.org/en/biodiversity/l-2/4-causes-desertification.htm

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