

ABOUT CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY.

The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) was signed in 1992 at the 1992 UN Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) in Rio de Janeiro and ratified in 1993 where world leaders agreed on a comprehensive strategy for "sustainable development" -- meeting our needs while ensuring that we leave a healthy and viable world for future generations. One of the key agreements adopted at Rio was the Convention on Biological Diversity. It is a comprehensive, binding agreement covering the use and conservation of biodiversity. It requires countries to develop and implement strategies for sustainable use and protection of biodiversity, and provides a forum for continuing international dialogue on biodiversity-related issues through the annual conferences of the parties (COPs).

The Convention established the Commission on Sustainable Development

RELEVANCE OF CBD IN RELATION TO ITS GOALS.

- ▣ Governments signed a number of regional and international agreements to tackle specific issues, such as protecting wetlands and regulating the international trade in endangered species. These agreements, along with controls on toxic chemicals and pollution, have helped to slow the tide of destruction but have not reversed it. For example, an international ban and restrictions on the taking and selling of certain animals and plants have helped to reduce over-harvesting and poaching.
- ▣ In addition, many endangered species survive in zoos and botanical gardens, and key ecosystems are preserved through the adoption of protective measures

- In 1987, the World Commission on Environment and Development (the Brundtland Commission) concluded that economic development must become less ecologically destructive. In its landmark report, *Our Common Future*, it said that: "Humanity has the ability to make development sustainable-to ensure that it meets needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs". It also called for "a new era of environmentally sound economic development"
- It recognizes-for the first time-that the conservation of biological diversity is "a common concern of humankind" and is an integral part of the development process. The agreement covers all ecosystems, species, and genetic resources. It links traditional conservation efforts to the economic goal of using biological resources sustainably. It sets principles for the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the use of genetic resources, notably those destined for commercial use. It also covers the rapidly expanding field of biotechnology, addressing technology development and transfer, benefit-sharing and biosafety. Importantly, the Convention is legally binding; countries that join it are obliged to implement its provisions.

- ▣ The Convention reminds decision-makers that natural resources are not infinite and sets out a new philosophy for the 21st century, that of sustainable use. While past conservation efforts were aimed at protecting particular species and habitats, the Convention recognizes that ecosystems, species and genes must be used for the benefit of humans. However, this should be done in a way and at a rate that does not lead to the long-term decline of biological diversity.



- ▣ The Convention also offers decision-makers guidance based on the precautionary principle that where there is a threat of significant reduction or loss of biological diversity, lack of full scientific certainty should not be used as a reason for postponing measures to avoid or minimize such a threat

- ▣ . The Convention acknowledges that substantial investments are required to conserve biological diversity. It argues, however, that conservation will bring us significant environmental, economic and social benefits in return.

- ▣ Some of the many issues dealt with under the Convention include:
- ▣ Measures and incentives for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity

