

CBD: Environmental Mandate & Activities

Convention on Biological Diversity

Environmental mandate

The Convention on Biological Diversity has 188 Parties and is dedicated to promoting sustainable development. The objectives of the Convention are the conservation of biological diversity, the sustainable use of its components and the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the utilization of genetic resources. On 29 January 2000, the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity adopted a supplementary agreement to the Convention known as the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety. The Protocol seeks to protect biological diversity from the potential risks posed by living modified organisms resulting from modern biotechnology.

Environmental activities

The Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity has initiated work on seven thematic work programmes, addressing marine and coastal biodiversity, agricultural biodiversity, forest biodiversity, island biodiversity, the biodiversity of inland waters, dry and sub-humid lands and mountain biodiversity. Over and above the thematic programmes there are a number of other items on the Conference of the Parties' agenda addressing key cross-cutting issues of relevance to all thematic areas. Essentially these correspond to the issues addressed in the Convention's substantive provisions in Articles 6-20, such as access to genetic resources and benefit sharing; alien species; traditional knowledge, innovations and practices; biological diversity and tourism; climate change and biological diversity; economics, trade and incentive measures; ecosystem approach; Global Strategy for Plant Conservation; 2010 biodiversity target; Global Taxonomy Initiative; impact assessment; indicators; liability and redress - Article 14(2); protected areas; public education and awareness; sustainable use of biodiversity; technology transfer and cooperation. The Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety deals with the following issues: capacity-building; compliance; financial mechanism; handling, transport, packaging and identification; liability and redress; risk assessment and management; roster of experts; monitoring and reporting; public awareness and participation; socio-economic considerations.