



Biodiversity is life



Biodiversity is our life

Biodiversity for Development and Poverty Alleviation

The majority of the world's poor live in rural areas and depend on forests, waters, wetlands, fields and pastures for their livelihood. Many of these ecosystems and related biodiversity are under threat and poorly managed.

The Millennium Ecosystem Assessment concludes that 60% of the world's ecosystems are degraded or unsustainably used. This directly impacts the livelihoods of the poor who depend on these resources for subsistence, security and income. Culprits include growing demands for natural resources, low public investment, poorly defined property rights, and global commodity trade policies that provide incentives for over-exploiting resources. Strengthening the rights of poor people over land, resources and ecosystem services is one of the first steps toward sustainable development.

Many socio-economic activities depend directly on biodiversity and contribute to poverty reduction. Other sectors are not directly dependent on biodiversity but need it to function. Others significantly impact the conservation and sustainable use of natural resources. However, these dynamic exchanges continue to be poorly valued or fully understood. Development can be sustainable when nature's capital is valued appropriately and integrated into development policies.

Efforts to incorporate the protection of biodiversity into poverty reduction and development strategies will only be effective with the collaboration of all stakeholders. Awareness activities and education increases understanding of the importance of biodiversity for human wellbeing. Reducing poverty goes hand in hand with conserving biodiversity and using it in a sustainable manner.



Convention on
Biological Diversity

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Fast Facts

- ▶ Over three billion people depend on marine and coastal biodiversity for their livelihoods, including many people in developing countries for whom fishing is a main subsistence and commercial activity
- ▶ Some 1.6 billion people rely on forests and non-timber forest products for their livelihoods
- ▶ Approximately 45% of the Earth's forests have been cleared, and other ecosystems, including wetlands and coral reefs, are also threatened
- ▶ Habitat degradation and loss of biodiversity threatens the livelihoods of more than 1 billion people living in dry and sub-humid lands
- ▶ The agricultural role of pollinators, of which more than 100,000 species are known, is worth over US \$50 billion per year
- ▶ 70% of the world's poor live in rural areas and depend directly on biodiversity for their survival and wellbeing
- ▶ Biodiversity contributes to development by supplying material used for small-income generating activities, such as the sale of craft items, local foods or traditional medicines
- ▶ A shortage of resources increases the workload of poor families, including children, which makes it harder for them to attend school
- ▶ Gender equality and women's empowerment are important prerequisites for the conservation of biodiversity and sustainable development
- ▶ • Hiking through tropical forests, scuba diving, observing wildlife, and many other tourist activities depend on biodiversity
- ▶ • The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) are eight goals established by the UN in 2000 to combat poverty, hunger, disease, illiteracy, gender inequality and environmental degradation.

Learn More

Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) ▶ www.un.org/millenniumgoals/

World Health Organization (WHO) ▶ www.who.int/en/

▶ www.cbd.int/development

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