



Ministry of Environment



EGYPT

Arab Republic of Egypt

Hosting the fourteenth Conference of the Parties of the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)
13 - 29 November 2018, Sharm El-Sheikh



Investing in biodiversity for human health and well-being and planet protection

Biological resources of the earth play a vital role in human socio-economic development. There is growing recognition that biodiversity is of great value for current and future generations. At the same time, the threat to species and ecosystems is at unprecedented levels and the extinction of species caused by human activities continues at an alarming rate.

What is biodiversity?

Biodiversity is the variety of all life forms: the different plants, animals and microorganisms, their genes and the ecosystems in which they live, such as forests, agricultural land, marine and freshwaters, mountains, dry and semi-arid lands.

Goods and services provided by Biodiversity:

- Clean water and water purification,
- Protection from sea storms and coastal erosion,
- Greenhouse gases (carbon dioxide and methane) absorption,
- Breeding sites for fish and fry nursery,
- Food and natural raw materials.

Economic value of biodiversity:

Biodiversity forms the foundation of life on Earth but it is disappearing in the face of human activity. Biodiversity comprises much of the renewable natural capital on which livelihoods and development are grounded. It offers many goods and services; most of them are not traded in the market place and so do not have a commercial value. For example: the role of biodiversity in the formation of oxygen, absorption of carbon dioxide (which leads to global warming), waste disposal, soil fertility, climate moderation, disease and pollution control, mitigation of natural disasters and conservation of genetic resources.

More than 20,000 species are found in Egypt

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 800 species of non-flowering plants such as conifers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 2303 species of flowering plants such as cotton (including 62 endemic, 2 endangered).
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 17 species of marine mammals (whales and dolphins).	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 111 species of mammals (including 51 endangered).
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• More than 1000 species of fish.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 109 species of reptiles (including 27 endangered).
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• More than 325 species of coral reefs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 480 species of birds (including 26 endangered).
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 800 species of mollusks (octopus and Squid).	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 10 – 15 thousand species of insects (including 63 species of butterflies).
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 9 species of amphibians (frogs).	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1000 species of crustaceans (shrimp and crab).
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• This is in addition to many microorganisms (fungi, bacteria and viruses) of unknown number; many of them are resistant to drought due to their origin in the dry lands.	



Biodiversity degradation:

- The number of plants, animals and microorganisms living on the earth is estimated between 10 million and more than 100 million species; what has been described and recorded is about only 2.3 million species.

- The world loses about 100-150 species daily without knowing what it has lost.
- About 75% of the genetic diversity of agricultural crops has been lost over the last century.
- Of 6,300 animal breeds, 1,350 are near extinction.
- Approximately 10 million hectares of forest have been removed annually in the past.
- About 20% of coral reefs have been lost in the last few decades.
- About 35% of mangrove forests have been lost.

Causes of biodiversity degradation:

- Spread of invasive species,
- Over-exploitation of natural resources
- Unsustainable production and consumption,
- Natural disasters such as floods and droughts,
- Climate change.
- Deterioration and fragmentation of natural habitats,
- Land-use change,
- Introduction of new species into agriculture,
- Excessive use of fertilizers, pesticides and increased pollution,

Impact of Climate Change on Biodiversity

There are many indicators of the impact of climate change on Egypt’s biodiversity:

- Bleaching of coral reefs (loss of colors) in the Red Sea due to climate change, the first time in 2007.
- Limited presence, distribution and spread of Olive trees in the highlands of Jabal Elba.
- Limited distribution of many medicinal plants in St. Katherine Mountain.
- Limited spread of the Sinai Baton Blue butterfly, the smallest butterfly in the world. It is endemic in the Sinai; its home range is not more than 5 square kilometers; and it feeds on a type of endemic plant (Sinai Thyme) in St. Katherine Mountain.

Facing the degradation of biodiversity in Egypt

- Joining the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity on 29 December 1993. The first meeting of the Conference of the Parties was held from 28 November to 9 December 1994 in the Bahamas.
- Development and implementation of a national strategy and action plan for conservation of biodiversity in Egypt for over 20 years (1997-2017) and update it to 2030.
- The declaration of Ras Mohamed national park in South Sinai as the first protected area (PA) in 1983, followed by establishment of 30 PAs covering 15% of the total area of Egypt covering most of the ecosystems and natural resources in the country.
- Mainstreaming of biodiversity conservation and the sustainable use of its components into relevant sectors.



Conferences of the Parties to the Convention on biological diversity

Policies relating to issues such as land use, transport, infrastructure development, trade, among others all have impacts on biodiversity. The losses are due to a range of pressures driven by a range of socio-economic drivers. Climate change will act synergistically with other threats having serious consequences for biodiversity.

In response to these concerns, governments negotiated the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) to promote sustainable development thereby reducing biodiversity loss. The CBD is one of the three Rio Conventions (together with the climate change and desertification conventions). It entered into force in December 1993 and currently it has 196 Parties, which constitute the Conference of the Parties (CBD/COP). The main objectives of the CBD are the conservation of biological diversity, the sustainable use of its components, and the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of their utilization. The CBD has two protocols one on Biosafety and the other on Access and Benefit Sharing. The secretariat of the CBD is located in Montreal, Canada.

The United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) is now one of the most important multilateral environmental agreements in the world and a key tool for sustainable development. In the last 25 years since its entry into force, Governments have developed a set of strategies and laws to protect biodiversity.

Fourteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity - Sharm El-Sheikh - November 2018

The 14th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (COP 14), as well as the 9th meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (COPMOP9) and the 3rd meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Nagoya protocol on Access and Benefit Sharing (COPMOP3) will be held in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt from 17 to 29 November 2018.

It will be preceded by a one day Africa Biodiversity Ministerial Meeting on 13 November 2018 and a two day Ministerial High Level Segment (HLS) of the Conference of the Parties on 14 - 15 November 2018 on mainstreaming of biodiversity into the following sectors: energy and mining; infrastructure; manufacturing and processing industry; and health.

The meeting is expected to be attended by between 6000 and 10,000 participants, representatives of States Parties (196 States) and United Nations agencies and relevant international conventions and global civil society organizations, in addition to representatives from international, regional and national media and TVs.

The convening of this conference in Egypt will be the first meeting of the parties of the Convention in Africa since 2000, and the first of its kind in the Arab countries. This will further strengthen cooperation to halt the degradation of biodiversity around the world. It will also provide a great opportunity to raise awareness on biodiversity among peoples and communities within the region and globally thereby contributing to the achievement of the objectives of the Convention.

The conference is a good opportunity to show Egypt's efforts in the field of environment and biodiversity conservation.

