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Linking Biological and Cultural Diversity

**Outcomes of the 2010 International Conference on Biological and
Cultural Diversity, Montreal**

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Interlinked Diversity of Life

Biological diversity - diversity within species, between species, and of ecosystems



ensembles of biodiversity are developed, maintained and managed by cultural groups

cultural practices depend upon specific elements of biodiversity for their existence and expression

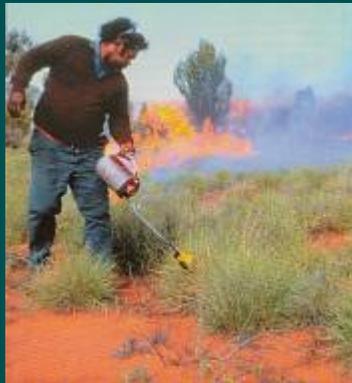


Cultural diversity - diversity of practices, ways of living together, value systems, languages, artistic expressions



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Biological - Cultural Diversity



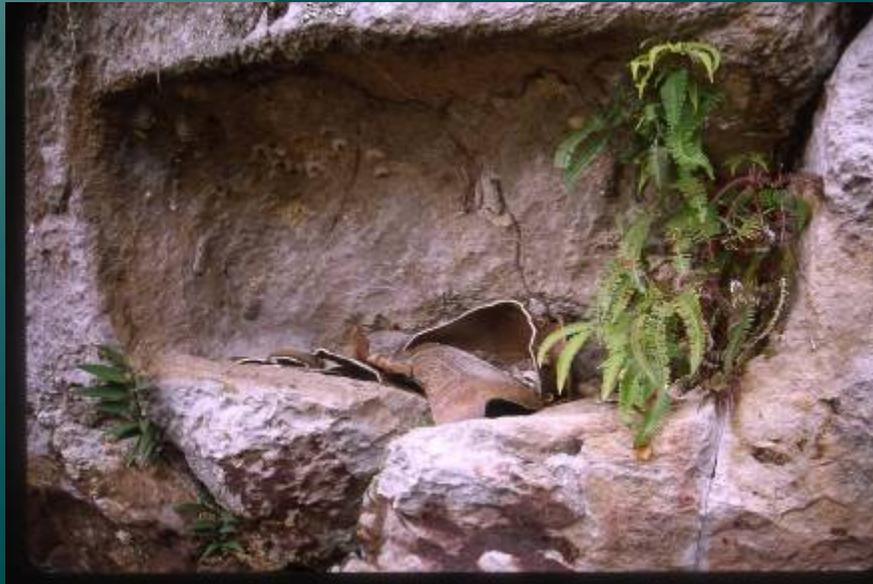
- ❖ Language - linguistic diversity
- ❖ Material culture
- ❖ Knowledge and technology
- ❖ Modes of subsistence
- ❖ Economic relations
- ❖ Social relations
- ❖ Belief systems





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Loss of Diversity



- ❖ Diversity is being lost at unprecedented rates
- ❖ Reduced diversity makes the world increasingly vulnerable to change posing a threat to global stability

Diversity loss needs to be dealt with in holistic, more comprehensive ways that recognize the value and the links between components of diversity and address them together.



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Diversity in UNESCO

**UNESCO - unique position to mainstream the links
between diversities in research, political dialogue & action**



World Cultural and Natural Heritage



Man and the Biosphere Programme and biosphere reserves



UNESCO/UNEP - High Level Round Table on 'Cultural Diversity for Sustainable Development' World Summit on Sustainable Development,



Local, traditional and indigenous knowledge, LINKS Programme
Sacred sites and cultural landscapes



Linguistic diversity and biodiversity (Linguistic Vitality Index)



Intangible heritage and



diversity of cultural expressions



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Diversity in research and policy

Progress in raising awareness about the importance of the links between biological and cultural diversity and the dangers of addressing them separately.

Academia - ethnoecology, historical ecology, deep ecology...

IGO and fora - UNESCO, UNEP, United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, International Indigenous Forum on Biodiversity, Tebtebba, Inuit Circumpolar Conference...

NGOs - IUCN, Terralingua, Resilience Alliance, Global Diversity Foundation...

Intergovernmental processes and policy instruments - explicit reference to cultural drivers when dealing with biological diversity and *vice versa*.

Convention on Biological Diversity

Ramsar Convention on Wetlands

World Heritage Convention

Convention on Intangible Heritage and Diversity of Cultural Expressions

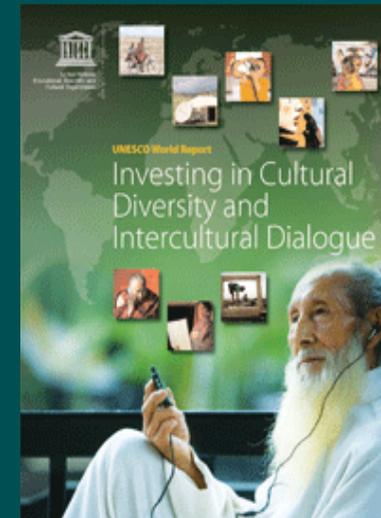
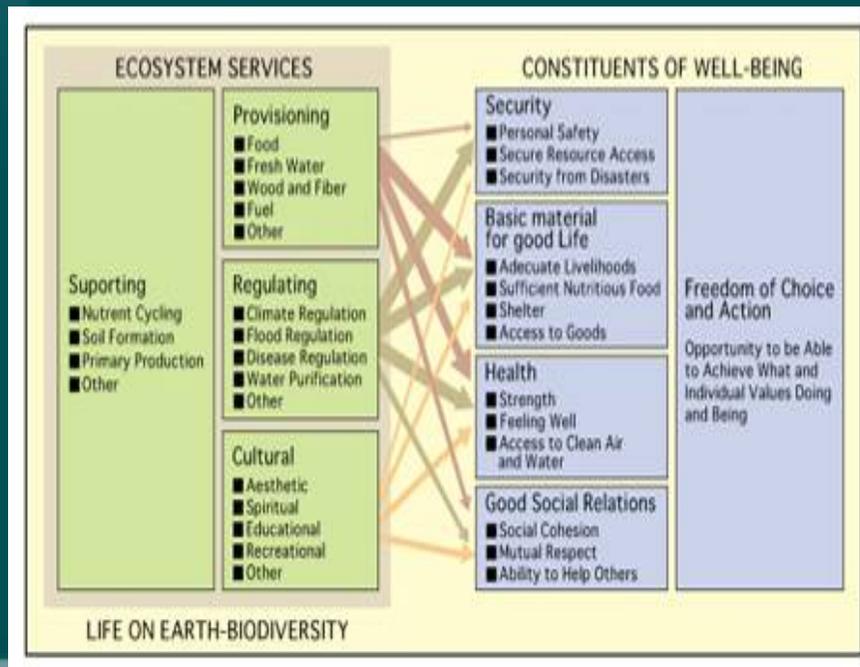
Millennium Ecosystem Assessment



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Value of the Interlinked Diversity

- Biodiversity provides cultural services that are essential for well being.
- Changes in the provision of ecosystem services are driven by cultural factors.
- Cultural diversity can help to reshape strategies for achieving environmental sustainability.
- Resource efficient economy reflects the values of nature, including recreation, inspiration, a sense of cultural and spiritual identity.





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Way Forward

The increase in development and application of approaches linking biological and cultural diversity raises the need to clarify **key theoretical & methodological issues** to ensure a more systematic consideration of such approaches and their use as meaningful tools for policy and practice.



UNESCO focus on analytical and scientific work to assist with normative work related to biological and cultural diversity.



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Joint Programme UNESCO – SCBD 2010 - 2020

Mission: strengthen the linkages between biological and cultural diversity initiatives, and enhance synergies between interlinked provisions of conventions and programmes dealing with biological and cultural diversity at relevant scales.

Objectives:

1. To **build bridges** between ongoing work on biodiversity and cultural diversity and **promote synergies** and information sharing
2. To further explore **conceptual and methodological issues** and the role of **communities in rural and urban areas**
3. To promote the **collection, compilation and analysis** of information from on-the ground activities
4. To support and foster **learning networks** on bio-cultural approaches, linking grassroots and community initiatives with local, national, regional and global policy processes
5. To further **explore and raise awareness of the value** of the interlinked diversity in resource management and decision-making

Joint Programme UNESCO – SCBD 2010 - 2020

Action Points

1. Strengthening connections between legal instruments

- identifying overlapping provisions and ways for their coordinated & mutually reinforcing implementation

2. Building the knowledge base

- guiding principles, including ethical principles, for future research, management, practice and policy work
- robust interdisciplinary conceptual and methodological frameworks & indicators
- on contemporary processes that simultaneously impact diversity and the responses to their impacts.

3. Raising awareness and educating

4. Mainstreaming the principles and acting at local level

- in the relevant CBD's and UNESCO's PoW and initiatives
- in the management of UNESCO sites, including through pilots and capacity building

Guiding principles: full and effective collaboration of communities; collaborative engagement of all relevant actors; holistic approach consistent with cultural and spiritual values, worldviews and knowledge systems and livelihoods that contribute to conservation and sustainable and equitable use of biodiversity.



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2010 Declaration on Bio-cultural Diversity

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Recognizing the **importance of biological and cultural diversity for the survival and well-being of contemporary societies, both in urban and rural areas,**

Expressing deep concern about the **threats** to both cultural and biological diversity, particularly in the face of the **homogenizing forces of globalization,**

Acknowledging the important progress made in building the knowledge on the links between biological and cultural diversity,

Also acknowledging the challenges and opportunities of a prospective **International Regime on Access and Benefit Sharing** for indigenous and local communities,

Committing to **take action** towards significant reduction in biodiversity loss, and promotion of cultural diversity,

Call upon Governments and Parties to all the relevant Conventions, IGOs, NGOs, academia, ILCs, the private sector to strengthen collaboration and coordination and to adopt, contribute to and support the joint programme between the SCBD and UNESCO on the links between biological and cultural diversity.



**Thank you for your
attention!**



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Biological - Cultural Diversity



- ❖ **Language and linguistic diversity** (terms, concepts)
- ❖ **Material culture** (objects created from bd, reflecting spiritual and religious beliefs)
- ❖ **Knowledge and technology**
 - Technology and techniques (practice using natural materials)
 - Traditional and local knowledge
 - Transmission of knowledge and skills
- ❖ **Modes of subsistence**
 - Natural resource use and management
 - Plant/animal domestication and selective breeding (e.g. creation and maintenance of genetic diversity)
- ❖ **Economic relations** (partnerships based on trading natural resources, going beyond eco borders)
- ❖ **Social relations** (e.g. social roles relating to differential resource use)
 - Attachment to place (e.g. cultural identity inscribed in natural places)
 - Gender (e.g. gender specific environmental knowledge)
 - Political relations (e.g. control over differential resource access)
 - Legal institutions (e.g. customary law governing resource/land access)
- ❖ **Belief systems**
 - Rites and rituals (e.g. those celebrating seasonal events)
 - Sacred sites (e.g. the conservation of sacred forests)
 - Mythology, worldview, cosmology and spirituality
 - Constructing identity with/through the natural world (e.g. totemism, nagualism, tonalism)



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UNESCO - SCBD Joint Programme

Strengthen collaboration & synergies between the CBD and UNESCO biodiversity and cultural diversity related initiatives, including the Conventions on Intangible Heritage and Diversity of Cultural Expressions

Identify provisions linking cultural and biological diversity in the texts of the Conventions as a guide for initiating collaboration and coordination between the Secretariats of the Conventions

Explore conceptual/theoretical and methodological issues related to the implementation of the identified provisions linking biological and cultural diversity

Promote the collection/compilation of *in situ* information as background for identifying good practices to feed into management and decision/policy making processes

Catalyze activities to raise awareness on the importance of linking biological and cultural diversity in decision-making



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Way Forward

Research

- Common conceptual and methodological framework
- Principal units and appropriate scale for diversity research
- Dynamics of knowledge
- Processes that reduce, modify and/or produce diversity through the 'homogenization - hybridity – diversification' process
- Impact of demographic shifts and dynamics on diversity
- Development of a value-based system for diversity

Policy

- Integrate cultural diversity in MEA
- Integrate biological diversity in international treaties dealing with cultural diversity
- Include the links between biological and cultural diversity in resource management and valorization of cultural & natural heritage
- Identify cultural values in territories, define their integrity & vulnerability

