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*The world's largest plant conservation network*



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# Module 1: Introduction to the Convention on Biological Diversity



# Objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)



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The objectives of the CBD are a global commitment towards the:

- conservation of biological diversity
- sustainable use of its components
- fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the utilisation of genetic resources

The CBD's definition of biological diversity includes diversity within species, between species, and of ecosystems.



# Parties to the CBD



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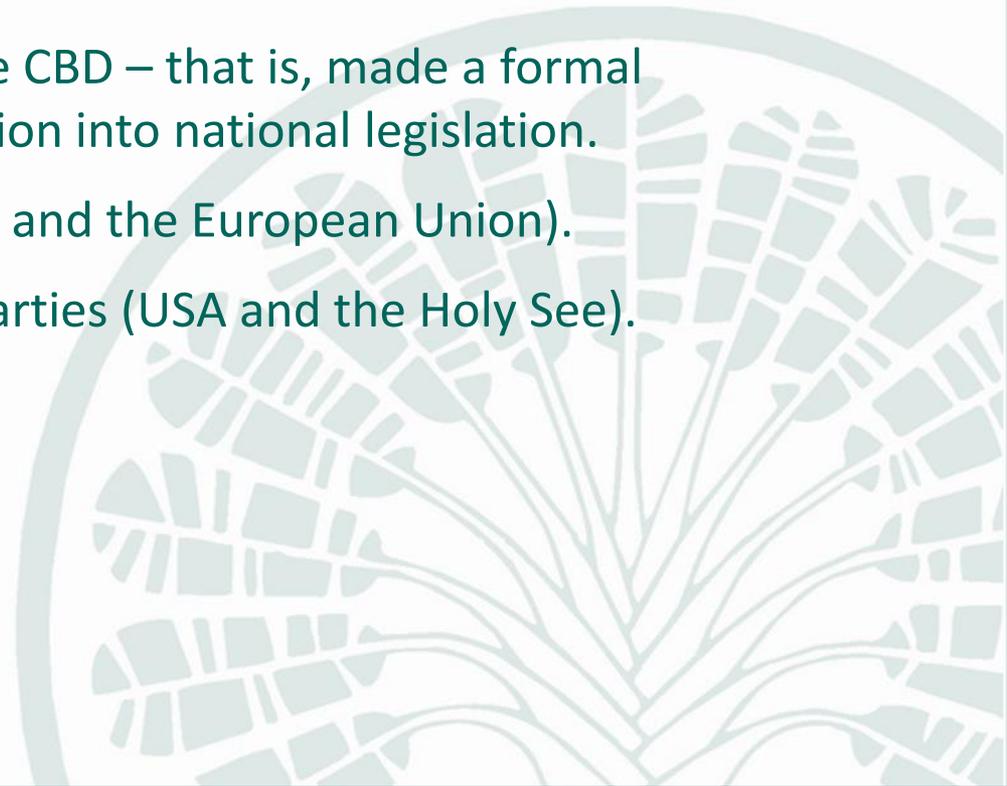
The text of CBD was opened for signature by countries at the Earth Summit in Rio in 1992.

The CBD came into force on 29 Dec 1993.

A Party is a country that has ratified the CBD – that is, made a formal declaration to incorporate the Convention into national legislation.

The CBD has 196 Parties (195 countries and the European Union).

Only 2 UN-recognised states are non-Parties (USA and the Holy See).



# CBD framework for national action

The CBD reaffirms that countries have sovereign rights over their biological resources. Parties to the CBD are responsible for promoting conservation and sustainable use of biological resources within their national boundaries.

The goals and obligations of the CBD are implemented by countries at a **national level**.

The first step is for countries to develop a **National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP)**, taking into account the **CBD's Strategic Plan**, to integrate conservation and sustainable use into national decision-making.

Countries report back on their efforts to implement the CBD through regular **National Reports**.

The CBD also provides a framework for more specialised treaties, including

- The Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (living modified organisms)
- The Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and Benefit-Sharing (see Module 3)

# Bodies of the CBD

The CBD operates through the actions of a number of bodies:

- The **Conference of the Parties (COP)** is the governing body - it meets every two years to make decisions by consensus to guide the implementation of the CBD by Parties.
- The **Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA)** brings together scientific experts to develop recommendations for the COP.
- **Ad Hoc Working Groups** are established to tackle key issues (for instance protected areas, access and benefit-sharing, traditional knowledge).

Parties send representatives to the meetings of these groups, but observers can also attend, e.g. non-governmental organisations, botanic gardens, universities, private sector groups.

- The **Secretariat** of the CBD (SCBD), in Montreal, provides administrative support.
- **National Focal Points (NFP)** in each Party provide information on how the CBD is being implemented in that country.
- A **Clearing House Mechanism (CHM)** facilitates the exchange of information.
- National contributions to the **Global Environment Facility (GEF)** fund the CBD.

# Genetic Resources under the CBD

The CBD text includes definitions of genetic resources and genetic material.

**Genetic resources:** genetic material of actual or potential value

**Genetic material:** any material of plant, animal microbial or other origin containing functional units of heredity

The CBD framework does not cover human genetic resources.

Botanic gardens personnel should take note that the definition of genetic resources includes living plants, seeds, herbarium specimens, tissue cultures and DNA samples.



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**End of Module One (Introduction)**

**Why not try the [quick quiz?](#)**

**Then, please go to [Module Two](#)  
(The History of the Nagoya Protocol  
on ABS)**



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Our Mission is to mobilise botanic gardens and engage partners in securing plant diversity for the well-being of people and the planet

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