

SECTION 3

Further Information

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Tea gardens in eastern Nepal are increasing in area and number; there is now serious concern about this mono-culture landuse practice

The Convention on Biological Diversity

The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) is a global agreement on the sustainable use and conservation of biological diversity. It has three main goals: 1) conservation of biological diversity, 2) sustainable use of its components, and 3) fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from genetic resources. The Convention was adopted at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in June 1992 and entered into force on 29 December 1993. There are currently 188 parties to the CBD, including Bhutan, China, India, and Nepal (Table 3.1).

As general measures for biodiversity conservation and sustainable use (Article 6), the CBD proposes that each Contracting Party develop (or adapt existing) national strategies, plans, or programmes to reflect the measures set out in the Convention. The CBD also recommends that the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity be integrated as far as possible and as appropriate into relevant sectoral or cross-sectoral plans, programmes, and policies (see <www.biodiv.org>).

A Conference of the Parties (COP) was established by Article 23 of the CBD as the governing body that advances implementation of the Convention through decisions it takes at its periodic meetings (Table 3.2). To date, the COP has held eight ordinary meetings and one extraordinary meeting, with the most recent meeting held in Curitiba, Brazil from 20-31 March 2006.

Table 3.1: Parties to Convention on Biological Diversity within the Kangchenjunga Landscape

Country	Signed	Party	Focal Institution
Bhutan	11 June 1992	25 August 1995 (ratification)	National Environment Commission
China	11 June 1992	05 January 1993	State Environmental Protection Organisation
India	05 June 1992	18 February 1994 (ratification)	Ministry of Environment and Forests
Nepal	12 June 1992	23 November 1993 (ratification)	Ministry of Forests and Soil Conservation

Table 3.2: CBD-Conference of Parties (COP) Meetings and Major Themes

COP	Date	Major Themes
COP-1	28 Nov-9 Dec 1994 Nassau, The Bahamas	Guidance to financial mechanism Medium-term programme of work
COP-2	6-17 Nov 1995 Jakarta, Indonesia	Marine and coastal biodiversity Access to genetic resources Conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity Biosafety
COP-3	4-15 Nov 1996 Buenos Aires, Argentina	Agricultural biodiversity Financial resources and mechanism Identification, monitoring, and assessment Intellectual property rights
COP-4	4-15 May 1998 Bratislava, Slovakia	Inland water ecosystems Review of the operations of the Convention Article 8(j) and related issues (traditional knowledge) Benefit sharing
ExCOP-1	22-23 Feb 1999, Cartagena, Colombia 24-28 Jan 2000, Montreal, Canada	Adoption of Biosafety Protocol
COP-5	15-26 May 2000 Nairobi, Kenya	Dryland, Mediterranean, arid, semi-arid, grassland, and savannah ecosystems Sustainable use, including tourism Access to genetic resources
COP-6	7-19 April 2002 The Hague, Netherlands	Forest ecosystems Alien species Benefit sharing Strategic plan 2002-2010
COP-7	9-20 Feb 2004 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia	Mountain ecosystems Protected areas Transfer of technology and technology cooperation
COP-8	20-31 March 2006 Curitiba, Brazil	Island, dry, and sub humid lands, global taxonomic initiative, access and benefit sharing (Article 15), Article 8j and related provisions; and communication, education, and public awareness (Article 13)

Relevant articles of CBD on regional cooperation

The CBD maintains that biological diversity can be conserved through in-situ (Article 8) or ex-situ (Article 9) conservation and by the sustainable use of components of biological diversity (Article 10).

Article 8 (in-situ conservation) makes provisions for the establishment and management of a system of protected areas; promotion of protection of ecosystems, natural habitats, and maintenance of viable species in natural surroundings; promotion of environmentally sound and sustainable development in areas adjacent to protected areas; rehabilitation and restoration of degraded ecosystems and promotion of the recovery of threatened species; regulation and management of risks associated with living modified organisms; prevention of introduction, and control or eradication of alien species; respect for, preservation, and maintenance of knowledge, innovations, and practices of indigenous and local communities; development or maintenance of necessary legislation to protect threatened species and populations; and cooperation in providing financial and other support for in-situ conservation. Of particular significance in this Article is the recognition for preserving and maintaining indigenous knowledge and practices, as well as encouraging equitable sharing of benefits arising from the utilisation of such knowledge and practices (Article 8j).

Article 9 (ex-situ conservation) calls for adoption of measures, and establishment and maintenance of facilities for ex-situ conservation and research on plants, animals, and micro-organisms. It also calls for adoption of measures for the recovery and rehabilitation of threatened species and for their reintroduction into their natural habits.

Article 10 (sustainable use of components of biological diversity) calls for integration of conservation and sustainable use of biological resources into national decision-making; adoption of measures to avoid or minimise adverse impacts on biodiversity; protection and encouragement of traditional use of biological resources that are compatible with conservation or sustainable use requirements; support of local populations to develop and implement remedial action in degraded areas; and encouragement of cooperation between governmental authorities and the private sector in developing methods for the sustainable use of biological resources.

Achievement of biodiversity conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity components is further enhanced by incentive measures (Article 11), research and training (Article 12), public education and awareness (Article 13), impact assessment and minimising adverse impacts (Article 14), access to genetic resources (Article 15), access to and transfer of technology (Article 16), exchange of information (Article 17), technical and scientific cooperation (Article 18), and handling of biotechnology and distribution of its benefits (Article 19).

CBD strategic plan

A ‘Strategic Plan (2002-2010) for the Convention on Biological Diversity’ was adopted during the sixth meeting of the COP. The Strategic Plan was developed in order to guide the CBD’s further implementation at the national, regional, and global levels. The purpose of the Plan is to effectively halt the loss of biodiversity so as to secure the continuity of its beneficial uses through the conservation and sustainable use of its components and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the use of genetic resources. The Strategic Plans’ mission is that parties commit themselves to a more effective and coherent implementation of the three objectives of the Convention in order to achieve by 2010 a significant reduction of the current rate of biodiversity loss at the global, regional, and national levels as a contribution to poverty alleviation and to the benefit of all life on earth (Box 3.1).

Box 3.1: Convention on Biological Diversity – Strategic Goals (2002-2010)

- Goal 1: The Convention is fulfilling its leadership role in international biodiversity issues.
- Goal 2: Parties have improved financial, human, scientific, technical, and technological capacity to implement the Convention.
- Goal 3: National biodiversity strategies and action plans and the integration of biodiversity concerns into relevant sectors serve as an effective framework for the implementation of the objectives of the Convention.
- Goal 4: There is a better understanding of the importance of biodiversity and of the Convention, and this has led to broader engagement across society in implementation.

The ecosystem approach

COP-7 placed special emphasis on the 'ecosystem approach' and agreed to prioritise this approach as the primary framework for addressing the three objectives of the Convention (Decision 11). The ecosystem approach is a strategy for the integrated management of land, water, and living resources that promotes conservation and sustainable use in an equitable way. The approach was recognised by the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) as an important instrument for enhancing sustainable development and poverty alleviation. The ecosystem approach recognises that people, with their cultural diversity, are an integral component of many ecosystems. It incorporates three important considerations:

- i) management of living components is considered alongside economic and social considerations at the ecosystem level;
- ii) if management of land, water, and living resources in equitable ways is to be sustainable, it must be integrated and worked within the natural limits and utilise the natural functioning of ecosystems;
- iii) ecosystem management is a social process; there are many key stakeholders who must be involved through the development of efficient and effective structures and processes for decision-making and management.

Mountain Biodiversity

COP-7 also adopted the programme of work on mountain biological diversity (Decision 27, Box 3.2). This programme will be implemented using the ecosystem approach, and in many instances regional cooperation has been strongly advocated for critical transboundary areas. The overall purpose of the programme is the significant reduction of mountain biological diversity loss by 2010 at global, regional, and national levels, through the implementation of the three main objectives of the CBD. The programme aims to make a significant contribution to poverty alleviation in mountain ecosystems and in lowlands dependent on goods and services of mountain ecosystems and thereby contribute to the objectives of the Strategic Plan of the CBD, the Plan of

Box 3.2: CBD Programme of Work on Mountain Biodiversity (VII/27)

Programme Elements and Goals

Programme Element 1: Direct actions for conservation, sustainable use, and benefit sharing

Goal 1.1: To prevent and mitigate the negative impacts of key threats to mountain biological diversity

Goal 1.2: To protect, recover, and restore mountain biological diversity

Goal 1.3: To promote the sustainable use of mountain biological resources

Goal 1.4: To promote access to, and sharing of, benefits arising from the utilisation of genetic resources related to mountain biological diversity in accordance with national legislation where it exists

Goal 1.5: To maintain genetic diversity in mountain ecosystems in particular through the preservation and maintenance of traditional knowledge and practices

Programme Element 2: Means of implementation for conservation, sustainable use, and benefit-sharing

Goal 2.1: To enhance the legal, policy, institutional, and economic framework

Goal 2.2: To respect, preserve, and maintain knowledge, practices, and innovations of indigenous and local communities in mountain regions

Goal 2.3: To establish regional and transboundary collaboration and the establishment of cooperative agreements

Programme Element 3: Supporting actions for conservation, sustainable use, and benefit-sharing

Goal 3.1: To develop work on identification, monitoring and assessment of mountain biological diversity

Goal 3.2: To improve knowledge on and methods for the assessment and monitoring of the status and trends of mountain biological diversity based on available information

Goal 3.3: To improve the infrastructure for data and information management for accurate assessment and monitoring of mountain biological diversity and develop associated databases

Goal 3.4: To improve research, technical and scientific cooperation, and other forms of capacity-building related to mountain biological diversity

Goal 3.5: To increase public education, participation, and awareness in relation to mountain biological diversity

Goal 3.6: To promote the development, validation, and transfer of appropriate technologies for mountain ecosystems, including indigenous technologies in accordance with Article 8(j) of the CBD and related provisions.

Implementation of the WSSD, and the Millennium Development Goals. Moreover, in accordance with Article 8(j) and related provisions of the CBD, the programme will account for the knowledge, innovations, and practices of indigenous and local communities and ensure their participation in conservation and sustainable use of mountain biodiversity. Box 3.2 outlines the programme elements and goals of the CBD Programme of Work on Mountain Biodiversity (see Sharma and Acharya [2004] for more details).

Side event on ‘Mountain Biodiversity Partnership’ during COP 8

A side event on ‘Mountain Biodiversity Partnership for Implementing the CBD’ was organised jointly by United Nations Environment Programme-Vienna, European Academy Bozen/Bolzano, IUCN, and ICIMOD during COP-8 at Curitiba, Brazil. The event recommended providing more focus on mountain ecosystems for biodiversity conservation and on the exchange of expertise between different mountain systems in the world. It was recommended that such partnerships be developed, and as an immediate follow-up to this recommendation, a planning workshop was held in 2006 on exchange between Gran Paradiso National Park, Italy, and Sagarmatha National Park, Nepal.

Initiatives Supporting Transboundary Biodiversity Cooperation

The Alpine Convention

The Alpine Convention is a landmark initiative for achieving transboundary conservation in mountain regions of the Alps. The Convention covers an area of 191,000 sq.km and a population of 12 million people belonging to 8 countries, 37 regions, and 6,200 communities. The Alpine Convention was started following a decision made in 1989 in Berchtesgaden, Germany; it was signed in 1991 in Salzburg, Austria, and ratified in 1999. The Convention is based on the principle of balanced and sustainable development, and has the objective of fostering development while maintaining the characteristics of the Alpine Region (Box 3.3).

Box 3.3: Convention on the Protection of the Alps (Alpine Convention)

Countries Party to the Convention – Signatory States

Germany, Austria, France, Monaco, Italy, Liechtenstein, Switzerland, Slovenia.

Additional Signatory – European Union

Highlights

Principles to be applied for the preservation and protection of the Alps are: prevention, payment by the polluter, and cooperation (*Article 2*).

Appropriate measures are to be taken particularly in the following areas: 1) population and culture, 2) regional planning, 3) prevention of air pollution, 4) soil conservation, 5) water management, 6) conservation of nature and the countryside, 7) mountain farming, 8) mountain forests, 9) tourism and recreation, 10) transport, 11) energy, and 12) waste management (*Article 2*).

Cooperation for research and systematic monitoring shall be achieved (*Article 3*).

Exchange of legal, scientific, economic and technical information relevant to the Alpine Convention shall be facilitated and promoted (*Article 4*).

Reference: Convention on the Protection of the Alps (Alpine Convention)

URL: http://www.conventionalpine.org/page1_en.htm

The Carpathian Convention

Following the Alpine Convention, a framework was proposed in 2001 for regional cooperation to achieve protection and sustainable development of the Carpathians, a major transboundary mountain system shared by seven countries in Central and Eastern Europe. A year later, the Alpine-Carpathian partnership was initiated and launched. The seven Carpathian countries – the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Serbia and Montenegro, the Slovak Republic, and the Ukraine – adopted the Framework Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians in May 2003; the Carpathian Convention entered into force on 4 January 2006 (Box 3.4).

Box 3.4: Framework Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians (Carpathian Convention)

The Parties

Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Serbia and Montenegro, Slovak Republic, Ukraine

Highlights

In order to achieve the Convention's objectives, the Parties shall apply the following (Article 2):

- a) precaution and prevention principles
- b) 'polluter pays' principle
- c) public participation and stakeholder involvement
- d) transboundary cooperation
- e) integrated planning and management of land and water resources
- f) programmatic approach
- g) ecosystem approach

The Convention stresses the application of the integrated approach to land resources management (Article 3).

Policies pertaining to the following shall be pursued (Articles 4-13):

- Conservation and sustainable use of biological and landscape diversity
- Spatial planning
- Sustainable and integrated water/river basin management
- Sustainable agriculture and forestry
- Sustainable transport and infrastructure
- Sustainable tourism
- Industry and energy
- Cultural heritage and traditional knowledge
- Environmental assessment/information system, monitoring and early warning
- Awareness raising, education, and public participation.

Reference: The Carpathian Convention

URL: <http://www.carpathianconvention.org/index.htm>

References

Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) <http://www.biodiv.org/convention/default.shtml>

Programme of Work on Mountain Biodiversity, <http://www.biodiv.org/decisions/default.aspx?m=COP-07&id=7764&lg=0>

Sharma, E; Acharya, R. (2004) 'Summary Report on Mountain Biodiversity in the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)'. In *Mountain Research and Development*, 24(3): 263-265

The Alpine Convention (n.d.) http://www.conventionalpine.org/page1_en.htm

The Carpathian Convention (n.d.) <http://www.carpathianconvention.org/index.htm>