

Biodiversity

Biodiversity Defined



Biological diversity - or biodiversity - is a term we use to describe the variety of life on Earth. It refers to the wide variety of ecosystems and living organisms: animals, plants, their habitats and their genes.

Biodiversity is the foundation of life on Earth. It is crucial for the functioning of ecosystems which provide us with products and services without which we couldn't live. Oxygen, food, fresh water, fertile soil, medicines, shelter, protection from storms and floods, stable climate and recreation - all have their source in nature and

healthy ecosystems. But biodiversity gives us much more than this. We depend on it for our security and health; it strongly affects our social relations and gives us freedom and choice.

Biodiversity is extremely complex, dynamic and varied like no other feature of the Earth. Its innumerable plants, animals and microbes physically and chemically unite the atmosphere (the mixture of gases around the Earth), geosphere (the solid part of the Earth), and hydrosphere (the Earth's water, ice and water vapour) into one environmental system which makes it possible for millions of species, including people, to exist.



At the same time, no other feature of the Earth has been so dramatically influenced by man's activities. By changing biodiversity, we strongly affect human well-being and the well-being of every other living creature.

