



## United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)

### Background

#### Mid- to late 1980s

IUCN's Commissions on Environmental Law and the IUCN Environmental Law Centre make policy and scientific recommendations on biological diversity

#### 1987

UNEP Governing Council Decisions 14/26 (and 15/34 in 1989)

#### November 1988–Summer 1990

UNEP convenes a series of expert group meetings referred to as meetings of the Ad Hoc Working Group of Experts on Biological Diversity. Topics covered included in situ and ex situ conservation of wild and domesticated species; access to genetic resources and to technology, including biotechnology; new and additional financial support; and safety of release or experimentation on genetically modified organisms

#### Mid-1990–Feb 1991

UNEP's Ad Hoc Working Group of Legal and Technical Experts mandated to draft a legal instrument under the guidance of the Director

#### Feb 1991–May 1992

Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC) meets four times and adopts final text of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)

#### Jun 1992–Dec 1993

CBD opened for signature in Rio de Janeiro (WCED) and enters into force in the following year

#### Nov 1994

First Conference of the Parties (COP 1) meets in the Bahamas

### Principles in the Rio Declaration covered by this CBD include:

- Conservation of biological diversity is a common concern of humankind (Principles 1, 7)
- States have sovereign rights over their own biological resources (Principle 2)
- Where there is a threat to significant reduction or loss of biological diversity, lack of full scientific certainty should not be used as a reason for postponing measures to avoid or minimize such a threat (Principle 15)
- Recognises the close and traditional dependence of many indigenous and local communities on biological resources (Principle 22)
- Recognises the vital role of women in the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity and affirming the need for the full participation of women at all levels (Principle 20)
- Economic and social development and poverty eradication are the first and overriding priorities of developing countries (Principles 3 and 5)

This factsheet on the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) is included in the comprehensive report: *Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs)*, pp. 6–13