

Committee: UNGA

Topic: The Convention on Biological Diversity and its Contribution to Sustainable Development

Country: UAE

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Biodiversity is important from utilitarian perspective as well it has its own intrinsic value. Utilitarian values include the many basic needs humans obtain from biodiversity such as food, fuel, shelter, and medicine. It is also important to sustain ecosystems that provide crucial services such as pollination, seed dispersal, climate regulation, water purification, nutrient cycling, and control of agricultural pests. Biodiversity has cultural value to humans as well, for spiritual or religious reasons. The value of biodiversity lies in the fact that it drives the relationships we form and strive for with each other and the rest of nature. Biodiversity shapes who we are, our relationships to each other, and social norms. Biodiversity also drives an individual or collective sense of wellbeing, responsibility for, and connection with the environment. Biodiversity and its maintenance are very important for sustaining life on earth. Biodiversity preserves different cultures and spiritual heritage.

Humans have come to dominate the planet, causing rapid ecosystem changes and massive loss of biodiversity across the planet. Major direct threats to biodiversity include habitat loss and fragmentation, unsustainable resource use, invasive species, pollution, and global climate change. Few of the underlying causes of biodiversity loss are growing human population and overconsumption. The loss of biodiversity is dangerous as it has numerous consequences including fewer opportunities for better livelihood, better health; less food for survival; lack of clean water etc.

The UAE also faces the impact of rapid development and the effects of climate change and global warming. Protection of environment and sustainable development are highest priority for the UAE Government. UAE is rated among the top for having the biggest ecological footprint. The UAE developed the national strategy that resulted many projects and initiatives to limit desertification and land degradation. Conservation of the endangered Arab Falcon and the protection of camel diversity, plays an important role in UAE's cultural legacy. UAE has formulated multiple strategies for green development, coastal and marine environment, and Aichi biodiversity. As a part of "Emirates Vision 2021", it has set 21 national targets with action-driven and outcome-oriented measures, grouped under 5 thematic areas. The new biodiversity strategy focuses on capacity building, communication and public awareness, resource mobilization, and national knowledge sharing. Progress on the implementation of the strategy and action plan will be monitored and assessed and findings will be reported by representatives from each Emirate. Huge efforts are paid by the UAE to conserve biodiversity. Several official decrees have been produced locally or at the federal level by the UAE to conserve biodiversity and its habitats. The UAE has ratified biodiversity and environment-related international conventions and signed regional agreements that enhance and conserve biodiversity. UAE's implementation efforts includes various steps like legislative acts for biodiversity conservation, mainstreaming biodiversity into sectoral and non-sectoral strategies, implementing Abu Dhabi global environmental data initiative and execution of multiple education and awareness programs.