

Biodiversity and human health

Health "is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity".

Biological diversity (biodiversity) is "the variability among living organisms from all sources including, inter alia, terrestrial, marine and other aquatic ecosystems and the ecological complexes of which they are part; this includes diversity within species, between species and of ecosystems."

Biodiversity underpins ecosystem functioning and the provision of goods and services that are essential to human health and well being.

The links between **biodiversity and health** are manifested at various spatial and temporal scales. Biodiversity and human health, and the respective policies and activities, are interlinked in various ways.



Direct drivers of biodiversity loss include land-use change, habitat loss, over-exploitation, pollution, invasive species and climate change. Many of these drivers affect human health directly and through their impacts on biodiversity.

Women and men have different roles in the conservation and use of biodiversity and varying health impacts.

Human population health is determined, to a large extent, by social, economic and environmental factors.

The social and natural sciences are important contributors to biodiversity and health research and policy. Integrative approaches such as the Ecosystem Approach, Eco-health and One Health unite different fields and require the development of mutual understanding and cooperation across disciplines.