

#HOWISITGOVERNED

How is biodiversity governed?

WHAT IS BIODIVERSITY?

Biodiversity refers to the variation in life forms on Earth: the number of different species, the genetic variation that exists within species and the variety of different ecosystems in which they live and interact.

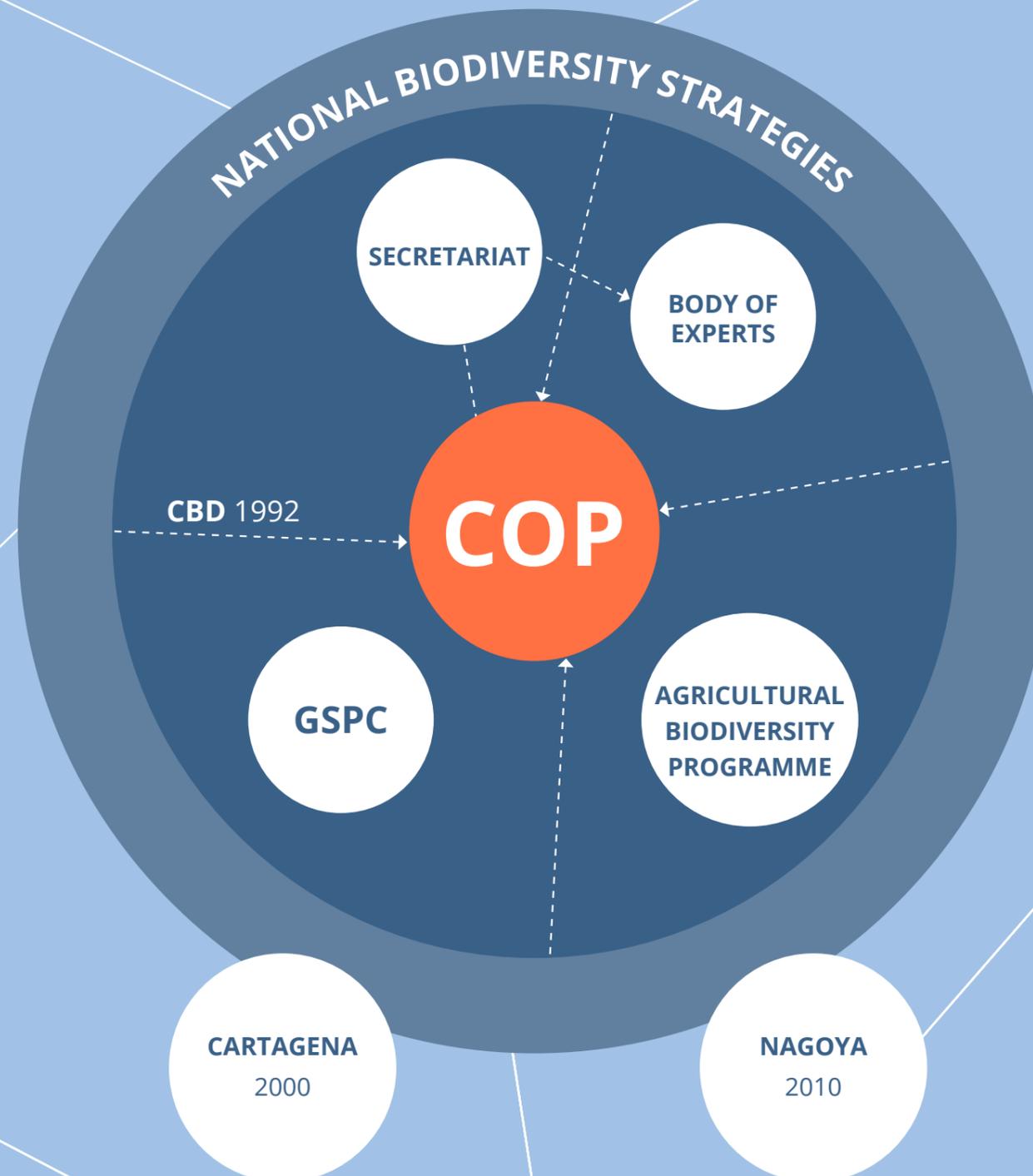
WHY IS BIODIVERSITY IMPORTANT?

Diversity makes ecosystems and species less vulnerable to threats and better at adapting to changes. An ecosystem is a complex weave of interdependent organisms where each one fills a function, and when diversity is lost ecosystems that are vital to human survival are put in peril. Protecting biodiversity also preserves the potential for new medical or scientific discoveries that may be of great importance in the future.

IS BIODIVERSITY THREATENED?

Ecosystems have always experienced changes and species have always gone extinct, but the current cycle of extinction (also known as the sixth cycle of extinction) is happening much faster. Estimates of the current rate are at 100 times the natural rate, resulting in one of the most massive losses in the diversity of life on Earth. Since humanity has become such a dominant force, we have to decide how best to manage the situation we are creating.

WHAT SHAPE OF GLOBAL GOVERNANCE IS IN PLACE TO SECURE BIODIVERSITY?



HOW DOES THE CBD WORK?

The United Nations **Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)** establishes basic international protection for biodiversity. It establishes general goals and principles, as well as a governing body and a working procedure. CBD is not binding.

Two supplementary protocols have been added to the main convention: The **Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety** in 2000, and the **Nagoya Protocol** in 2010. **Conference of the Parties (COP)**, its governing body, has also established related programmes, e.g. the **Global Strategy for Plant Conservation (GSPC)** and the **Agricultural Biodiversity Programme**.

WHAT IS THE CURRENT STATE OF GOVERNANCE ON BIODIVERSITY?

CBD has been signed and ratified by 195 countries. The US is the only UN member state that has not yet ratified the convention. So far, 189 of the parties have developed national strategies to enforce the agreement.