

Biodiversity: Beyond Conventions
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As part of the course *Evolution and Diversity of Life*, students are invited to further examine the concept of biodiversity through familiarization with the contents of the Convention on Biological Diversity, which resulted from the Earth Summit held in Rio in 1992.

The Convention on Biological Diversity serves as a working tool to measure environmental impacts of two current oil development projects: one on the East Coast in the St. Lawrence Estuary, and the other on the West Coast in the Queen Charlotte Islands archipelago. These two areas have drawn worldwide attention for their rich biological diversity.

To start off, students work on one of the two issues in teams of four or five people. After preparing an impact assessment report, the three teams assigned to the same case get together to reach a consensus as to the project's risks of biodiversity loss. The outcome of this consensus is presented to the group.