

6. Seventh National Report to CBD – Environment

The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) has submitted India's Seventh National Report (NR-7) to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) In accordance with CoP Decision 15/6.

Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) & India's NR-7

1. Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)

1.1 Overview

1. CBD is a multilateral environmental treaty aimed at biodiversity conservation and sustainable use.
2. It also ensures fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from genetic resources.
3. It is often referred to as the Biodiversity Convention or UNCBD.

1.2 Historical Background

1. Opened for signature on June 5, 1992 at the Rio Earth Summit.
2. Came into force on December 29, 1993.

1.3 Membership and Legal Status

1. Legally binding treaty with 196 parties.
2. The United States is the only UN member that has not ratified it.
3. India is a signatory and active participant.

1.4 Core Objectives

1. Conservation of biological diversity.
2. Sustainable use of biological resources.
3. Fair and equitable sharing of benefits from genetic resources.

2. Global Context– Kunming–Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework

1. Provides global targets for biodiversity conservation up to 2030.
2. Includes the “30×30” goal of conserving 30 percent of land and sea by 2030.
3. India's national targets are aligned with this framework.

3. India's Seventh National Report (NR-7)

3.1 About the Report

1. NR-7 is an indicator-based national assessment of biodiversity progress.
2. Aligned with National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan 2024–2030.
3. Also aligned with the Kunming–Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework.

3.2 Institutional Framework

1. Prepared by Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change.
2. Inputs from 33 ministries.
3. Technical coordination by National Biodiversity Authority.
4. Supported by UNDP under Global Environment Facility.
5. Progress tracking by Wildlife Institute of India.

3.3 Methodology

1. Based on 142 national indicators.
2. Mapped against 23 National Biodiversity Targets.
3. Reflects a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach.

4. Progress on National Biodiversity Targets (NBTs)

4.1 NBT1– Land and Sea-use Planning

1. Focuses on integrating biodiversity into planning processes.

2. Forest and tree cover stands at 827,357 sq. km.
3. Represents 25.17 percent of India's geographical area.
4. Increase of 1,445.81 sq. km between 2021 and 2023.
5. Identified as on track.

4.2 NBT2- Ecosystem Restoration

1. Focuses on restoring degraded ecosystems.
2. About 29.77 percent of India's land is degraded.
3. Equivalent to around 97 million hectares.
4. Progress is mixed and not fully on track.

4.3 NBT3- Conservation and Protected Areas

1. Aligned with global 30×30 target.
2. Protected areas cover a little over 5 percent of India's area.
3. Expansion of protected areas continues.
4. Management effectiveness evaluations are regularly conducted.

4.4 Trees Outside Forests (TOF)

1. Plays a significant role in overall tree cover.
2. Agroforestry covers about 8.65 percent of geographical area.
3. Indicates integration of biodiversity into production landscapes.

5. Overall Findings

1. Only 2 out of 23 biodiversity targets are clearly on track.
2. India has strengthened policy and monitoring frameworks.
3. However, biodiversity loss and ecological pressures persist.

6. Challenges Identified

6.1 Financial and Technical Constraints

1. Limited funding for biodiversity conservation.
2. Lack of technical capacity in monitoring and implementation.
3. Increasing climate impacts such as floods, droughts and forest fires.

6.2 Agriculture and Invasive Species Issues

1. Limited quantitative data on pesticide use and nutrient runoff.
2. Weak monitoring of invasive alien species.
3. These factors significantly contribute to biodiversity loss.

6.3 Data and Monitoring Challenges

1. Biodiversity monitoring is complex and resource-intensive.
2. Lack of standardized protocols for new indicators.
3. Data collected at different intervals by multiple ministries.
4. Rapid satellite advancements create comparability issues.

7. Significance of NR-7

7.1 Commitment to CBD Goals

1. Reinforces India's commitment to biodiversity conservation.
2. Aligns national actions with global frameworks.

7.2 Policy Strengthening

1. Promotes integrated and coordinated governance approach.
2. Supports evidence-based policymaking.

7.3 Global Leadership

1. Positions India as a responsible stakeholder in global biodiversity governance.
2. Enhances credibility in international environmental negotiations.

7.4 Monitoring and Accountability

1. Provides measurable indicators for progress tracking.
2. Improves transparency and accountability.

8. Way Forward

1. Increase financial investment in biodiversity conservation.
2. Strengthen institutional and technical capacity.
3. Develop standardized monitoring protocols.
4. Improve coordination among ministries and agencies.
5. Address key drivers of biodiversity loss such as land degradation and invasive species.
6. Enhance community participation and local conservation efforts.

Conclusion

1. The CBD provides a critical global framework for biodiversity conservation.
2. India's NR-7 highlights both progress and persistent gaps.
3. Achieving biodiversity targets will require stronger implementation, better coordination and sustained investment.

Source- <https://www.downtoearth.org.in/wildlife-biodiversity/india-submits-7th-biodiversity-report-but-will-it-meet-its-2030-targets>