

# Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)

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## Topic- Environment and Ecology [GS Paper-3]

**Context-** Recently, India has pushed for a new fund to reverse biodiversity loss at the U.N. biodiversity conference (COP-15) in Canada's Montreal.

### Key Highlights

#### Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF):

- The draft GBF, has been set to replace the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, comprises 22 targets and four goals proposed for 2030—a stepping stone to the 2050 goal of Living in Harmony with Nature.
- The GBF goals include reducing pollution, pesticides, subsidies harmful to nature and the rate of introduction of invasive alien species among others.
- The framework will cater to a new set of goals and targets to halt and reverse biodiversity loss.
- As the 196 parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) finalise negotiations for a post-2020 GBF, there are calls for the inclusion of the CBD principle in finance-related targets.

#### Fund at present:

- Currently, the Global Environment Facility caters to multiple conventions, including the

UNFCCC and UN Convention in order to Combat Desertification.

- It remains the only source of funding for biodiversity conservation.

### **Subsidy elimination:**

- Eliminating subsidies which are harmful to the environment, such as subsidies for fossil fuel production, agriculture, forestry and fisheries, by at least \$500 billion (one billion = 100 crore) annually.
- This money will be used for biodiversity conservation.

### **Target:**

- It aims at achieving a historic deal in order to halt and reverse biodiversity loss on par with the 2015 Paris Agreement on climate change, when all countries agreed to holding the increase in the global average temperature to well below 2 degrees Celsius above the pre-industrial level.

### **CBDR**

- CBDR was established as the seventh principle of the Rio Declaration adopted at the Earth Summit in 1992.
- It is defined as “states have common but differentiated responsibilities in view of the different contributions to global environmental degradation”.
- Applying the principle to biodiversity conservation has not been straightforward as compared to climate negotiations, and there have been repeated disagreements between the global north and south on the issue.

## **India's Stand**

### **Funding**

- There is an urgent need to create a new and dedicated fund to help developing countries to successfully implement a post-2020 global framework to halt and reverse biodiversity loss.

### **‘Common but Differentiated Responsibilities and Respective Capabilities’ (CBDR):**

- Conservation of biodiversity must also be based on the framework as climate change also impacts nature.

### **Implementation of GBF:**

- The successful implementation of a post-2020 GBF will depend on the ways and means country's put in place for an ambitious ‘Resource Mobilisation Mechanism’.
- The goals and targets set in the GBF should be realistic and practical.

### **Subsidy elimination:**

- India is against reducing the agriculture-related subsidy and redirecting the savings for the conservation of biodiversity.

### Reason:

- Most of the rural population in India is dependent on agriculture and allied sectors and the government provides a variety of subsidies, including seed, fertilizer, irrigation, power, export, credit, agriculture equipment, agriculture infrastructure for supporting the livelihoods of farmers mainly, small and marginal.
- When food security is of most importance for developing countries, prescribing numerical targets in pesticide reductions is unnecessary and must be left to countries to decide, based on national circumstances, priorities and capabilities.

### Biodiversity conservation:

- It requires ecosystems to be conserved and restored aggregated and in an integrated manner.

### Issues

- **Insufficient funds:** Existing multilateral sources are not up to the mark of meeting the requirements of the GBF.
- **Improper distribution of responsibility:** Higher ambition in GBF means greater cost and the burden of this cost falls disproportionately on the countries that can least afford them.
- **Giving up subsidy:** For the developing nations, agriculture is a paramount economic driver for rural communities, and the vital support provided to these sectors cannot be redirected.

### Way Ahead

- It is needed to create a new and dedicated mechanism for the provision of financial resources to developing-country parties.
- Such a fund must be operationalised at the earliest to ensure effective implementation of the post-2020 GBF by all countries.
- Ecosystem approaches for conservation of biodiversity should be adopted rather than going for nature-based solutions.
- The GBF needs to be framed considering science and equity and the sovereign right of countries over their resources.
- The GBF should recognise the responsibility of the developing countries towards poverty eradication and sustainable development.

### Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)

- The convention is known informally as the Biodiversity Convention.
- CBD is a multilateral treaty.
- It was first opened for signature at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992 and entered into force in 1993.
- The Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (SCBD) is established in Montreal, Canada.
- It has been ratified by 196 countries.

- The United States is the only UN member which has not ratified the convention.

### **Two supplementary agreements:**

- The Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety to the Convention on Biological Diversity is an international treaty governing the movements of living modified organisms (LMOs) resulting from modern biotechnology from one nation to another.
- The Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization (ABS) to the Convention on Biological Diversity is the other supplementary agreement to the CBD.
- The governing body of CBD is the Conference of the Parties (COP).
- This authority of all governments which have ratified the treaty meets every two years to review progress, set priorities and commit to work plans.