



Participation in CoP-13, Cancun, Mexico

In the last few decades globally, biodiversity has come under increasing pressure on account of factors such as habitat fragmentation, development imperatives and more recently global warming. The global concern about loss of biodiversity found expression in the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) which was adopted at the Rio Earth Summit in 1992.

India, a megadiverse country rich in biodiversity, is recognised as a leader on biodiversity conservation in developing and implementing relevant legal and policy regimes. These *inter alia* include the Biological Diversity Act 2002, enacted in pursuance to the Convention on Biodiversity (CBD) and its Protocols on Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit Sharing and Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, to which India is a Party.

Having hosted CoP-11 to the CBD in Hyderabad in October 2012, India was the President of CoP for the two-year biennium from October 2012-October 2014.

India has developed 12 national biodiversity targets in line with the 20 global Aichi targets, and updated its national biodiversity action plan by integrating these national targets. India is also one of the few countries that have undertaken an assessment of funding for biodiversity conservation in India.

Being a party in the CBD, India has actively participated thirteenth Conference of the Parties (CoP-13) to the CBD, Eighth Conference of the Parties to the CBD serving as Meeting of the Parties (CoP-MoP 8) to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (CPB), and Second CoP-MoP to Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit Sharing (ABS) held from 2-17 December, 2016 in Cancun, Mexico. The Indian delegation was led by Dr Amita Prasad, Additional Secretary, MoEFCC with 6 other delegates.

More than 8,000 delegates from 174 countries, UN agencies, intergovernmental, non-governmental, indigenous and local community organizations, academia and the private sector participated in CoP-13 at Cancun, Mexico city.

CoP 13 further considered a series of substantive, organizational and financial issues, and adopted 37 decisions. Among other items, it reviewed progress towards implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and the achievement of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, and related means of implementation; and considered strategic actions to enhance implementation of the Strategic Plan and achievement of the Aichi Targets, including with respect to mainstreaming and the integration of biodiversity within and across sectors.

CoP-MoP 8 adopted 19 decisions. It considered the report of the Compliance Committee; reviewed the Framework and Action Plan for Capacity Building; provided guidance on the operation and activities of the Biosafety Clearing-House; and addressed issues on risk assessment and risk management, including a coordinated approach on the issue of synthetic biology, and socio-economic considerations, among other items.

CoP-MoP 2 reviewed progress towards Aichi Target 16 on the Nagoya Protocol, and adopted 14 decisions on, among other issues, on the need for and modalities of a global multilateral benefit-sharing mechanism, and the Access and Benefit-sharing (ABS) Clearing-House.

The main outcomes of CoP-13 to the CBD are mainstreaming biodiversity into other sectors, synthetic biology, Article 8j and ecologically or biologically significant marine areas (EBSAs) and implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and the achievement of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, and related means of implementation.

India's position in different agenda items is as follows:

- India welcomed the adoption of Strategic Plan and Aichi Biodiversity Targets through decisions to mainstream biodiversity into productive sectors, including agriculture, fisheries, tourism and forests, and promote integration of the Convention and its Protocols through the organization of concurrent meetings.
- Unintentional transboundary movements and emergency measures, India has disagreed the definitions of "unintentional" and "illegal" transboundary movement.
- Regarding Ecologically Biologically Significant Marine Areas (EBSAs), India has not supported inclusion of any site within its EEZ.
- On Resource mobilization and financial mechanism, India asked for a more flexible timeframe for parties to submit national financial plans.
- In communications strategy, India proposed adding that women are key stakeholders in both conservation and sustainable use of natural resources and special focus should be made in mainstreaming gender in all engagements and all delegates has been accepted and its reflected in L documents.
- In Capacity Building: Framework and Action Plan for Capacity Building, India, expressed concern regarding lack of financial resources for effective implementation and called for additional support.





Indian delegations at CoP-13 to the CBD

High Level Segment

A high level ministerial segment of the thirteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, and of the meetings of the Conference of the Parties to the Nagoya and Cartagena Protocols, together known as the United Nations Biodiversity Conference, Cancun, Mexico, 2016, was held in Cancun, Mexico, on 2 and 3 December 2016.

The high level segment, with the theme of “Mainstreaming Biodiversity for Well-Being”, was attended by 382 participants, including 50 government ministers, 40 vice-ministers, 42 heads of delegations, and 250 representatives of national and international organizations, including heads of international organizations.

The high-level segment focused on four sectors which have major implications for biodiversity: food and agriculture, tourism, fisheries and aquaculture, and forests. In addition to ministers of environment, the high-level segment included a significant number of ministers and other high-level representatives of these four sectors. The high-level segment also considered the linkages between action on biodiversity and climate change, as well as the importance of biodiversity to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The high-level segment was opened and chaired by His Excellency Rafael Pacchiano Alamán, Minister of Environment and Natural Resources of Mexico, who made an opening statement.

Dr Amita Prasad, Additional Secretary and Head of Indian delegation alongwith Shri D.K. Sinha IGF (FC) participated in the High Level Segment (HLS) and made a statement on India’s stand on Biodiversity in Forestry and Tourism.

Side events

India organized 12 side events during CoP-13 which has received appreciation and accolades from all participants, is a matter of national pride for all of us. This was the result of painstaking efforts and meticulous planning by MoEFCC.

Theme of the side event was “Mainstreaming Biodiversity for Human Well-being” and the celebration of the United Nations Decade on Biodiversity. The purpose of the side events is to showcase work undertaken and sharing experiences and contributions to the implementation of the Convention.

Apart from Biodiversity, two side events were held on Capacity Building on Biosafety which was appreciated by many participants.

Shri Jogu Ramanna, Minister, Environment, Forest, Science & Technology, State of Telangana, Dr Braulio, Executive Secretary, CBD, Representative from UNEP, Directors of Zoological Survey of India, GB Pant Institute, Wildlife Institute of India and other participants from National Biodiversity Authority have participated in the side events.



Side event on strengthening Biosafety Management System in India: Sharing of Indian Experience



Side event on Himalayan biodiversity and Climate Change



Side event on showcasing innovative approaches for ensuring effectiveness and sustainability of capacity development measures for coastal and marine biodiversity conservation in India