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Sixth National Report to the Convention of Biological Diversity

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India submitted its **sixth national report (NR6)** to the **Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)** during the inaugural session of the meeting of the State Biodiversity Boards (SBBs) organized by the **National Biodiversity Authority (NBA)**.

- The **NR6** highlights the progress India has made in achieving the **12 National Biodiversity Targets (NBT)** set under the convention process.
- With this India is among the **first five countries** in the world, the first in Asia and the first among the biodiversity-rich mega diverse nations, to have submitted Sixth National Report (NR6) to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD).
- The submission of national reports is a **mandatory obligation** on parties to international treaties, including the CBD.
- India developed **12 National Biodiversity Targets** in line with **20 global Aichi biodiversity targets**.

Highlights of Report

- India is one of the few countries where **forest cover is on the rise**, according to the **15th India State of Forest Report (ISFR) 2017**.
- While India has **exceeded/overachieved two NBTs**, it is on track to achieve eight NBTs and in respect of the remaining two NBTs also, India is striving to meet the targets by the stipulated time of 2020.
 - More than 20% of India's total geographical area is under biodiversity conservation, India has exceeded the terrestrial component of 17% of **Aichi target 11**.
 - India published the first **internationally recognized certificate of compliance (IRCC)** under the Protocol in 2015, and since then published nearly 75% of the IRCCs. Thereby, achieving target relating to access and benefit sharing (ABS) by operationalising the Nagoya Protocol on ABS.

- The **population of Lion** has **risen** to over 520 in 2015, and elephants to 30,000 in 2015.
- **One-horned Indian Rhino** which was on the brink of extinction during the early 20th century, now number 2400.
- Further, while globally over 0.3 % of total recorded species are critically endangered, **in India only 0.08% of the species** recorded are in this category.
- Measures have been adopted for **sustainable management** of agriculture, fisheries and forests, with a view to provide food and nutritional security to all without destroying the natural resource base while ensuring intergenerational environmental equity.
- Programmes are in place to **maintain genetic diversity** of cultivated plants, farms livestock and their wild relatives, towards minimising genetic erosion and safeguarding their genetic diversity.
- Mechanisms and enabling environment are being created for recognising and protecting the vast heritage of coded and oral **traditional knowledge** relating to biodiversity.

Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)

- The **Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)**, a **legally binding treaty** to conserve biodiversity has been in force **since 1993**. It has **3 main objectives**:
 - The **conservation** of biological diversity.
 - The **sustainable use** of the components of biological diversity.
 - The **fair and equitable sharing** of the benefits arising out of the utilization of genetic resources.
- Nearly all countries have ratified it (notably, the US has signed but not ratified).
- The CBD Secretariat is based in **Montreal, Canada** and it operates under the **United Nations Environment Programme**.
- The Parties (Countries) under Convention of Biodiversity (CBD), meet at regular interval and these meetings are **called Conference of Parties (COP)**.
- On 29 January 2000, the Conference of the Parties to the **Convention on Biological Diversity (COP5)** adopted a supplementary agreement to the Convention known as the **Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety**. It came into force on 11 September 2003.

The Protocol seeks to **protect biological diversity** from the potential risks posed by living modified organisms resulting from **modern biotechnology**.

- 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 was adopted on **29 October 2010 in Nagoya, Japan at COP10**. It entered into force on 12 October 2014.
 - It provides a transparent legal framework for the effective implementation of one of the three objectives of the CBD: **the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising out of the utilization of genetic resources**.
 - It not only applies to genetic resources that are covered by the CBD, and to the benefits arising from their utilization **but also covers traditional knowledge (TK)** associated with genetic resources that are covered by the CBD and the benefits arising from its utilization.
- Along with Nagoya Protocol on Genetic Resources, the COP-10 **also adopted a ten-year framework** for action by all countries to save biodiversity.
- Officially known as **“Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020”**, provide a set of **20 ambitious yet achievable targets (divided into 5 sections: A to E), collectively known as the Aichi Targets for biodiversity**.
- The Aichi Biodiversity Targets are:
 - **Strategic Goal A:** Address the underlying causes of biodiversity loss by mainstreaming biodiversity across government and society
 - **Strategic Goal B:** Reduce the direct pressures on biodiversity and promote sustainable use.
 - **Strategic Goal C:** To improve the status of biodiversity by safeguarding ecosystems, species and genetic diversity
 - **Strategic Goal D:** Enhance the benefits to all from biodiversity and ecosystem services
 - **Strategic Goal E:** Enhance implementation through participatory planning, knowledge management and capacity building.
- India enacted **Biological Diversity Act in 2002** for giving effect to the provisions of the CBD.
- The National Biodiversity Authority is a **statutory body**, which was established by the Central Government in 2003 to implement India’s Biological Diversity Act (2002).
 - It performs facilitative, regulatory and advisory functions for the Government of India on issues of conservation, sustainable use of biological resources and fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising out of the use of biological resources.
 - The NBA is headquartered in **Chennai, Tamil Nadu**.
- **International Biological Diversity Day is observed on 22 May**. Theme for 2018: **“Celebrating 25 Years of Action for Biodiversity”**.
- United Nations General Assembly had declared the period 2011-2020 to be the **“United Nations Decade on Biodiversity”**.