

Outcomes of COP15 of Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)

December 21, 2022

In news— COP15 of CBD was culminated recently with a global deal to protect the ecosystems that prop up half the world economy, and prevent the further loss of already ravaged plant and animal populations.

Some of the key areas agreed on after two weeks of negotiations-

Conservation, protection and restoration(30×30 target)-

- Delegates committed to **protecting 30% of land and 30% of coastal and marine areas by 2030**, fulfilling the **deal's highest-profile goal**, known as **30-by-30**.
- **Indigenous and traditional territories will also count toward this goal**, as many countries and campaigners pushed for during the talks.
- The deal also **aspires to restore 30% of degraded lands and waters throughout the decade**, up from an earlier aim of 20%.
- And the world will strive to prevent destroying intact landscapes and areas with a lot of species, bringing those losses close to zero by 2030.

Money for nature-

- Signatories aim to **ensure \$200 billion per year is channelled to conservation initiatives**, from public and private sources.
- Wealthier countries should contribute at least \$20 billion of this every year by 2025, and at least \$30 billion a year by 2030.

Big companies report impacts on biodiversity-

- Companies should analyse and report how their operations affect and are affected by biodiversity issues.
- The parties agreed to large companies and financial institutions being subject to “requirements” to make disclosures regarding their operations, supply chains and portfolios.
- **This reporting is intended to progressively promote biodiversity, reduce the risks posed to business by the natural world**, and encourage sustainable production.

Harmful subsidies-

- Countries committed to **identify subsidies that deplete biodiversity by 2025**, and then eliminate, phase out or reform them.
- They agreed to **slash those incentives by at least \$500 billion a year by 2030**, and increase incentives that are positive for conservation.

Pollution and pesticides-

- One of the deal’s more controversial targets sought **to reduce the use of pesticides by up to two-thirds**.
- But the final language to emerge focuses on the risks associated with pesticides and highly hazardous chemicals instead, pledging to reduce those threats by “at least half”, and instead focusing on other forms of pest management.
- Overall, the **Kunming-Montreal agreement will focus on reducing the negative impacts of pollution to levels** that are not considered harmful to nature, but the text provides no quantifiable target here.

Monitoring and reporting progress-

- All the agreed aims will be supported by processes to monitor progress in the future, in a bid to prevent this agreement meeting the same fate as similar targets that were agreed in Aichi, Japan, in 2010, and never met.

- **National action plans will be set and reviewed**, following a similar format used for greenhouse gas emissions under U.N.-led efforts to curb climate change.

Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF)-

- The Montreal Conference has delivered a new agreement called the Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF), which contains four goals and 23 targets that need to be achieved by 2030.
- The GBF is being compared to the 2015 Paris Agreement on climate change that is guiding global climate action.

Note:

- In 2010, at COP10 in Nagoya, Japan, countries had agreed to a Strategic Plan for Biodiversity containing 20 targets.
- These used to be called the Aichi targets – Aichi is the region in which Nagoya city is located. A recent report showed that none of these targets were achieved at the end of the decade.
- The GBF is to the 2020-30 decade what the Aichi targets were for the previous one.

CBD, CCD & UNFCCC-

- The comparison of the biodiversity meetings with the climate conferences is not incidental. The two are in fact closely related.
- The UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the CBD were both outcomes of the 1992 Rio Earth Summit – as was the third member of the family, the **Convention to Combat Desertification (CCD)**, which deals specifically with the issue of land degradation.
- **The CBD came into force in 1993**; the other two in the following year.
- The three environmental conventions seek to address the issues that overlap among them.

- The CBD is not just about conservation and restoration of ecosystems. It is also about sustainable use of natural resources, and equitable sharing of benefits from the use of these resources.
- **The CBD has given rise to two 'supplementary' agreements – the Cartagena Protocol of 2003 and the Nagoya Protocol of 2014.** Both agreements take their names from the places where they were negotiated.
- **The Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety** seeks to protect biodiversity from genetically modified organisms by ensuring their safe handling, transport and use. Genetically modified crops, for example, can interfere with natural ecosystems in ways that might not yet be fully understood. That is the reason why GM crops are cultivated on segregated farms.
- **The Nagoya Protocol** on Access and Benefit Sharing deals with the commercial utilisation of biological and genetic resources, for example, by pharma companies. It asks the host countries to provide access to its genetic resources in a legal, fair and non-arbitrary manner and, as mentioned above, offers them a fair and equitable share of benefits arising out of the utilisation of those resources