

Sansad TV Perspective: Historic Biodiversity Deal

In the series Sansad TV Perspective, we bring you an analysis of the discussion featured on the insightful programme 'Perspective' on Sansad TV, on various important topics affecting India and also the world. This analysis will help you immensely for the [IAS exam](#), especially the mains exam, where a well-rounded understanding of topics is a prerequisite for writing answers that fetch good marks.

In this article, we feature the discussion on the topic: **Historic Biodiversity Deal**.

Context: The 15th Conference of Parties 15 (COP 15) of the UNCBD was recently concluded in Montreal and it aims at conserving biodiversity.

Details:

What is the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)?

- CBD is a legal agreement which was established with the aim to:
 - Conserve biological diversity
 - Sustainable use of its components and the fair and
 - Equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the utilisation of genetic resources
- The Convention on Biological Diversity covers biodiversity at all levels:
 - Ecosystems
 - Species and
 - Genetic resources
- It also covers **biotechnology, including through the [Cartagena Protocol](#) on Biosafety**.
- Conference of the Parties (COP) is the chief governing body of the CBD.

What is the Conference of Party 15 (COP 15)?

- The Montreal meeting was the 15th edition of this conference, therefore it is named COP15 or the 15th Conference of the Parties to the CBD.
- Signatories to the **Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)**, meet every two years, **not annually like the climate meetings**.
- The **UN Framework Convention on Climate Change ([UNFCCC](#))** and the **Convention on Biological Diversity CBD** were both outcomes of the **1992 Rio Earth Summit**.

Mandate of Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)

- The mandate of CBD is not confined only to the conservation of genetic resources; rather, it encompasses the **sustainable use of natural resources, and equitable sharing of benefits from the use of these resources**.

- **For example**, if a European pharmaceutical company wants to utilise the medicinal properties of plants grown in Tamil Nadu, the benefits of such use, monetary, must be distributed among all stakeholders, including the indigenous populations.
- The CBD is enforced with the help of two ‘supplementary’ agreements:
 - **The Cartagena Protocol of 2003:** The Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety seeks to protect biodiversity from genetically modified organisms by ensuring their safe handling, transport and use.
 - **The Nagoya Protocol of 2014:** The [Nagoya Protocol](#) on Access and Benefit Sharing deals with the commercial utilisation of biological and genetic resources

Outcomes of the COP 15 CBD:

- It chalked a new agreement called the **Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF)**, containing **four goals and 23 targets that need to be achieved by 2030**. It was popularly referred to as the **'30*30' targets**.
 - The GBF is **being compared to the 2015 [Paris Agreement](#) on climate change** that is guiding global climate action. But the GBF will direct the efforts of humanity in the field of biodiversity protection.
- 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**.
- The 30×30 target comes out with a commitment to **protect at least 30 percent of the world's lands, oceans and coastal areas by 2030**.
- The overall objective is to ensure that all natural ecosystems are either maintained, enhanced or restored “substantially” with an aim of creating additional areas of natural ecosystems by 2050.
- Another objective of this CBD is to **reduce species extinction by at least ten-fold**. Currently, the rate of extinction is estimated to be tens to hundreds of times higher.
 - A recent report said that about **1 million species face extinction** if urgent action is not taken.
- It also came out with a target of **cutting down global food wastage by half, and reducing the risk of pesticides and other chemicals by half**.

Evaluation of the outcome:

- This conference is seen as a **reiteration of the previous targets without any concrete and defined objective**. The latest exercise is just a replacement of similar targets that were meant to be achieved in the 2010-2020 decade.
- Additionally, **no measures are mentioned to penalise the countries** if they fail to achieve these climate targets.

- Responsibilities were placed upon the developed countries to provide the funds for conservation. In the past, we have seen that **developed countries have failed to provide funds for climate change. So this seems very unlikely too this time.**
- **There is a lack of deadlines fixed for the countries to come out with their proposal to reduce the impact of their activities on biodiversity.**

Conclusion: The objective of the COP can be achieved with **dedicated efforts of the countries** and for this, they need to **develop an attitude of “Environmental ethics” in their policies.**