



BANGLADESH NATIONAL CONSERVATION STRATEGY



ENVIRONMENTAL OBLIGATIONS

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1.1. GENERAL

Since the 1970s rapid depletion and degradation of environmental resources, particularly of renewable resources, have become evident in many parts of the world. The degradation was evident more in the developing countries because of their increasing use of natural resources for economic growth. Also increased pollution of different types straddling borders of countries gave rise to global commons problems. To combat this downward trend in green and brown issues, the global community started organizing summit meetings/conferences, beginning with 1972 in Stockholm. Since then many international conventions, protocols and agreements have been adopted. These agreements aim at global natural resource conservation as well as combating pollution of different types. Bangladesh has become party to many of these multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs). Becoming a Party to any MEAs brings in both opportunities and responsibilities in terms of financial and technology support and capacity building, and compliance with the agreement provisions through actions at the domestic level. In this context, new domestic legislations may need to be initiated and updated/ revised.

The earlier version of the Bangladesh Conservation Status (BCS) was drafted in the early 2000s. Since more than a decade has elapsed and many new developments have taken place with the MEAs, it is time to update the latest developments with the MEAs. This updating obviously will indicate what Bangladesh has done so far to comply with and needs to do in future and what gains she has derived from these developments. Since conservation of resources and pollution management are a relatively new area of concern in most of the developing countries, there is lot to learn from the MEAs and practices in other countries.

This chapter is cross-cutting, since it involves both brown and green issue in light of international experiences. Also as an LDC, Bangladesh can gain from the provisions of international support in finance, technology and capacity building for promotion of conservation nationally and internationally.

This chapter has been developed keeping as background the SDG goals in general many of which as sub-goals promote sustainable use and conservation of natural resources. However, SDG goals of 13, 14 and 15 talk respectively of combating climate change; conservation and sustainable use of ocean, sea and marine resources; and protection and promotion of terrestrial ecosystems, forests & taking care of REDD+ issues. As means of implementation, Goal 17 reads as: "Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development." Thus, the Goal 17 covers means of implementation of all the MEAs that are relevant and important for Bangladesh. Such means include Finance, Technology, Capacity Building and Trade. It also includes systemic

Issues, such as policy and institutional coherence, multi-stakeholder partnerships, and data, monitoring and accountability systems.

1.2 METHODOLOGY

There are several hundred MEAs by now, but this chapter covers the MEAs that are of prime importance to Bangladesh and for conservation of environmental resources. So the updating is based on content analysis of documents, both national and international. The primary materials consulted are the MEAs and their latest developments. In light of this, the space for opportunities and obligations has been brought out. The drafts have been discussed first among the team members assigned for updating the document and then with a wider audience of stakeholders. Finally, the comments received in these consultations led by the team leader have been incorporated for finalization of the chapter.



This section is a brief overview of the main MEAs related to conservation of nature and natural resources since the 1970s, and their latest developments:

2.1 RAMSAR CONVENTION ON WETLANDS 1971

Ramsar is the oldest of the modern global intergovernmental environmental agreements. It was adopted in the Iranian city of Ramsar in 1971 and came into force in 1975. As is known, wetlands are important habitats of flora and fauna, regulators of water regimes and important sink of carbon dioxide, the main greenhouse gas, causing global warming.

Objective: The treaty was negotiated through the 1960s by countries and NGOs concerned about the increasing loss and degradation of wetland habitat for migratory water birds. The Convention's mission is "the conservation and wise use of all wetlands through local and national actions and international cooperation, as a contribution towards achieving sustainable development throughout the world"


Main Provisions: The main provision of Ramsar is that each Party should designate wetlands for inclusion in a List of Wetlands of International Importance (Articles 2.1 & 2.2) and that Parties should conserve these wetlands (Articles 3 & 4.1). They should also include wetland conservation considerations in their land use planning so as to promote their wise use. The Convention also promotes education and training for the purpose.

Developments: There have been 12 Conference of Parties (COP) since the Convention's entry into force: Beginning with COP1 in Cagliari, Italy (November 1980), COP12 was held in Punta del Este, Uruguay, from 01 to 09 June 2015. The theme of the conference was Wetlands for our Future. COP12 adopted 16 resolutions by consensus, including the Strategic Plan 2016-2024, a new framework for the delivery of scientific and technical advice and guidance on the Convention, peat lands, disaster risk reduction, etc. In the face of dramatic loss and degradation of wetlands, and notwithstanding organizational difficulties, the meeting adopted the Strategic Plan in charting the way for the Convention and to link up to other international processes, as well as guide work on the ground.

2.2 CONVENTION ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE IN ENDANGERED SPECIES OF WILD FAUNA AND FLORA (CITES)

CITES was signed by representatives from 80 countries in Washington, DC, on 03 March 1973, and entered into force on 1 July 1975.

Objective: CITES was established as a response to growing concerns that over-exploitation of wildlife through international trade was contributing to the rapid decline of many species of plants and animals around the world. The operational bodies of CITES include the



Standing Committee (SC) and two scientific committees: the Plants Committee (PC) and the Animals Committee (AC).

Mode of Operation: Species are categorized in the three Appendices to the Convention according to the level of protection needed and thus, indicating the extent of regulation to be exercised. Appendices are periodically updated. Appendix I lists all species that are threatened with extinction and in which international trade is banned. Appendix II lists species which are currently not threatened with extinction but may become so unless restrictions are applied. Trade in such species is to be regulated and monitored. Finally, Appendix III lists those native species which can be traded and any Party wishes to protect from overexploitation and in which it seeks the assistance of other Parties.

The twenty-second meeting of the Plants Committee (PC22) of the CITES convened from 19-23 October 2015 in Tbilisi, Georgia. Participants acted in a cooperative spirit throughout the week to get through the heavy agenda. The recommendations agreed on at PC22 has been forwarded for discussion at the 66th meeting of the Standing Committee (SC), prior to CoP17, which will convene in Johannesburg, South Africa, in September 2016.


The twenty-eighth meeting of the Animals Committee (AC28) of the CITES convened from 30 August - 3 September 2015 in Tel Aviv, Israel. This was the first meeting that the European Union (EU) attended as a full member, the first regional economic integration organization to join CITES.

2.3 CONVENTION ON THE CONSERVATION OF MIGRATORY SPECIES OF WILD ANIMALS 1979

Migratory species are vulnerable to a wide range of threats, including habitat shrinkage in breeding areas, excessive hunting along migration routes and degradation of their feeding grounds. As a result of international concern over these threats, Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species (CMS) was adopted in 1979 and entered into force on 1 November 1983.

Objective: CMS overlaps with both CITES and the Ramsar Convention regarding endangered species. The Convention was designed to allow for expansion and revision of commitments and to provide a framework through which parties may act to conserve migratory species and their habitat by: adopting strict protection measures for migratory species that have been characterized as being in danger of extinction throughout all or a significant portion of their ranges.

COP11 of the CMS met from 4-9 November 2014, in Quito, Ecuador. COP11 adopted 35 resolutions, including on: the Asiatic lion that, inter alia, will work towards a proposal to be presented at COP12; the Strategic Plan for Migratory Species 2015-2023; the Program of Work on Climate Change and Migratory Species; the Central Asian Mammals Initiative; renewable energy and migratory species; enhancing the relationship between the CMS family and civil society; the Action Plan for Migratory Land birds in the African-Eurasian Region; management of marine debris; the Single Species Action Plan for the Loggerhead Turtle in the South Pacific Ocean; fighting wildlife crime and offenses within and beyond borders; and enhancing synergies and common services among CMS family of instruments.



After considering proposals submitted by parties to amend the appendices of the Convention, the COP decided to list 31 new species. COP12 will be held in 2017, in the Philippines.

2.4 REGIONAL SEAS PROGRAMME UNDER THE UNEP

Objective: The UN Environment Programme (UNEP) launched its Regional Seas Programme (RSP) in 1974. The Regional Seas Programme addresses the accelerating degradation of the world's seas and coastal areas and promotes the sustainable management and use of the marine and coastal environment by engaging countries to implement specific actions to protect their shared marine resources.

Basic Components & Coverage: The Programme consists of five basic components: environmental assessment, environmental management, institutional arrangements, financial arrangement and regional legal instruments. The RSP extends to about 15 regional areas including South Asia. Of these, 10 regions have their own Action Plans. The UNEP RSP now comprises of over 30 Framework Conventions and Protocols, and others are under negotiation.

16th Global Meeting of the Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans (RSCAPs) took place in Athens, Greece, from 29 September to 1 October 2014. The objectives of the meeting were to: discuss the role of the RSCAPs in the process of developing a sustainable development goals (SDG) on oceans within the post-2015 development agenda; present progress in the implementation of the Regional Seas Strategic Directions 2013-2016; discuss the Global Partnership on Marine Litter (GPML) and regional actions on marine litter; and discuss the development of a roadmap for implementing the visioning priorities for the next 10 years. UNEP launched the report "The Importance of Mangroves: A Call to Action" at a press conference on the 40th Anniversary of the Regional Seas Program. In fact, the RSP contributed to the formulation and adoption of the SDG # 14, which reads: "Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and the marine resources for sustainable development."

2.5 CONVENTION ON LAW OF THE SEA III (UNCLOS III, 1982)

UNCLOS III opened for signature on 10 December 1982, in Montego Bay, Jamaica, at the Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea. UNCLOS, which entered into force on 16 November 1994, comprises 320 articles and nine annexes. It provides for a mechanism for the settlement of disputes, and is supplemented by the 1994 Deep Seabed Mining Agreement, and the 1995 Fish Stocks Agreement. Since the entry into force of UNCLOS, three relevant international bodies have been established, namely the International Seabed Authority (ISA), the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (ITLOS), and the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf (CLCS).

Objective & Areas covered: The UNCLOS sets forth the rights and obligations of States regarding the use of the oceans, their resources, and the protection of the marine and coastal environment. In order to establish an ocean order and protect marine resources,

negotiations on the framework of the UNCLOS-III continued since 1973 till the text was settled at the last session in New York in March/April 1982.

The Convention covers such matters as the Areas of National Jurisdiction, including the Territorial Sea, the Contiguous Zone, the Exclusive Economic Zone, the Continental Shelf (CS), Archipelago States, Transit Passage through Straits, the Marine Environment, Marine Scientific Research, Regional Cooperation, the Regime for Deep Sea Mining, and the legal concept of the Common Heritage of Mankind to name only a few. The Convention also contains elaborate and multifarious provisions for the settlement of disputes. Probably no international multilateral instrument in history has covered such a wide range of topics in such detail and depth.

Marine Environment: Chapter XII of the Convention deals with 'Protection and Preservation of the Marine Environment.' The provisions require states to pursue two main environmental objectives: to prevent, reduce and control marine pollution, and to conserve and manage marine living resources. For both objectives, UNCLOS establishes rules on information, scientific research, monitoring, environmental assessment, enforcement (Chap. 5) and liability (Chap. 17). Drawing upon the language of Principle 21 of the 1972 Stockholm Declaration, UNCLOS declares that 'states have the sovereign right to exploit their natural resources pursuant to their environmental policies and in accordance with their duty to protect and preserve the marine environment' (Art 193).

Stake of Bangladesh: Bangladesh has been included in the World Wildlife Fund's list of the top 20 fishing nations that account for about 80% of the world's marine fish catch. India is the other South Asian country to make the list. Therefore, there is great potential for exploitation of fish resources, individually or jointly with other nations on a collaborative basis. Besides, Continental Shelf of Bangladesh is believed to possess petroleum and gas. Other economically important non-living resources are beach sand minerals, marine chemicals, sea minerals, polymetallic nodules and other resources. Till to date, limited exploration activities of offshore hydrocarbons and beach sand minerals have been initiated at the Bay of Bengal. With delineation of the CS and EEZ with Myanmar and India in recent years, exploration of marine resources can be intensified.

2.6 UN FRAMEWORK CONVENTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE (UNFCCC)

The international political response to climate change began with the 1992 adoption of the UNFCCC. The Convention, which entered into force on 21 March 1994, has 196 parties. In December 1997, delegates to COP 3 in Kyoto, Japan, agreed to a protocol to the UNFCCC that committed industrialized countries and countries in transition to a market economy to achieve emissions reduction targets. These countries, known as Annex I Parties under the UNFCCC, agreed to reduce their overall emissions of six GHGs by an average of 5% below 1990 levels in 2008-2012 (the first commitment period), with specific targets varying from country to country. The Kyoto Protocol entered into force on 16 February 2005 and now has 192 parties.

Objective: UNFCCC sets out a legal framework for stabilizing atmospheric concentrations of greenhouse gases (GHGs) to avoid "dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system" (Article 2). Together with mitigation, adaptation and loss & damage as well

have been adopted as policy planks to address climate change and its impacts. Because of her disadvantaged geographical location Bangladesh is regarded as one of the most vulnerable countries in the world.

Negotiation Outcomes: Important COP meetings were COP7 in Marrakesh in 2001, where the Marrakesh Accords establishing three funds, with a LDC Work Program were adopted; COP13 in Bali, Indonesia in 2007 adopted the Bali Action Plan, COP15 in Copenhagen in 2009 attended by over 120 world leaders ended in total failure, with the 3-page 'Copenhagen Accord' just taken note of; COP17 in Durban, South Africa in 2011, adopted the Durban Platform for working out a universal agreement by 2015 applicable to all UNFCCC Parties.


Finally the COP21 in Paris in December 2015 adopted the Paris Agreement, with a 140-para decision text. The outcome of the COP 21 is an important step in the evolution of climate governance and a reaffirmation of environmental multilateralism. At COP 21, 195 countries gathered to complete the task set in Durban in 2011, to complete a "protocol, another legal instrument or an agreed outcome with legal force under the Convention applicable to all parties." However, the PA can be regarded as the beginning of a process of ratcheting up ambition of GHG emissions reduction in the next few years, which is to come into force by 2020. Indications are there that it may come into force by end of 2016. Once the PA comes into force, the Kyoto Protocol will face its natural death, which in its life-time never could be an effective agreement, because of non-participation by the US and walk-out later by some other industrial countries. COP22 will take place during 7-18 November 2016 in Marrakesh, Morocco to begin the process of fleshing out the PA.

2.7 CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY 1992

The CBD was adopted on 22 May 1992 and entered into force on 29 December 1993.

Objective: There are currently 193 parties to the Convention, which aims to promote the conservation of biodiversity, the sustainable use of its components, and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the use of genetic resources. It's a framework convention, meaning that the Contracting Parties may decide how they would implement the provisions of the CBD. The convention includes the objectives, tools of conservation, organizational structure, financial assistance etc. Of the tools of conservation, in-situ, rather than ex-situ, conservation has been given more importance to conserve biodiversity.

Negotiation Outcomes: CBD COP12 was held from 6-17 October 2014, in Pyeongchang, Republic of Korea. COP1 serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization (NP COP/MOP 1) was held during the second week of COP 12, from 13-17 October 2014. A High-Level Segment (HLS) was held from 15-17 October 2014, under the theme "Biodiversity for Sustainable Development." COP12 adopted 33 decisions on a series of strategic, substantive, administrative and budgetary issues. Among other items, the meeting conducted a mid-term review of progress of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011- 2020. Other highlights from COP 12 include: the launch of the fourth edition of the Global Biodiversity Outlook (GBO-4); deliberations on restructuring the Convention processes, including a decision on organization of concurrent meetings of the Convention



and its Protocols; the High Level Segment on “Biodiversity for Sustainable Development,” which culminated in the adoption of the Gangwon Declaration; and agreement on the Pyeongchang Roadmap, containing five decisions on: mid-term review of progress of the 2011- 2020 Strategic Plan for Biodiversity, and the Aichi targets; biodiversity and sustainable development; review of progress in providing support in implementing the objectives of the Convention; cooperation with other conventions; and a strategy for resource mobilization. Delegates agreed to convene future meetings of the COP and COP/MOPs of both the Nagoya Protocol and the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety concurrently, beginning with the next meeting of the COP in Mexico in 2016.

It may be mentioned that the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (CPB) adopted under the CBD in 2000 aims to ensure an adequate protection for the safe transfer, handling and use of living modified organisms (LMOs), also known as genetically modified organisms (GMOs), resulting from modern biotechnology. Its focus is on the export and import of LMOs/GMOs that may have adverse effects on the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, including risks to human health. The Protocol establishes an advance informed agreement (AIA) procedure to ensure that countries are provided with the information necessary to make informed decisions before agreeing to the import of LMOs into their territory.

Concurrently with COP12, the CMP7 of the CPB to the CBD was held from 29 September to 3 October 2014 in Pyeongchang, Republic of Korea. The meeting’s decisions on risk assessment and socioeconomic considerations, in particular, provided a mandate to advance work on important elements of the Protocol in future sessions.

2.8 UN CONVENTION TO COMBAT DESERTIFICATION (UNCCD 1992)

The UNCCD was adopted on 17 June 1994, entered into force on 26 December 1996.

Objective: The UNCCD is the centerpiece in the international community’s efforts to combat desertification and land degradation in the drylands (DLDD). The UNCCD recognizes the physical, biological and socio-economic aspects of desertification, the importance of redirecting technology transfer to be demand driven, and the importance of involving local communities in combating DLDD. The core of the UNCCD is the development of national, subregional and regional action programmes by national governments, in cooperation with UN agencies, donors, local communities and non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

Mode of Functioning: This is the only MEA to have a well-developed regional dimension. All countries are grouped into 5 Annexes, with Asia in Annex II. Affected Parties are required primarily to strengthen their legal framework, develop and implement Strategies and National Action Programs to combat desertification and mitigate the effects of drought, promote awareness and facilitate broad local participation, and give due priority to combating desertification including in the allocation of resources.

The UNCCD COP12 convened in Ankara, Turkey, from 12-23 October 2015. The meeting adopted 35 decisions related to DLDD, including how to pursue the target to achieve land degradation neutrality (LDN) and how to align the UNCCD’s goals and parties’ actions with the recently adopted SDGs. The UNCCD’s two subsidiary bodies, the Committee on Science and Technology (CST) and the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the

Convention (CRIC), also convened in parallel to the COP. The CST developed six decisions for COP consideration, regarding the outcomes of the UNCCD 3rd Scientific Conference, improving the efficiency of the CST, improving knowledge dissemination, and the work programme of the Science-Policy Interface (SPI), among other issues. The CRIC developed eight decisions for COP consideration, regarding, inter alia: collaboration with the Global Environment Facility (GEF); establishment of national level voluntary LDN targets within National Action Programmes (NAPs) and national reports, including funding to support national target-setting towards achieving LDN; actions to achieve the 10-year strategic plan and framework to enhance the implementation of the Convention (2008-2018) (the Strategy); procedures for communication of information to be submitted to the COP, including on progress indicators for trends in land cover, land productivity, and carbon stocks; and a results framework against which the CST, CRIC, Global Mechanism (GM) and Secretariat will organize their work for the period 2016-2019. COP 13 is tentatively scheduled to take place in Bonn, Germany, in autumn 2017.


2.9 INTERNATIONAL TREATY ON PLANT GENETIC RESOURCES FOR FOOD & AGRICULTURE (ITPGR 1982)

The ITPGRFA is a legally-binding instrument that targets the conservation and sustainable use of PGRFA and fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of their use, in harmony with the 1992 Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), for sustainable agriculture and food security. The Treaty contains sections on general provisions, farmers' rights, supporting components, and financial and institutional provisions. The Treaty covers 35 food crops and 29 forages. There is provision of international cooperation for strengthening capacities and funding under Article 18. Developed countries shall provide financial assistance to developing countries for implementation of the Treaty.

The sixth session of the Governing Body (GB) of the ITPGRFA convened from 5-9 October 2015, at the headquarters of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the UN, in Rome, Italy. The meeting adopted 13 resolutions on a series of substantive, cooperation-related and administrative items. Deliberations revolved around two main themes: addressing the shortfall in the Benefit-sharing Fund (BSF), through a review of the Funding Strategy, an exploration of short-term measures and a continued inter-sessional effort aiming to enhance user-based payments through a subscription system for access to the MLS; and strengthening implementation of Treaty provisions with regard to conservation and sustainable use of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture (PGRFA) on-farm, through the work programme on sustainable use and farmers' rights. Issues related to the management of PGRFA-related information and data systems, and the Treaty's role in this regard were also among the meeting highlights, as the GB adopted a work programme for the Global Land Information System (GLIS), aiming to respond to challenges ahead. The 7th session of the Governing Body to the ITPGRFA will be held in the second half of 2017.

2.10 TRADE AND ENVIRONMENT (UNDER WTO, LAUNCHED BY UNCTAD, 1996)

International trade, structured on a sound and sustainable basis, itself can provide resources for poverty alleviation and sustainable development. For example, there are a



large number of wildlife species listed in the CITES Appendices, whose products and derivatives have a great potential for sustainable exploitation. The interface between trade and environment policies covers three aspects: a) environmental impact of trade policies, b) potential effects of environmental policies and measures on trade and 3) the use of trade measures to achieve environmental goals.

UNCTAD, the task manager for this issue, has sponsored a number of meetings on trade, environment and sustainable development. The UNCTAD Trade and Development Board met in September 1994 and discussed the effect of environment-based activities on market access. UNCTAD and UNEP co-sponsored, during 21-25 November 1994, a high-level meeting on trade, environment and sustainable development where over thirty experts attended. The GATT/WTO Committee on Trade and Environment also met for three days at the end of November and the UNCTAD *Ad Hoc* Working Group on Trade, Environment and Development met from 28 November - 1 December 1994, in Geneva. Working Group II considered programme element IV, trade and environment relating to forest goods and services, on 11 September. J.E.K. Aggrey-Orleans (ITTO) introduced the Secretary-General's report (E/CN.17/IPF/1996/22). Back in 1996, country delegates considered the UN Secretary-General's report, along with a summary document (E/CN.17/IPF/1996/CRP.2) containing only the conclusions and proposals for action. The report addressed market access and trade barriers to forest products; relative competitiveness of forest products; promotion of less used species; certification and labeling; full cost internalization of environmental impacts; and market transparency.

There are disagreements among parties about trade-environment relationship. The EU emphasized that trade-related mechanisms must be compatible with World Trade Organization (WTO) rules. The G-77/China noted the need to consider both market and non-market values of forest-related goods and services and recommended greater emphasis on the mutually supportive roles of trade and environment.

Biotrade, launched by UNCTAD in 1996, is designed to identify commercial processes that i) benefit the conservation of wildlife, ii) do not result in an unsustainable pressure for survival of species, and iii) generate tangible economic benefits for local communities. The mission of Biotrade is to stimulate trade and investment in biological resources to create economic incentives for sustainable trade.

2.11 ROTTERDAM CONVENTION ON THE PRIOR INFORMED CONSENT (PIC) PROCEDURE FOR CERTAIN HAZARDOUS CHEMICALS AND PESTICIDES IN INTERNATIONAL TRADE, 1998

It aims to promote shared responsibility between exporting and importing countries in the trade of certain hazardous chemicals in order to protect human health and environment from potential dangers resulting from such trade.

The MEAs that are of utmost importance for Bangladesh indicate that a wide range of issues is on the global agenda for implementation at global and national levels, in order to address conservation and sustainable development. Each of these instruments targets a particular set of problems, yet each one also recognizes that activities to address one instrument must take into account other instruments. The ultimate objective of all these MEAs is to achieve sustainable development. The crux of the problem lies in how to effectively implement such a vast agenda geared to a common goal. Before moving to locate the obligations of Bangladesh arising out of being a party to these MEAs, a list of the issues needs to be clarified:

3.1 CONCEPTUAL SHIFT IN CONSERVATION

The practice of conservation has changed tremendously during the last hundred years. The CBD reflects a basic conceptual shift. Conservation in the developing countries, particularly where biotic pressure on natural resources is heavy, must serve people, in terms of the benefits it provides, while ensuring their sustainability. Now many different instruments have been initiated to ensure proper valuation of ecosystem services, such as payment for ecosystem services (PES). Conservation is most successful when there is strong locally-based interests in environmental concerns that are critical to rural livelihoods and urban well-being. An explicit link is established between access to genetic resources and transfer of technologies, considered essential to conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity. Implementing this link is likely to draw a great debate in the years to come.

3.2 SYNERGY AMONG THE MEAS AND THEIR REFLECTION IN THE SDGS

If one carefully reads the SDGs, there are lots of overlapping and related goals and sub-goals that are directly related to conservation. Those goals relate to food security and sustainable agriculture (SDG-2), sustainable management of water (SDG-6), sustainable energy (SDG-7), sustainable cities (SDG-11), sustainable consumption and production (SDG-12), combating climate change (SDG-13), conservation of ocean, sea and marine resources (SDG-14), protection and promotion of terrestrial ecosystems and forests (SDG-15) and good governance (SDG-16). Besides, other SDGs are indirectly related to conservation via elimination of extreme poverty (SDG-1), inclusive quality education and gender equality (SDGs 4&5), inclusive and sustainable economic growth (SDG-8), building resilient infrastructure and sustainable industrialization (SDG-9), and reduction of inequality within and among nations (SDG-10). The final SDG # 17 deals with the means of implementation of all these SDGs.

Obviously, MEAs, though initiated before the adoption of the SDGs, reflect these complementarities, for which a synergistic approach is the most efficient and effective means of implementation at global and national levels. The most important links – elements and processes in common - can be found among the MEAs, such as the UNFCCC, CBD, UNCCD, Forestry Principles and Ramsar Convention. In addition, these issues are linked

very much with global and national development agenda. These links are both straightforward and complex. For example, the linkages between climate change and forests, land and biodiversity are explicit. Widespread deforestation contributes to emission of carbon dioxide and reduces the vegetation cover for storing it. By removing this cover, deforestation reduces water retention capacity of the soil and increases soil erosion. This in turn can lead to changes in temperature and topographic pattern leading to desertification and global warming. Deforestation also affects biodiversity in the ecosystem and in turn affects the livelihoods of local communities. Thus, actions taken to address one element of the above can have many incremental benefits to the other. Though we understand the scientific linkages well, operational linkages at Convention levels are a bit myopic.

Box 1: International Initiatives Seeking Synergies between MEAs


In recent years, the secretariats of the UNFCCC, CBD and UNCCD have made several recommendations, conclusions and decisions to enhance mutual understanding and coordination. In March 2001, the CBD's Scientific Body requested that its Executive Secretary explore the formation of a joint liaison group (JLG) responsible for enhancing coordination between the CBD and the UNFCCC. The establishment of a JLG was endorsed by the Parties to the UNFCCC in July 2001, with subsequent meetings taking place since January 2002. The JLG has established a common web-based calendar of events related to the three conventions, and is exploring the possibility of holding joint workshops on cross-cutting thematic areas and activities.

In addition, the CBD has established the Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group (AHTEG) to prepare scientific advice on the inter-linkage between biological diversity and climate change. The first meeting of the AHTEG took place in January 2002. The CBD is also developing a joint work programme with the UNCCD to examine options for conservation and sustainable use of dry and sub-humid lands.

UNCCD Secretariat examined how it may promote and strengthen its relationship with related conventions, international organizations and other institutions at its COP-5 held in October 2001.

Exploration of synergies is also taking place through a number of other initiatives at the international level. These include an IPCC technical paper on the inter-linkages between climate change, biodiversity and desertification, OECD DAC study on synergies in the national implementation of the Rio agreements, UNEP's work on synergies among the conventions, and the UN University's inter-linkages initiative.

There are links among the MEAs, which are complex in nature. For example, inconsiderate climate change policies can severely affect biodiversity – through creation of plantations as carbon sinks at the cost of wetlands or natural forests. In like manner, hydropower, though does not emit greenhouse gases, may lead to inundation of land and displacement of local communities. This is what happened as a result of the Kaptai Dam in Rangamati. But, conservation (avoided deforestation, degradation and reduced/economized consumption) should get priority, which is a win-win option under all the three Rio conventions. The relatively new instrument of REDD* (reducing emissions from deforestation and



degradation through conservation) reflect this strategy. Besides, there are conflicts in trading with animals and plants and the related genetic resources.

Financial synergy lies in linking the implementation of the activities under the MEAs. For example, Articles 6 and 20 of the UNCCD call for developed country Parties to assist the affected developing country Parties, particularly the LDCs in combating desertification, while Articles 4.3, 4.4, 4.8 and 4.9 of the UNFCCC call to do the same. Financial support for renewable energy technology is a synergetic option, as it cuts greenhouse gas emissions, while easing pressure on land and forests as an alternative to unsustainable biomass fuels. So a coordinated use of economic and financial mechanisms (i.e., subsidies, export credit facilities, trading of environmental goods, import levies, etc.) would have greater effect on both costs and outcomes.


Table-1 shows the linkages and complementarities in national requirements/ obligations to the MEAs. For example, preparation of national and regional Action Plans under different MEAs, public education, research and training, appropriate legislation, public participation in decision-making, and reporting are some of the common requirements under the Rio agreements.

Incidentally, there are barriers to realize synergies both at global and national levels. Many of the institutional weaknesses of environmental governance arise from an administratively compartmentalized approach, but ironically with overlapping mandates of Secretariats and multiple guidelines for activities at the field level. Existence of: a) a large number of state & non-state actors, b) strong interrelationships between environment and development issues, and c) proliferation of organizations, treaty Secretariats and programs compound the problem. The complexity is deepened further by differing governing structures, differences in membership and constituencies and different decision-making processes among the MEAs. Another problem relates to understanding the functional relationship of these processes with those of sustainable development at the national level. Therefore, in recent years, the Secretariats of the UNFCCC, CBD and UNCCD have taken initiatives to enhance mutual understanding and coordination in their activities. A joint liaison group (JLG) has been established to consider cross-cutting areas and activities (Box-1).

At national level, the barriers to achieving synergies are: i) technical – lack of interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary knowledge and understanding of cross-sectoral and cross-scale issues, ii) institutional – inter-departmental conflicts, issues of territoriality, lack of guiding principles and understanding at policy level, and iii) cultural – norms of not overstepping boundaries and lack of insight into working at local levels, and iv) lack of adequate data on conservation-related issues. Therefore, inter-sectoral collaboration, common work plans, joint meetings of scientific bodies and coordinated reporting and shared databases, more involvement of multidisciplinary expertise in MEAs-related policy development are some issues that will demand greater attention from global and national policy-makers.

3.3 RECOGNITION OF INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE AND COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

An innovative element that deserves to be noted is the recognition of the contribution of indigenous peoples and rural masses to the conservation of biological diversity and



sustainable use of its components. Though Article 15 of CBD privileges the role of the State in determining the access to genetic resources, the provision of Article 8(j) is considered a significant step forward. Though the action it contemplates is subject to national legislation, it is the first time that governments are called upon in a binding international instrument to “respect, preserve and maintain” the knowledge of indigenous (IK) communities relevant to biological diversity and to encourage the equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the utilization of such knowledge. The test remains as to how to combine this IK with modern science and ensure meaningful participation of local communities in conservation efforts.


3.4 ECONOMIC VALUATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL GOODS AND SERVICES

Environmental degradation worldwide is largely due to the market failure, i.e., values of environmental goods and particularly services were not factored earlier into the price mechanisms. The protective value of ecosystems may exceed the immediate incomes from the use of their resources. Ecosystems’ protective services, such as the prevention of erosion, floods, landslides, avalanches, cyclones and other natural and unnatural disasters, deserve far more attention when it comes to assessing their value. For example, a GoB estimate (MoEF/IUCN, 2000) suggests that the storm protection provided by the mangrove forests has saved the public purse half a billion dollars in avoided costs of structural mitigation and relocation. New knowledge in this regard is evolving and being fine-tuned to give better estimates of economic valuation.

Another example is the CITES Appendices. They include live animals, [(tortoises, reptiles, parrots, butterflies, insects, frogs, ornamental fishes, etc.), and products and derivatives of fauna species (reptile skins, wool, shells, eggs, meat, hunting trophies], flora species (plants artificially propagated (Orchids), dry plants, medicinal plants), tourist souvenirs (rain-sticks) etc. The potential economic value of these species can be translated into tangible economic benefits for populations whose livelihoods depend on wildlife. Sustainable trade could act as a key means for reducing illegal trade and shifting economic benefits from illegal chains and networks (poachers, smugglers, traffickers, dealers) to local communities, the private sector and public agencies.

3.5 CONFLICTS BETWEEN ENVIRONMENT AND TRADE/TRIPS PROVISIONS

In the name of protecting domestic environment under the WTO rules, there is a trend that ‘environmental protectionism’ in the North might become a non-tariff barrier to free trade. For example, the intrinsically domestic environmental questions create international conflicts, not so much because of concerns for a higher ethical and environmental standard, but because of the fear of loss of jobs and competitiveness in the North. For example, the question is whether actions can be taken against the process and production methods (PPM), rather than the product itself. Developing countries like Bangladesh are against any changes in Article XX of the WTO/GATT, because the production practices do not incorporate themselves into the product itself. So, unilateral measures and indiscriminate eco-labeling based on PPM are likely to undermine free trade regime. In like manner, many of the domestically-prohibited goods (DPGs) in the North are exported to the South in the guise of consumer products, such as fertilizers. There have been such cases in Bangladesh in the early 1990s. These conflicts are likely to intensify in future.



The trade-related intellectual property rights (TRIPs) are likely to emerge as a big issue for negotiations in future. There is a need to reconcile the market-based TRIPs provisions under the WTO on the protection of plant varieties and life forms (GMOs/LMOs) with those of the CBD. The latter requires that benefits arising from the conservation and sustainable use of biological resources be equitably shared between those who conserve the resource and those who exploit it commercially.


3.6 MEANS OF IMPLEMENTATION: SDG # 17

SDG # 17 commits global community to look for means of implementation of other goals, many of which have been reflected in the MEAs, discussed above. These means include finance, technology and capacity building. Below is a brief discussion of status of these means.

Mechanisms for Financial Support

One might recall that two vehicles were envisaged at Rio to finance environmental protection and development. One was the increased flow of official development assistance (ODA). The architects of the 1992 Earth Summit estimated that US\$ 125 billion would have to be transferred to developing countries as external financing. This level of funding amounted to approximately 0.7% of the then GNP of the industrial countries. The target was agreed to earlier and reaffirmed at Rio. However, the ODA in real terms today has declined to almost half compared to the early 1980s. A special session of the UN General Assembly reviewed the progress and found that only a few industrial countries have fulfilled their target of 0.7% of GNP. Now ODA is being repackaged and renamed for other vehicle. The status of the other vehicle, i.e., 'new and additional' funding for environmental protection in the developing countries is not encouraging either. The only visible financial outcome of Rio was about \$5 billion worth of commitments for implementing the MEAs, mostly for the Global Environment Facility (GEF), initiated in 1993 and now serves as the financial mechanism of CBD, UNFCCC and the UNCCD. It gets guidance from the COPs of respective conventions on policy, strategy, program priorities and eligibility criteria for funding. In CBD, GEF finances four project areas: i) arid and semi-arid zones, ii) coastal, marine and freshwater resources, iii) forests, and iv) mountains. Under the Climate Convention, projects under the GEF are organized into four areas: i) removing barriers to energy efficiency and conservation, ii) promoting adoption of renewable energy by removing barriers and reducing implementation costs, iii) reducing long-term costs of low greenhouse gas emitting technology, and iv) supporting development of sustainable transport. Since then five replenishments have taken place, with few billion dollars in each. Now initiatives are there for the sixth replenishment.

Besides the GEF, several other funds have been established to provide environmental assistance to developing countries. One such fund is the Montreal Protocol Fund, established for funding the phase-out of ODS in developing countries. Also under the UNFCCC, a total of four funds have been established since 2001, three of which have been operationalized in 2009/2010. They are the LDC Fund, the Special Climate Change Fund and the Adaptation Fund. The first two have been established under the UNFCCC, and the Adaptation Fund under the Kyoto Protocol. However, with the Paris Agreement of the UNFCCC coming into force by 2020, the fate of the Adaptation Fund remains uncertain.



The latest, the Green Climate Fund (GCF) established by COP16 in Cancun in 2010 has been operationalized. Now the donor countries have pledged an amount of \$10.4 billion for 3/4 years, until 2018. But the commitment level to the LDC Fund or the SCCF or the AF is not encouraging at all. The experience being witnessed by the developing countries is that the ODA is being re-packaged as 'additional' funding, thereby meeting the environmental priorities of the industrial countries. This gives rise to double counting of aid. The Paris Agreement is no better except for continuing the preferential treatment for the LDCs and SIDS, and instituting an MRV mechanism in finance. This trend manifest in further widening the gap between the industrial and developing countries is disquieting for the most vulnerable countries like Bangladesh.

Technology Transfer

Unlike the conventional polluting path of industrialization, environment-friendly technologies already exist in the market. Transfer of such clean technologies is warranted for the provision of global public good. However, experiences in such transfer indicate that it still is dominated by pure commercial considerations. Therefore, a very uneven distribution of such transfers is found, the direction being toward the industrializing and front-runner countries of the developing world. This contributes to widen the gap even within the developing world, leaving the less fortunate ones further behind. Besides, there is a tendency of moving the sunset industries to the developing world. South Asia as one of the poorest regions might be one of the premier destinations in this regard. This issue is likely to continue as a negotiation agenda in the years to come. Besides, the IPR issues is hotly debated with the technology transfer issue. In recent years, negotiations under the UNFCCC resulted in establishing a Tech Executive Committee, tech research and transfer networks, which are likely to contribute to promoting tech transfer across North-South, South-South and South-North directions.

Capacity Building

Environmental policy-making and management for conservation and sustainable development is a relatively new area, with not much of past experience in many developing countries. Therefore, capacity building at national level for devising appropriate policies, programs and tools at national, local, community and private sector levels and also for their implementation is a precondition for attaining sustainable development. Almost all the environmental agreements discussed above have provisions for capacity building in the developing countries, with preferential treatment to be given to the LDCs. The issues likely to be debated are about their prioritization in the context of needs in the developing countries. However, there were some basic lacking in capacity building efforts, such as one-shot workshop/training programs led often by foreign experts, with no phased-in continuity process and its sustainability. The recently envisioned Paris Committee on Capacity Building under the Paris Agreement may plug the gaps/lacuna in this regard.

It may be mentioned that net ODA for capacity-building and national planning amounted to \$23 billion in 2014; of that total, sub-Saharan Africa received \$6 billion and Southern and Central Asia received \$4.6 billion. The main sectors receiving assistance were public administration, environment and energy, which together were allocated a total of \$9.3 billion (Report of the UN Secretary General on SDGs, 2016).

3.7 OBLIGATIONS/REQUIREMENTS OF BANGLADESH UNDER THE MEAS

Table-1 below is an indicative list of national obligations under the MEAs. These MEAs are meant for implementation particularly at national level, so that the aggregate implementations of the signatory parties contribute to achieving the main goals of the MEAs. These obligations differ across MEAs, as they are designed to tackle different degradation and pollution problems. The first column shows different obligations under different MEAs and the remaining three columns represent 3 Rio provisions, which obligate the parties for taking different measures. The first obligation is to participate in their regular political negotiations, as well as in their technical exercises. As environmental negotiations are extremely knowledge-intensive, such participation both in political negotiations and in technical **exercises** requires deep knowledge and negotiating skills.

The second obligation is to prepare and submit national communications or strategies or reports on national activities at specified intervals to the regime secretariats. As an LDC country, these requirements are more relaxed than for other developing countries. Besides, there are so many minor obligations including submissions on specific decisions adopted by the parties in the COP process.

**Table-1:
Obligations of The Parties to the Rio Agreements: Linkages And Complementarities**

National Requirements	Climate Change	Biodiversity	Desertification	Forestry Principles
Prepare National Inventories of GHGs & removal by sinks	Article 4 (b), Art 13.7a & 13.7b			Principle 12 (a)
Prepare National and Regional Action Plans	Art 4 (b) 4.2 of Paris Agreement (PA)	“Strategies” Art 6 (a), (b)	Art 9, 10	Principles 3 (a), 5 (a), 6 (b), 8 (d & h), 9 (c), Article 4 (b) & Proposals for Action of Intergovt Forum on Forests
Identification & Monitoring	Art 13.7a & 13.7b	Art 8	Art 16	
Develop Protected Areas		Art 8		Principles 7 (b), 8 (f)
Legislation	Preamble	Art 8 (k)	Art 5 (e)	Principles 8(f), 13 (d & e)
Research	Art 5, Art 10.5 of PA	Art 12 (b)	Art 17, 19 (b)	Principles 12 (a)
Public Education	Art 6,; Art 12 of PA	Art 13	Art 5 (d), 19, 6	Principles 12 (d)
Env Impact Assessment	Art 4 (1) (d)	Art 14		Principles 8 (h)
Submission of Info on CC impacts & adaptation	Art 13.8 of PA			
R&D & Clearinghouse for information	Art 10.5	Art 18	Art 18	
Public Participation	Art 6 (l) (a) (iii)	Art 9	Art 19 (4)	Principle 2 (d)
COP/regular reviews	Art 7			
Exchange of Information	Art 7	Art 17	Art 16	Principles 2 ©, 11, 12 (c)
Training	Art 6, Art 12 of PA	Art 12 (a)	Art 19	Principles 3 (9a), 11, 12 (b)
Reports	Art 12, Art 13 of PA	Art 26		

Data Collection			Art 16	Principle 12 (a)
Examine obligations, assess implementation	Art 7	Art 23		Principle 12 (a)
Report to COP	Art 12	Art 26	Art 26	
Compatible Data / Standards			Art 16	

Source : UNDP, 1997: *Synergies in National Implementation: The Rio Agreements*, UNDP, New York; latest info on the MEAs & Paris Agreement is added by the writer of this chapter.



4.1 INTRODUCTION

The Government of Bangladesh is already a Party to all the MEAs discussed above. Also the Ministry of Environment and Forests is preparing the ground so that the highest authority can submit the instrument of ratification by the end of 2016. Accordingly, our Government has adopted a plethora of new policies, such as a new Environment Policy (2013), Wetland Conservation Act (2012), Climate Change Trust Act (2010), Biosafety Act (Draft), etc. Also the GoB has added an amendment (18Ka) to our Constitution, stipulating environmental protection as a constitutional obligation. In order to mainstream climate change into development strategy, the GoB has also taken initiatives to revise the sectoral plans.

In terms of new institutions, the GoB has established a Climate Change Cell in the MoEF to manage the Climate Change Trust Fund, established in 2009 with domestic budgetary resources. Another fund – the Climate Change Resilience Fund has been established with donor support. Now the GoB is contemplating establishing a Programme Monitoring and Implementation Unit (PMIU) under the MoEF for smooth implementation of projects/programmes related to environment, forests and climate change. Besides, the GoB has developed a climate fiscal framework to address the resource mobilization aspect for addressing climate change.

4.2 STRATEGIES

Conservation of natural resources is cross-cutting and cross-scale. Therefore, in line with the provisions of the MEAs, a multi-faceted strategy will be required to comply with the obligations under the MEAs that Bangladesh needs to carry out. These strategies include capacity building at individual, organizational and systemic levels, through formal and informal education and training, instituting an enabling legal and policy framework that mainstreams conservation into development process, and above all, establishing stakeholder partnerships and networks nationally and internationally to mobilize financial, technical and technological resources for implementation of the MEAs.

Also a shift in the development approach is needed – from a business-as-usual track to a low carbon and climate resilient development pathway. This pathway actually subsumes all the strategies and measures envisaged under all the MEAs discussed above. For example, the development approach earlier was on implementing projects to realize specific objectives, rather than on looking at their macro-linkage and addressing the underlying issues that improve enabling policy frameworks and governance structures. In like manner, policies and institutions focusing on the short-term exploitation of natural resources – often to maximize immediate benefits – led to mal-adaptation of different kinds. Past experience also indicates that adaptive capacity and resilience are closely associated with effective governance, economic well being, human and social capital, sustainable resource

management and participatory disaster preparedness. So measures that promote improved governance, sustainable economic growth, poverty reduction and improved resource management are central to conservation and sustainable development.

For example, NAPA Guidelines clearly specify poverty reduction as prime criteria for selection of adaptation measures. The ultimate goal is to ensure societal, not merely technical, adaptation through enhancing the resilience of the larger society against environmental shocks. Besides, planned adaptation requires harmonization of sectoral goals, among which there are conflicting provisions. For example, intensive agricultural practices run counter to polyculture and conservation of biodiversity, but our agriculture policy prescribes doing so. These can only be dealt with considered trade-offs among national priorities and through mainstreaming environmental concerns into the national development strategy.

4.3 MAJOR ACTIONS TAKEN BY GOVERNMENT

The GoB has taken so far many different actions to comply with the MEAs related to conservation. Under the UNFCCC, there are the submissions of two national communications, first and second, related to climate change, the National Adaptation Programme of Action (NAPA) as immediate and urgent needs, the National Adaptation Plan (NAP) as the medium and long-term plan is under process of preparation and the third National Communication is almost ready for submission. Besides, national reports on actions have been submitted to CBD & UNCCD secretariats. At regular intervals as specified for the LDCs, reports also are prepared for submission in case of other important MEAs. Also during the last two decades, many different projects and programmes have been implemented and are being implemented currently. With the CCTF money more than 200 projects are being implemented both by the government and the NGOs to address particularly climate change adaptation. Also with the CCRF, over 25 projects, mostly medium-sized, are being implemented by different government agencies.

4.4 BARRIERS AND GAPS/LACUNA IN COMPLIANCE OF MEAS

The GoB as a representative of an LDC country is quite active in global negotiations over MEAs. In fact Bangladesh is regarded as a natural leader of 48 LDCs, because of its size, level of expertise, and considered responses to issues that represent the LDC and overall developing country interests. However, there are still some barriers and gaps in playing such a role and their reflection at implementation at national level. So, there are quite a number of systemic and institutional barriers and gaps in the area.

At national level, the barriers to achieving synergies and better compliance levels are:

- i) Technical: Though there is relatively better expertise in Bangladesh compared to the LDCs and many other developing countries, there is actually a lack of interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary knowledge and understanding of cross-sectoral and cross-scale issuers. This needs to be taken care of.
- ii) Institutional: inter-departmental conflicts, issues of territoriality, lack of coordination among sectoral agencies, guiding principles and understanding at policy level sap

the realization of synergies and better compliance level. The focal point of the MEAs suffers from lack of appropriate and dedicated manpower. So it will function better if some permanent staff with technical background is hired, as well as some experts can work on part-time basis to systematically take care of the obligations and compliance level. The GO-outside expert partnership, if forged on a regular basis, will cross-pollinate ideas & contribute to capacity building on both sides. This will also maintain institutional memory over MEA negotiations outcome. It needs to be remembered that now environmental support globally is increasing, where real ODA level is going down.

- iii)** Cultural: Norms of not overstepping boundaries and lack of insight into working at local levels stand in the way. Rising above territoriality, a better culture of inter-sectoral collaboration, common work plans, joint meetings of scientific bodies and, more involvement of NGO/CBo stakeholders in MEAs-related policy development are some issues that will demand greater attention from global and national policy-makers.
- iv)** Lack of finance: Though the GoB carries out many climate-related projects and programmes in its ADP and has already invested over US\$400mn in the Trust Fund, together with about \$100mn from the donor-supported Resilience Fund, it is not adequate at all, particularly for adaptation. The latter actually cannot be separated in most cases from development, Bangladesh needs to invest more on near-term in order to save its economy and society from increasing impacts of climate change. In this regard, Bangladesh should be able to mobilize more environmental aid than its present level. For the purpose, fundable proposal development expertise needs to be developed in earnest.
- v)** Building better fiduciary management capacity: This is an area warranting immediate considerations by the highest-level policy-makers. Bangladesh does not have a very positive image abroad in this regard for whatever reasons. Obviously, a better transparent and accountable system of fund management should be instituted and showcase it to development partners. As mentioned before, environmental aid is likely to go up in the years to come.
- vi)** Lack of adequate data on conservation-related issues: Necessary statistical and qualitative information is a vital part of effective management. For conservation management this is all the more important, because it is very much a cross-sectoral and cross-scale issue, which makes the process extremely complicated. For overcoming this lacunae, a two-pronged strategy is needed: a) a) first is a collation and compilation of whatever data and statistics are there related to natural resource conservation sectors; and b) generation of targeted new data for coordinated reporting and creation of shared databases.

5.1 LIST OF INDICATORS TO MONITOR COMPLIANCE AT NATIONAL LEVEL

As is evident from the objectives and activities of the MEAs discussed above, the secretariats of the MEAs carry out some activities to coordinate and promote their mission. But the implementation of MEAs at the national level is the prime focus. This is natural for obvious reasons, as the aggregate actions by the individual sovereign governments add up to the global level of implementation and their effectiveness. For the purpose, below is an elaborate list of national actions and indicators to monitor the compliance and effectiveness level of the MEAs.

5.2 SUGGESTED ACTIONS IN COMPLIANCE TO OBLIGATIONS TO MEA AND OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE

Table-2: List of Indicators for Monitoring Actions at National Level

MEAs	Actions	Implementing agency
Climate Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing a phased low-carbon & climate-resilient development strategy • Strengthen resilience & adaptive capacity • Integrate CC measures into national development strategy • Allocation of funds for CC measures • Inventory of GHGs • Promotion of renewable energy • Impart education, awareness raising, human & institutional capacity • Strengthening early warning for CC disasters 	MoEF, Planning commission, BFD, DoE, NGOs, INGOs, LGED, Universities, Research Organizations
CBD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable management of natural forests • Expansion of forest cover in available areas • Afforestation of degraded /denuded forests • Development of strategy for management & expansion of protected & ecologically critical areas in terrestrial & • Marine ecosystems (PAs, ECAs) • Expansion of forest areas under co-management • Control of alien species • Inventory of species of flora & fauna • Mobilization of aid & REDD+ funds for promotion of forests • Participatory governance of forests 	MoEF, BFD, DoF, Universities, Research Organizations, DoE

MEAs	Actions	Implementing agency
UNCCD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying & mapping of desertifying areas • Identifying of appropriate forest species for desertifying areas • Expansion of forest cover • Mulching/green manuring of desertifying lands • Digging of ditches & narrow canals 	DoE, MoEF, LGED, Planning commission, BFD
UNCLOS III	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of a comprehensive strategy and plan for protection of EEZ for sustainable harvest of ocean, sea & marine resources • Development of a plan for reduction & control of marine pollution • Promotion of education & research on marine biology & oceanography • Mapping of stakeholders involved in protection & management of EEZ & delineation of their roles • Protection & expansion of mangrove forests • Inventory of coral reefs • Expansion of fishing fleets in partnership with private sector • Development of national, regional & global partnerships for managing marine resources & control of pollution • Initiatives for transfer of marine technology from ICs 	MoEF, DoF, Universities, BFD, Research organizations, BFRI
Ramsar Convention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inventory of wetlands • Development of a plan for protection & recovery of encroached wetlands • Development of a plan for wetland fishery • Protection & expansion of Ramsar & World Heritage sites • Census of migratory species of birds & wildlife 	BFD, MoEF, DoE, NGOs, INGOs, Universities
SDG # 17: Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen domestic resource mobilization • Strengthen foreign resource mobilization from bilateral, multilateral & INGO • Develop a plan for foreign investment promotion • Enhance North-South, South-South and triangular regional and international cooperation on access to science, technology and innovation • Mobilize the development, transfer, dissemination and diffusion of environmentally sound technologies • Mobilize international support for implementing effective and targeted capacity-building for SDG 	Foreign ministry, Home ministry, MoEF, Donor, INGOs