

Convention on Biological Diversity

Bangladesh signed the Biodiversity Convention at Rio on 5 June 1992 and ratified on 3 May 1994. A focus on biodiversity has been emphasized in the Forest Policy and Environment Policy. However, a separate policy on biodiversity is yet to be formulated, and until then various departments of the government are responsible for conservation of biodiversity. The Bangladesh has initiated the preparation of National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan for conservation of biodiversity in Bangladesh as a national obligation to the Convention on Biological Diversity. However, in the mean time, Bangladesh has prepared National Conservation Strategy (NCS) and the National Environment Management Action Plan (NEMAP). IUCN Bangladesh Country Office has prepared Red Data Book of animals.

As a means to conserve biodiversity in *in situ* condition, there are three acts have been in place in which there are provisions for conservation of biodiversity through creation of Wildlife Sanctuary, National Park, Game Reserve, Fish Sanctuary, Ecologically Critical Area (ECA). So far, we have established 8 wildlife sanctuaries, 5 national parks and 1 game reserve under the provisions of the Bangladesh Wildlife (Preservation) Order, 1973; and seven ECAs under the Bangladesh Environment Act, 1995. Fish sanctuary is established under the Bangladesh Fish Act, 1950 for seasonal protection of fishes, and their habitats.

Bangladesh has *ex situ* gene bank facilities in the Bangladesh Rice Research Institute where an important gene bank has been established for conservation of rice genetic resources.

A number of projects having biodiversity components are being implemented in Bangladesh. Some of the noteworthy ones are: Biodiversity Survey in 13 Protect Areas, Forest Resources Management Project, Management of Aquatic Ecosystem through Community Husbandry (MACH), Haor and Floodplain Resource, Conservation and Management of Medicinal Plants, Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM), Coastal and Wetland Biodiversity Management at Cox's Bazar and Hakaluki Haor(CWBMP) etc.

Bangladesh has by now, established several training and research institutes in addition to the scientists and teachers working in the universities and non-governmental organizations. Besides, the Ministry of Science and Technology has been conducting academic researches in the field of biodiversity since the independent of the country. Moreover, every sectors and sub-sectors has training and research institute for development and management of biodiversity in the country. As for example, there are several research institutes for agricultural crop biodiversity, such as Bangladesh Agricultural Research Institute, Bangladesh Rice Research Institute and Bangladesh Jute Research Institute.

Forestry sub-sector has Forest Research Institute; Fisheries sub-sector has Freshwater Fisheries Research Institute, Brackish water Fisheries Research Institute, Tidal water Fisheries Research Institute; and Livestock Department has Livestock Research Institute. There is an institute for Tea Development in the country.

The most important gap regarding biodiversity research and training is the lack of any institute for taxonomy of biodiversity. For this reason, the concerned field managers are not in a position to identify the biodiversity and biological resources for proper conservation and management as per requirement of the national and international purposes as well as implementation of CBD in the country.

Bangladesh signed **The Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety to the Convention on Biological Diversity** on 24 May 2000. In accordance with the relevant provisions of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, Bangladesh has under taken a project titled "Development of the National Biosafety Framework for Bangladesh" which aims "to contribute to ensuring an adequate level of protection in the field of the safe transfer, handling and use of living modified organisms resulting from modern biotechnology that may have adverse effects on the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity, taking also into account risks to human health, and specifically focusing on transboundary movements".

Bangladesh has developed a very detailed Biosafety Guidelines notified in Bangladesh Gazette on June 1, 200. These Guidelines have been developed following international frameworks and are quite comprehensive, as they consider not only definitions, organizational and procedural aspects but also provide specific criteria for the implementation of the assessment and regulatory processes, including specific criteria for risk assessment for different areas of work, specification facilities for containment for different biosafety levels and detailed annexed on guidelines for classification of micro organisms according to their risk potential, general good laboratory practices, good industrial large-scale practices, the list of organisms according to different risk groups and a framework for risk assessment with decision trees for familiarity and confinement test at different level and appropriate questions for decision on the release of different GMOs.