

First International Agrobiodiversity Congress (6-9 Nov 2016)

Action taken report and Remarks by Protection of
Plant Varieties and Farmers Rights Authority

RC Agrawal, Registrar General
rg-ppvfra@nic.in

Delhi Declaration

Recommendation-1

- We call upon nations to accord top priority to the shared vision of agrobiodiversity conservation and sustainable use towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Aichi Targets of the Convention on Biological Diversity addressing poverty alleviation, food, nutritional and health security, gender equity and global partnership.

Remarks

- This is very important point with respect to era of climate change, where we will be in need to develop the varieties suitable to certain climatic conditions using varied agro biodiversity.
- India (National Biodiversity Authority) has prepared 12 National Biodiversity Targets using the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 as the broad framework. These National Biodiversity Targets have been prepared through an extensive consultative process with all stakeholders, have also been included in India's Fifth National Report (NR5) submitted to the CBD.

NATIONAL BIODIVERSITY TARGETS

S.No.	Target	Related Strategic Goals/Aichi Targets
NBT 1	By 2020, a significant proportion of the country's population, especially the youth, is aware of the values of biodiversity and the steps they can take to conserve and use it sustainably.	1
NBT 2	By 2020, values of biodiversity are integrated in National and State planning processes, development programmes and poverty alleviation strategies.	2
NBT 3	Strategies for reducing rate of degradation, fragmentation and loss of all natural habitats are finalized and actions put in place by 2020 for environmental amelioration and human well-being.	5, 15
NBT 4	By 2020, invasive alien species and pathways are identified and strategies to manage them developed so that populations of prioritized invasive alien species are managed.	9
NBT 5	By 2020, measures are adopted for sustainable management of agriculture, forestry and fisheries.	6, 7, 8
NBT 6	Ecologically representative areas on land and in inland waters, as well as coastal and marine zones, especially those of particular importance for species, biodiversity and ecosystem services, are conserved effectively and equitably, on the basis of PA designation and management and other area-based conservation measures and are integrated into the wider landscapes and seascapes, covering over 20% of the geographic area of the country, by 2020.	10, 11, 12

NATIONAL BIODIVERSITY TARGETS

S.No.	Target	Related Strategic Goals/ Aichi Targets
NBT 7	By 2020, genetic diversity of cultivated plants, farm livestock and their wild relatives, including other socioeconomically as well as culturally valuable species, is maintained, and strategies have been developed and implemented for minimizing genetic erosion and safeguarding their genetic diversity.	13
NBT 8	By 2020, ecosystem services, especially those relating to water, human health, livelihoods and wellbeing, are enumerated and measures to safeguard them are identified, taking into account the needs of women and local communities, particularly the poor and vulnerable sections.	14
NBT 9	By 2015, Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization as per the Nagoya Protocol are operational, consistent with national legislation.	16
NBT 10	By 2020, an effective, participatory and updated national biodiversity action plan is made operational at different levels of governance.	3, 4, 17
NBT 11	By 2020, national initiatives using communities' traditional knowledge relating to biodiversity are strengthened, with a view to protecting this knowledge in accordance with national legislations and international obligations.	18
NBT 12	By 2020, opportunities to increase the availability of financial, human and technical resources to facilitate effective implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011–2020 and the national targets are identified and the Strategy for Resource Mobilization is adopted.	19, 20

ACTION POINTS OF NATIONAL BIODIVERSITY ACTION PLAN 2008

VIII- Strengthening implementation of policy, legislative and administrative measures for biodiversity conservation and management

PPV&FRA is already implementing the Act which also includes under Gene Fund to identify Farmers and Farming Communities involved in conservation of traditional varieties, landraces etc. Till date we have awarded about 124 such communities.

Gene fund needs further strengthening.

We are in contact with NBA for the use of Peoples Biodiversity Registers for the identification of areas which can be supported for registration of farmers varieties and also for conservation activities alongwith awards/rewards to such farmers

Created more than 1000 awareness programs regarding the importance of conservation of agrobiodiversity with the support of ICAR/KVKs/SAUs

Harmonise provisions concerning disclosure of source of biological material and associated knowledge used in the inventions under the Patents Act, Protection of Plant Varieties and Farmers' Rights Act, and Biological Diversity Act, to ensure sharing of benefits by the communities holding traditional knowledge, from such use.

Already PPVFRA is taking such disclosure with application

Recommendation -2

- We recognize the importance of traditional agrobiodiversity knowledge available with farm men and women, pastoralists, tribal and rural communities and its central role in the conservation and use for a food secure and climate resilient world. We, therefore, call upon countries to develop the necessary legal, institutional and funding mechanisms to catalyse their active participation.

Remarks

- PPVFRA has no role in this regard. We get some TK alongwith Farmers Varieties but we only register varieties and not TK. We understand AYUSH is taking up such activity. NBA has sufficient provisions for access of TK

Recommendation -3

- We urge researchers and the policymakers to initiate, strengthen and promote complementary strategies to conserve agrobiodiversity through use, including greater emphasis on using crop wild relatives. We call for them to ensure a continuum between ex situ, in situ, on-farm, community based and other conservation methods with much greater and equal emphasis on each.

Remarks

- PPVFRA under National IPR policy is developing strategies for mainstreaming of registered farmers varieties.
- We are going to have a national action plan in this regard.

Recommendation-5

- We reemphasize the necessity of **global exchange of plant**, animal, aquatic, microbial and insect genetic resources to diversify agriculture as well as our food basket and to meet the ever-growing food and nutritional needs of all countries. To ensure this, nations need to be catalysed to adopt both multi-lateral (as envisaged in the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture) and bilateral (as per the Nagoya Protocol) instruments to facilitate the exchange of genetic resources, while ensuring equitable access and benefit sharing opportunities.

Remarks

- PPVFRA has no role to play for this recommendation. PPVFRA is only responsible only to pay Biennial subscription to ITPGRFA on behalf of India and implementation of Farmers Rights as per article 9 of ITPGRFA. We are developing guidelines for the transfer of varieties after protection period to NBPGR but not beyond.

Recommendations

7. We also expect that the governments and civil societies lay much greater emphasis on **public awareness and capacity enhancement program on agrobiodiversity conservation** in order to accelerate its effective and efficient use.

Remarks

- PPVFRA is regularly conducting awareness programs for the benefit of farmers and benefits of agrobiodiversity conservation. We need to develop national action plan for use of mass media to convey such messages.

Recommendation

8. We recommend the development and implementation of an **Agrobiodiversity Index** to help monitor on-going genetic resource conservation and management efforts, with particular emphasis on agrobiodiversity hot spots.

9. It is also urged that **public and private sectors and civil societies henceforth actively invest** in and incentivize the utilization of agrobiodiversity to mitigate malnutrition, increase the resilience and productivity of farms and farming households and enhance ecosystem services. Such efforts should lead to equitable benefits and opportunities, with particular emphasis on women and youth.

Remarks

- This is very valid point as far as genetic resource conservation and management is concerned. It shall be of immense use to even PPVFRA in its activities.
- We can think of using the CSR available with private companies for this purpose. We have already written to NSAI for conveying to seed companies for grants in Gene Fund under CSR so that we can take up more activities related to conservation of agro-biodiversity

Recommendations

10. We urge countries to **reprioritize their research and extension** with increased investments to support the conservation and use of agrobiodiversity. Furthermore, we strongly recommend to create an International agrobiodiversity Fund as a mechanism to assist countries and communities in scientific in situ and ex situ conservation and enhanced use of agrobiodiversity.

Remarks

- PPVFRA is supporting conservation and use of agro-biodiversity by recognizing and awarding annually such farming communities/farmers, particularly of the tribal and rural areas engaged in conservation, improvement and preservation of genetic resources of economic plants and their wild relatives in the areas of agro-biodiversity hotspots. These awards are being conferred through National Gene Fund which has a very meagre fund.
- The Gene Fund can be supported with more funds so that such awardee farmers may be also provided with funds to support such important conservation, improvement and preservation activities in the areas of plant genetic resources.

Recommendation

11. We urge the United Nations to consider declaring a 'Year of Agrobiodiversity' in order to draw worldwide attention and catalyse urgent actions for effective management of genetic resources by the global community.

Remarks

- In order to create awareness globally regarding biodiversity, it is a very good idea and should be implemented effectively.
- This shall help even PPVFRA to achieve many targets during the year of declaration with the support of many agencies.

Recommendations

12. Finally, we recommend that the International Agrobiodiversity Congress be held every four years, with Bioversity International playing the facilitator's role, to maintain the momentum gained in 2016 and continue emphasizing the need to implement the 'Delhi Declaration on Agrobiodiversity Management' and monitor the progress so made by the different stakeholders and countries.

Remarks

- It will give a platform to all the researchers, breeders, amateurs, conservers of biodiversity to exchange their ideas to protect the biodiversity and use it effectively and safely for future generations.
- It will also help PPVFRA monitor the progress of different stakeholders in last four years.

Thanks