

Implementation Mechanism for NBSAP¹

Implementing this action plan is going to require the sustained effort of all sections of Indian society. Specific responsibilities are stated in the case of each strategy/action in the preceding chapter. However, there is a need for an overall implementation mechanism, which could help to facilitate and coordinate the actions being taken. Necessarily, and leading on from the recommended Planning and Governance structure proposed in Chapter 7.0, this implementation mechanism needs to be rooted in ground-level institutions and processes of participatory decision-making.

The following implementation mechanism is suggested (See also Figure 8.1). It incorporates the structures proposed by the Biological Diversity Act, 2002 (BD Act), and adds to it some other institutional mechanisms to ensure the participation of as widespread a section of India's population as possible.

1. Local-Level Implementation

Primary implementation of several strategies and actions is proposed to be done by local level bodies. These would include *gram sabhas* or corresponding bodies in tribal areas, or Biodiversity Management Committees proposed under the BD Act (with the clear proviso that such committees should be set up by *gram sabhas*, and not by outside agencies or even by *panchayats*). They would also include local-level line departments, in partnership with the village bodies. In urban areas, they would include the Urban Wards. These local level institutions would be coordinated through larger land/waterscape institutions or district level bodies such as District Planning Committees (as suggested in Chapter 7.0.2) for relevant strategies and actions.

What is important is for local bodies, with facilitation and guidance from the state/national institutions and Biodiversity Network described below, to assess the various strategies and actions relevant to them. They need to build their further planning and implementation based on this, including the legal/policy backing, capacity enhancement and other measures they need to be able to effectively take on such implementation. A number of the actions may actually require lobbying and advocacy, in which connections with wider level networks would help.

2. State-Level Implementation

It is suggested that at the state level, implementation is coordinated through State Biodiversity Boards (SBBs). SBBs have also been recommended as coordinating bodies in the BD Act. These boards should include representatives of: Biodiversity Management Committees proposed under the BD Act, or of other equivalent village-level institutions, larger land/waterscape and district level bodies, Ecoregional Authorities (wherever relevant states are involved, see below), and executing agencies involved in the formulation of NBSAP (which would include sub-state sites).

3. Ecoregional (Inter-State) Implementation

It is suggested that there be Ecoregional Authorities (EAs) consisting of representatives of Biodiversity Management Committees or other village-level institutions (especially from communities residing near the state border or those migrating back and forth between relevant states), State Biodiversity Boards (SBBs), NBSAP executing agencies, and others. A balanced composition containing all key stakeholders needs to be ensured. The task of these Authorities will be to assess and take action on (or guide state and central government to take



action on) issues pertaining to the ecoregion as a whole, to trans-state boundary conflicts and issues, and to further the ecosystem or land/waterscape approach (see Chapter 7.0.1). Their powers could be similar to those exercised by River Basin authorities or boards that already exist in India. These Authorities will also be represented at state government level for all states falling within the ecoregion.

4. National-Level Implementation

4.1 National Biodiversity Authority (NBA) and NBSAP Implementation Committee

The BD Act proposes that the coordination and regulation of all biodiversity-related work in the country be done by the NBA. It is suggested that the same authority also be responsible for the implementation of NBSAP, in the following manner:

- There could be a separate committee under the NBA that looks specifically at this component. This Committee should have relatively independent charge while reporting to the NBA.
- It should have as members: representatives of communities and people's networks that have taken initiatives in biodiversity, relevant ministries, state governments by rotation, the Planning Commission, selected NBSAP nodal agencies and coordinators, representatives of the National Board for Wildlife and other relevant national boards/committees. Its composition should ensure a balanced representation of officials, NGOs/institutions, community members and other sectors.
- There could be several thematic sub-committees for specific aspects of NBSAP implementation.
- The Committee, besides being responsible for the implementation of NBSAP, could be entrusted with the task of producing/commissioning a State of India's Biodiversity Report every two years.
- The Committee could also advise the NBA on the operational links between the Biological Diversity Act and NBSAP implementation (see Box 8.1 below).
- There could also be a national referendum through a democratic process, involving as many people as possible, to reflect on the report and comment on it.

Box 8.1 NBSAP and the Biological Diversity Act: Supporting Each Other in Implementation

Of the various measures that would facilitate the implementation of the NBSAP, one of the more powerful would be the Biological Diversity Act. In turn, the NBSAP would help to carry out the provisions of the BD Act. Given below are, in general, the interface points between the two. (The S.No. refer to the sections of the BD Act).

1. Strategies and actions to enhance understanding and information on biodiversity (7.1.1 and 7.2.1):
S.No. 36(1), 37(1), 38, 41(1).
2. Strategies and actions for *in situ* conservation of biodiversity (7.1.2 and 7.2.2).
S. 3(1), 7, 8, 18(3), 19, 20, 22(1), 23, 24, 27(2)(b), 32(2)(a)(c), 36, 37, 38, 41(1), 44(2), 55, 56, 57, 58, 59.
3. Strategies and actions for *ex situ* conservation of biodiversity (7.1.3 and 7.2.3).
S.No. 8(1), 22(1), 39(1).
4. Strategies and actions for sustainable use (7.1.4 and 7.2.4).
S.No. 24(2), 36(1)(2)(3ii), 41(1).
5. Strategies and actions for equitable access, use and benefit-sharing (7.1.5 and 7.2.5).
S.No. 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 18(3)(a), 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 27(2), 32(2), 36, 41, 44(2), 52, 53, 55, 56, 57.
6. Strategies and actions for enhancing the capacity of actors in each sector (7.1.6 and 7.2.6).
S.No. 36(1).
7. Strategies and actions for inter-sectoral coordination and integration of biodiversity-related concerns (7.1.7 and 7.2.7).
S.No. 8(1)(b)(c), 13, 36(2).
8. Strategies and actions for policy and legal changes and measures (7.1.8 and 7.2.8).
All sections relevant.

9. Strategies and actions to generate additional financial resources (7.1.9 and 7.2.9).
S.No. 17, 26, 27, 3142, 43.
10. Strategies and action plans related to technology (7.1.10 and 7.2.10).
S.No. 21(2), 36(3ii).
11. Strategies and action plans related to international fora (7.1.11 and 7.2.11).
S.No. 18(4), 51A.

4.2 Government of India Ministries

To ensure that inter-sectoral coordination is taking place, it is essential that all the relevant Ministries also be involved in the process. It is suggested that each Ministry appoint a high level officer to specifically deal with relevant biodiversity issues; such an officer needs to have a relatively stable tenure to ensure continuity.

4.3 Planning Commission

It is suggested that a separate Working Group on Biodiversity be set up within the Planning Commission. This working group would be responsible for looking at the implementation and revisions relating to biodiversity in the 10th Five Year Plan (2002-2007), and in particular to integrate the implementation of NBSAP into the Plan process. It should have a long-term mandate, to enable monitoring as also to work towards fuller integration of biodiversity issues in the 11th Five Year Plan.

5. State and National Biodiversity Networks

There now exists an extensive informal network created as a result of the NBSAP process, at local, state, and national levels. Many of the NBSAP executing agencies and participants have time and again requested that this network be recognised, sustained, and involved in the implementation of NBSAP. It is suggested that this entity, titled the National Biodiversity Network (NBN), function as a complementary and linked body to the NBA. Its major mandate should be to facilitate the implementation of NBSAP by the Implementation Committee of NBA. There should be a formal link between the two bodies, in such a way that the NBN helps in implementation but also acts as a mirror for, and watchdog of, the NBA Committee's actions and decisions.

For this reason and because the NBN will need to have long-term continuity and freedom from bureaucratic constraints, its coordination should be with a non-official member, supported by a Technical and Policy Core Group of the kind used for the NBSAP, consisting of a mix of governmental and non-governmental (including community) representatives. The network would include representatives of several nodal agencies that have been involved in the formulation of the NBSAP, other officials and NGOs, and local community members.

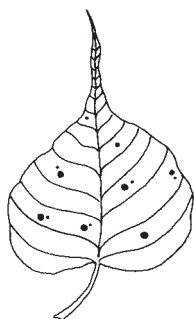
Similarly, State and perhaps even Local Biodiversity Networks could be strengthened and if appropriate, formalised in some form. This needs to be considered by relevant local and state actors. These could be linked to local and state implementation bodies described above, in a manner similar to the links between the NBN and NBA.

6. Implementation Indicators and Monitoring

The proposed NBSAP Implementation Committee of NBA and the National Biodiversity Network should jointly prepare a series of implementation indicators, for the purpose of monitoring the success (or otherwise) of implementation measures. Broadly, these indicators would include (at local, state, and/or national levels, as relevant):

1. A number of documentation, database, and information centres related to biodiversity;
2. Coverage of various kinds of ecosystems (natural and domesticated) under some form of conservation;
3. Coverage of threatened/endemic/otherwise important taxa (both wild and domesticated) under some form of conservation;
4. Populations of these taxa;
5. Number and quality of local-level institutions undertaking biodiversity-related work;
6. Number and quality of involvement of disadvantaged sections, including women, in decision-making and implementation activities relating to biodiversity (including in the implementation mechanisms listed above);

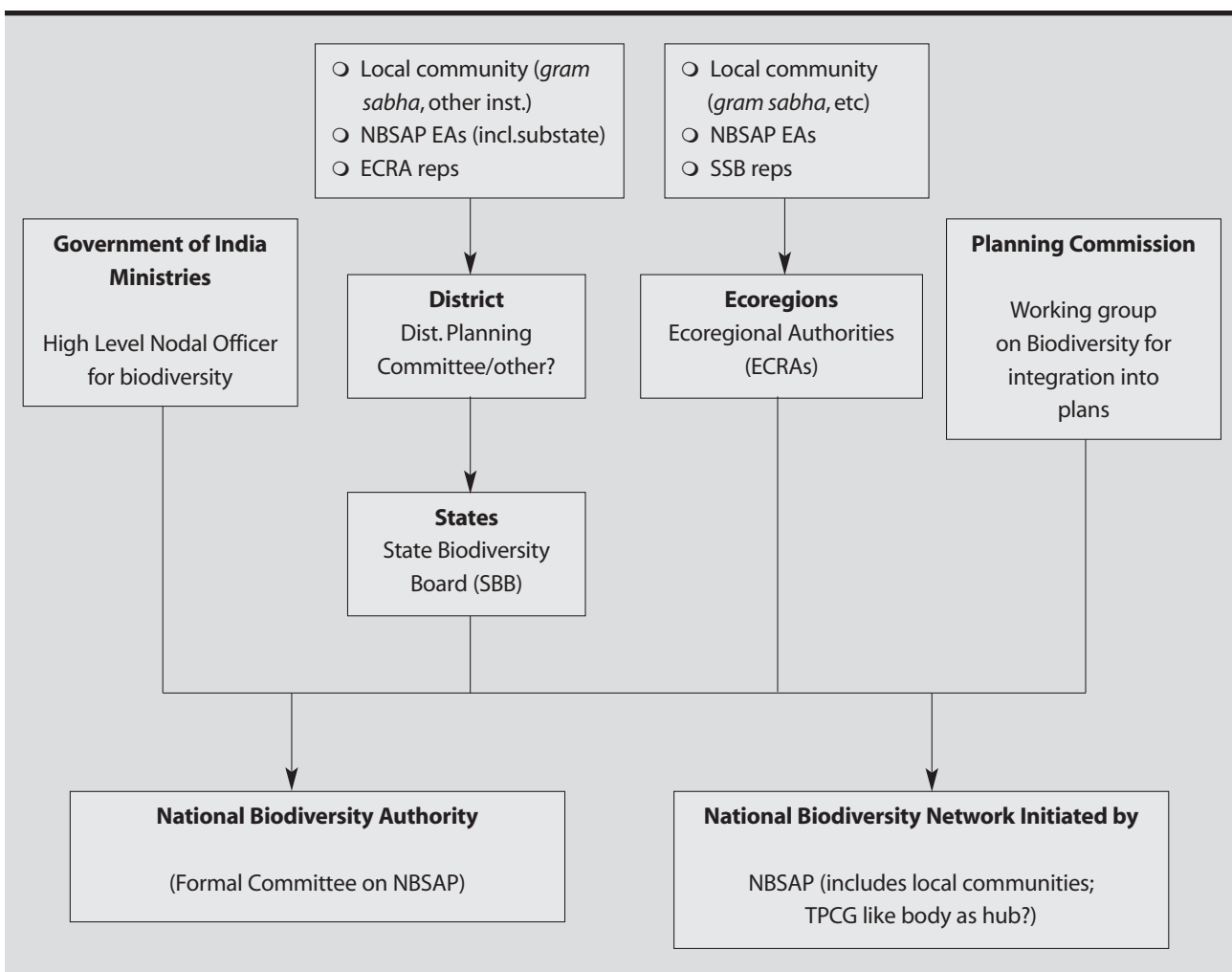




7. Extent to which programmes like PDS, Food for Work, health schemes, and others described in Chapter 7.2 are integrating domesticated biodiversity;
8. Number and coverage of economic and other incentive schemes for biodiversity-related work;
9. Extent of integration of biodiversity into various sectors, through dedicated budget lines, dedicated staff, impact assessments, and so on;
10. Size of budgets dedicated to biodiversity;
11. Other indicators as evolved in the course of implementation.

Such indicators could be developed for the NBSAP as a whole, for particular sites, and for each of the strategies and actions in the previous chapter.

The NBSAP Implementation Committee would then have overall responsibility for monitoring implementation, through its own subsidiary groups or by commissioning independent agencies. The monitoring needs to be with full participation of primary stakeholders, especially local communities, at every level. Results of the monitoring should be periodically made public through the proposed State of India's Biodiversity Reports.



Notes

1. see also accompanying Flow Chart.