

South Asia



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India

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SUMMARY

In India the preparation of the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) is a two-year process that began in early 2000. The NBSAP is being developed in a decentralised and participatory manner. The course of action for conservation will be formulated by approximately 70 agencies across the country. These action plans will then be synthesised into the national action plan. Coordinating the planning at these different levels is done by a central team, consisting of representatives from the Ministry of Environment and Forests, experts (forming a Technical and Policy Core Group), and an administrative agency.

Participation in all aspects of planning is crucial to the NBSAP process, and input from a wide range of stakeholders is being sought. Participation incorporates public hearings, steering committees and working groups; the process makes use of local languages and encourages people from all sectors to help develop the action plans.

The NBSAP aims to build on rather than duplicate the considerable efforts for biodiversity conservation in India- including the protected area system, numerous research and awareness raising initiatives and institutions and, in more recent years, Joint Forest Management. It also seeks to link up with the numerous processes for conservation in India — in both the development and implementation stages, to encourage the involvement of all sectors in planning for biodiversity conservation. While the NBSAP is at an early stage, already there are lessons to be gleaned to guide future activity. These include the need to clarify the NBSAP as a planning process, the need to closely monitor and interact with various agencies, the fact that outreach gets stakeholders to participate, and that government support and engagement is essential. Some groups might need assistance to participate effectively in the NBSAP.

These are some of the issues at the forefront of the NBSAP discussions:

- 1. Lack of information:** There are gaps in our understanding of India's biodiversity: on its extent, current status, rate of loss and relative impacts of various human activities. Where this information does exist, it has not reached decision-makers. There is also a serious lack of awareness regarding the value of biodiversity and the urgent need for its conservation.
- 2. The destructive effects of development:** In India development has undervalued biodiversity and the benefits it provides to the country's economy, culture, and society. The role of biodiversity in the lives and livelihoods of a large section of the country's population has also been neglected. While the 1980s saw some improvement, the 1990s brought a renewed assault on biodiversity as a result of the new economic policies promoting globalisation, export-driven growth, elite consumerism, and easing of licensing restrictions on industrial production.
- 3. Centralised decision-making and alienation:** This holds true in all spheres of governance, including natural resources. Local communities that were once primary managers of local natural resources are alienated from them, while government agencies do not have the political will or resources to take over this management.
- 4. Divorce of conservation from livelihoods:** While the extensive protected area system and various conservation projects constitute a concerted attempt to conserve India's biodiversity, they now face problems as they tend to be based on an exclusionary model of conservation. Many of India's protected areas are viewed with hostility by local communities, who are dependent on their resources but are denied customary access to them.
- 5. Divorce of productivity from diversity:** In the primary sectors of the economy, policies have stressed increasing production, which has led to erosion in diversity. In agriculture, for example, subsidies and loans are oriented towards monoculture, chemical-intensive farming, and the definition of "productivity" is linked to single outputs like grain, wool and milk. Biologically diverse systems are at a disadvantage as their long-term sustainability, greater overall biomass productivity, and adaptation to local conditions are undervalued by policies and the market.

On the positive side, each of these issues has become a matter of national discussion and dialogue, and across the country alternatives are being tried, including the following:

- alternative development processes, building on local needs and skills, and emphasising the interconnections between natural resources and human/ social dynamics;
- decentralisation of decision-making, both through changes in the Indian constitution and legal system, and through widespread self-empowerment on the part of the people;
- increasing recognition of, and moves towards, a more integrated model of conservation, in which wildlife protection and livelihood security are linked; and
- widespread attempts, particularly at community and NGO level, to redefine economic and social welfare, providing incentives for biodiverse production systems through producer-consumer links, and reducing dependence on monoculture systems.

Introduction

India is home to a vast diversity of species, as well as two of the world's biodiversity "hot spots"¹, in addition to being the second most populous nation on Earth. The country is witnessing serious erosion of its diversity of life forms and ecosystems, and a consequent loss of ecological, economic and social functions. Changes in land use and patterns of consumption, rather than sheer human numbers, are the main cause of this biodiversity loss. The fact that vast populations coexist with centres of rich biodiversity shows the protective relationships communities have had and, in some cases, continue to have, with their environment.

India has begun a two-year process of developing a National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP). Preparation of the NBSAP is part of the country's obligations under the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), although the history of biodiversity conservation in the country began well before ratification of the Convention. Deliberations on the NBSAP process ran parallel to other CBD activities in India.

The Ministry of Environment and Forests (MoEF) has been working with NGOs and individual experts in the field of biodiversity since the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development was concluded in 1992². This relationship grew from NGO initiatives and lobbying of ministry officials to make the CBD processes open and consultative. A legal expert group was proposed to draft a law regulating access to biological resources and various other policies that would become mandatory once India ratified the CBD.

Law reform

India became a signatory to the CBD in December 1993 and ratified the Convention in February 1994. A month prior to ratification, MoEF set up a core group to discuss the rules and regulations that would be needed to give force to the Convention. The group consisted of representatives from different ministries of the government, as well as people from the private sector. They initiated a process of discussion and debate on the various possibilities for implementing the CBD. The first step was to examine whether existing laws would suffice or a new separate law was required; from the start there were concerns about how to accomplish this.

One of the group's first suggestions was to regulate the export of biological material from the country. A draft notice was prepared for issue by the Ministry of Commerce under the *Foreign Trade Development and Regulation Act, 1992*. This "Notice on Transfer of Indigenous Genetic Material" defined a "negative list of exports" which would include indigenous genetic material. Export of "genetic material, genetic resources, and/or their by-products and soil" would be subject to certain terms and conditions. The notice was never issued, however. It was concluded that to include all "genetic material" would be too constraining and might adversely affect trade in cereals and animal products, which constitutes a large proportion of India's exports.

In 1994, a consensus emerged that a separate law would be required to address the objectives of the CBD. The MoEF drafted a document, setting out the elements of a comprehensive law and taking into account discussions with different ministries and inputs from various experts and NGOs. The government did not approve the draft, however, because of serious differences between the various departments (especially on the issue of imposing export restrictions). Following two national consultations in 1997 and 1998, and numerous drafts drawn up by different NGOs, a biodiversity bill was placed before Parliament. At the end of 2000, a Standing Committee of parliamentarians was receiving depositions from the public on the content of the proposed bill.

National Policy and Macro-level Action Strategy

Between 1994 and 1997, MoEF prepared a National Policy and Macro-level Action Strategy on biodiversity. The core group set up in 1994 also took steps to formulate a national policy statement on the conservation of biodiversity. These actions predated the availability of Global Environment Facility (GEF) funds, and included various divisions/ministries of government, in addition to representatives from the non-government sector. The Macro Strategy on

biodiversity was prepared by 1997, but was not articulated as a policy statement until 1999 when the necessary clearances were received from the government. The Macro Strategy provides the foundation for the current NBSAP, which will define the detailed work plans needed to implement broad policy. The issues covered in the Macro Strategy are addressed in the NBSAP, though the more holistic and participatory nature of the NBSAP has meant that the context in which these issues are being considered is somewhat different.

The political context

It is important to note the political and socio-economic context for these developments. Politically, the situation in India was somewhat unstable between 1995 and 1999, as one-party rule gave way to coalition governments. Many deliberations relating to the CBD and Macro Strategy at the central level had to go through several iterations.

The panchayat system

There were (and continue to be) some moves towards decentralised governance. Panchayats, or local institutions of self-governance, have been in existence in India since before independence, though they were dependent on state governments' political will to recognise and delegate powers to local level. In 1993 the *Constitution (73rd Amendment) Act* was passed, whereby the Panchayati Raj system — devolving administrative powers to the local village level — was institutionalized as a third level of governance³. In essence, states are mandated to recognise panchayats as institutions of self-government. The states are responsible for preparing plans economic development and social justice for the areas under panchayat jurisdiction. A greater role for the panchayats in ecosystem management was outlined in the 1993 amendment, which placed under their jurisdiction matters such as land improvement, land consolidation and soil conservation, social forestry and minor forest produce. These areas provide scope for local community control and management of natural resources.

Regions designated as Scheduled Areas and Tribal Areas are dealt with separately under the Constitution of India. These areas are inhabited by tribes whose socio-economic and political situation is distinct from the rest of the country. The *Panchayats (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act, 1996* was enacted to extend the scope of the Panchayati Raj institutions to Scheduled Areas. This law has further provisions for control of resources by local communities⁴.

Local dependence on natural resources

Underlying this flux in politics and governance is the continuing dependence on biological resources of many millions of Indians. The relationship between societies and nature shaped by basic survival needs is enriched by a strong spiritual and cultural connection. The past decade has seen the forces of globalisation and economic liberalisation alter the way that resource use, and indeed development, is viewed in the country. Local communities have often protested the takeover of their livelihoods and ways of life by representatives of these global forces or their national counterparts. There is a gradual recognition that communities can and should make decisions about their resources. There is also increasing emphasis on participatory forms of natural resource management within official circles, as demonstrated in the widespread Joint Forest Management process.

The increasing concern over the state of biodiversity itself, and natural resources in particular, has prompted a more aggressive search for effective conservation measures. It is in this context that the NBSAP process in India is taking shape.

Background to the NBSAP

In 1994, as MoEF was investigating the requirements of a biodiversity law, the Ministry held consultations with representatives from government agencies, NGOs, and academics to discuss the need for a national action plan on biodiversity. A core group was set up to examine the requirements of such an action plan. The core group comprised of representatives from various government authorities and autonomous institutions under the Government of India⁵. The core group was further subdivided to deal with the following issues:

- conservation, documentation, research and monitoring;
- sustainable utilisation, public participation and benefit sharing;
- formulation of policy and planning and generating finances;
- biosafety; and
- identification of relevant technologies and the role of industry in the transfer of technology under the CBD.

A series of six consultative meetings was organised by MoEF for the entire core group. Each subgroup was entrusted with drafting an action plan for its area of expertise, although not all of them were able to do so.

Initially, the task of preparing a conceptual framework for the action plan was entrusted to a few members of each group. The framework they drafted was sent to various scientific institutions for comments and inputs. The core group met to consider a revised draft along with the specific inputs from the sub-groups. The core group decided that a 'nucleus team', comprising the Forest Survey of India, Botanical Survey of India, Zoological Survey of India, and Wildlife Institute of India, would finalise the form of the main document. The Forest Survey of India coordinated the efforts of this team. The team held further discussions with scientists and NGO representatives, and came up with a new draft in June 1995. This draft was severely criticised for not taking into account the discussions and intensive debate that had been integral to the action planning process.

In June 1997, after a lag of some time, a MoEF consultation on the action plan evaluated ongoing strategies and programs and assessed current and future biodiversity conservation and sustainable use needs. Input was sought on eleven subject areas, which are covered in the Macro Strategy document:

- legal and policy framework;
- survey of biodiversity and a national database;
- in situ conservation;
- ex situ conservation;
- sustainable utilisation;
- indigenous knowledge systems;
- innovations and practices and benefit sharing;
- peoples' participation;
- institutional framework and capacity building;
- education, training and extension; and
- research and development activities and international cooperation

Action by state governments and local bodies was emphasised. Links between government departments were identified as critical to effective action. Discussions emphasized the need for education of and capacity-building for policy-makers, NGOs, industrialists and local communities. It was also decided that scientific examples, illustrations and case studies should be marshalled for assessing the intrinsic and extrinsic worth of biodiversity. Compiling biodiversity registers of indigenous knowledge was suggested after detailed study of the implications of such documentation. It was concluded that monitoring of biodiversity status and implementation of conservation actions must occur at the local level, with any national authority limited to a supervisory role.

Concurrent with the development of the Macro Strategy was the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) liaison with the MoEF regarding the availability of GEF funds for developing an action plan. In October 1996, the MoEF applied for these funds and the proposal was finally submitted in March 1998. The project was approved in March 1999 and the original plan preparation process was reviewed. It was suggested that the top-heavy structure be replaced with a decentralised arrangement. Other suggestions for the planning exercise included widening participation, determining how best to involve central ministries and state governments, developing grassroots conservation strategies, and considering the socio-economic and fiscal dimensions of biodiversity conservation.

The time for developing the NBSAP was set at two years. The NBSAP project began in February 2000, with the first meeting of a Steering Committee at the national level.

Against this backdrop, the MoEF evolved a mechanism for the preparation of the NBSAP that would take it beyond a review exercise at the central level. It was decided that coordinating the preparation of the NBSAP would be given over to an external agency. Proposals were solicited by MoEF and, of the six agencies who responded⁶, Kalpavriksh, an NGO based in Delhi and Pune, was chosen. Administration of the project was entrusted to Biotech Consortium India Limited (BCIL), a secondary research organisation based in Delhi that deals with matters of environmental engineering and biotechnology. The institutional arrangement for preparation of the action plan was subsequently expanded to include a Technical and Policy Core Group (TPCG) coordinated by Kalpavriksh. The members of this group include experts from different parts of the country and different sectors of work related to biodiversity and conservation⁷.

MoEF continues to be the main executing agency of the NBSAP. A Steering Committee, comprised of senior functionaries in the MoEF, representatives from different departments of government involved with biodiversity and four NGO experts, oversees the entire process. A National Project Directorate exists within MoEF, and its members are in constant touch with Kalpavriksh and BCIL.

The NBSAP Process

Box 1. Levels of NBSAP preparation

The function of the Technical and Policy Core Group is to aid in conceptualising and, more significantly, coordinating the preparation of the NBSAP. Actual preparation of the plan's action points is taking place at different levels and in various places across the country. NBSAP preparation incorporates the following levels:

- all the states and union territories⁸ of the country, 30 in all⁹;
- 14 themes relating to biodiversity at the national level¹⁰;
- 10 interstate ecoregions¹¹; and
- 19 sub-state sites¹².

Nodal agencies have been identified to prepare biodiversity action plans at state, sub-state and ecoregion levels. For each of the states and union territories these agencies have been identified in consultation with the state government to ensure its commitment to the process. The work of these agencies will be guided by a State Steering Committee¹³. Sub-state site plans are also being prepared by nodal agencies, who are guided by a Local Advisory Committee. Working groups headed by a coordinator have been organized for the thematic and ecoregion action plans.

This arrangement means that each nodal agency (or working group) will prepare a strategy and action plan (SAP) covering the particular unit for which they are responsible. The SAPs will then be combined, and a national SAP from these site specific and/or thematic plans will be collated. This final collation is the responsibility of the TPCG. SAPs prepared by the different agencies have the potential to be entities distinct from the national action plan. It is also possible that their implementation will begin before formal implementation of the NBSAP, especially since actions are to be detailed for all sections of society, and should build upon existing programs and infrastructure for conservation¹⁴.

The NBSAP as Process

National level policy processes in the past have usually been top-down and limited to a small number of 'experts' and consultants; as a result they often end up remaining on paper. The NBSAP as visualised is a departure from such policy initiatives: the process of preparing the plan is seen as being as important as the final document.

Biodiversity Planning in Asia

The process is intended to recognise and further facilitate protection of biodiversity by local communities. Important components of this process-oriented preparation include the following elements:

- comprehensive coverage;
- a commitment to effective and widespread participation and communications;
- innovative methodologies; and
- special activities.

Comprehensive coverage

The NBSAP will include the following:

1. Conservation of biodiversity at ecosystem, species, and genetic levels (through in situ, ex situ, in vitro, and other measures), and of its associated ecological functions, with a special focus on endemic, threatened, and otherwise critical elements;
2. Sustainable use of biological resources, in that their use will not imperil their long-term existence, and will not threaten biodiversity in other ways;
3. Social, economic, political and inter-generational equity, including decision-making with regard to conservation and use, sharing of benefits, and access to and protection of knowledge and information relevant to biodiversity.
4. Ethical, cultural, scientific, and economic dimensions, including:
 - the right of species and ecosystems to survive;
 - the primacy of survival and livelihoods based on biodiversity, and of creating a stake for people in conservation and sustainable use;
 - cultural ways of relating to nature; and
 - the role of biodiversity in economics and technology.

Participation and communications

Part of the rationale for decentralising the process of preparing SAPs is to be able to reach out to a large number of stakeholders while formulating strategies and actions. The vision behind the current structure of the NBSAP is that, if a truly participatory approach can be achieved, it will evoke much wider ownership of the process, and go a long way towards ensuring the implementation of what is recommended.

The first step is to decentralise the responsibility for preparing the plans. The second step involves the nodal agencies inviting participation by various means, including the following:

- workshops and public hearings at the level of districts and talukas¹⁵, seeking inputs from farmers, pastoralists, fisherfolk, and other user communities who are directly dependent on or traditionally relating to biodiversity;
- coordination and consultation with a variety of line agencies of government, at central and state levels;
- consultation with political decision-makers at various levels;
- seeking input from a wide range of experienced individuals and organisations working on various aspects of biodiversity, including scientists, social activists, academics, students, industrialists and cultural leaders.
- maximising the use of local languages in all of the above.

In addition, at the central level, a media campaign¹⁷ is in place to raise awareness of the NBSAP and invite participation in the process. The campaign uses print and electronic media, while emphasising the use of local/folk media and idioms. The use of local media can take the message directly to those whose lives are most closely linked to biodiversity and its conservation. Workshops to orient the nodal agencies in the use of media are planned as part of this campaign.

One of the first steps in this media campaign was the preparation of a brochure entitled “A Call for Participation”. This brochure has been translated into India’s 15 major languages and is being distributed widely by the central team and nodal agencies. Issued in April 2000, and more widely distributed since July 2000, it has generated close to 350 responses to the call for participation. Most of the responses received at the NBSAP’s central offices were in response to the English or Hindi edition; more responses to the regional language editions may have been received by other nodal agencies.

Innovative methodology

The central coordinating team has entrusted much of the plan preparation to the nodal agencies, although it developed a set of methodological guidelines for evolving actions¹⁶.

SAP structure: The first element of the methodology relates to the nature of an SAP, the components of which are as follows:

- statement of the issues or problems;

- identification of ongoing initiatives relating to each issue;
- identification of the key actors involved;
- identification of major gaps in coverage;
- delineation of strategies needed to plug gaps and enhance the effectiveness of ongoing initiatives;
- a list of measures and actions (short and long term) needed to implement these strategies, identifying priorities;
- identification of key elements needed for implementation, including institutional structures, funds, expertise/human resources, policy/legal measures and monitoring;
- specific project proposals; and
- time needed for implementation.

Actions articulated in the SAPs are to be concrete and achievable; wherever possible the actors and the mechanisms for carrying them out should be identified. Agencies should concentrate on actions that can be carried out with little or no additional funding. Next in priority are those actions which require additional funds; specific project proposals should be included for them.

Review of existing information and policy: Primary research is not part of the NBSAP's mandate. Given that the NBSAP is not the first nor the overriding policy in India on environment conservation or biodiversity (or elements thereof), there is concern that the NBSAP may be merely retreading familiar ground. From the beginning of the process the NBSAP central team has been aware of this concern. Accordingly, one of the activities central to the preparation of the SAPs is a review of existing information and policy statements, and an assessment of both their efficacy and their gaps. At the central level, the TPCG has reviewed five environmental policy statements from the government in the past decade¹⁸. It assessed coverage of biodiversity with reference to the definitions used in the NBSAP, identified gaps that the NBSAP should fill and outlined actions already prescribed or taken on which the NBSAP can build. These reviews of the national policy statements (and a synthesis of them) have been provided to all the executing agencies. A significant link between the NBSAP and the Biodiversity Conservation Prioritisation Program (BCPP)¹⁹ was identified early in the process, and BCPP's findings have been circulated to the relevant nodal agencies of the NBSAP.

Coordinate with existing processes: It was suggested that the NBSAP work in tandem with, rather than parallel to, the various projects and processes in

the country which also have a planning component. In order to do this, a study was commissioned in early 2000 to gather information on processes to which the NBSAP could link and from which it could possibly leverage funds. The information collected was passed on to the relevant nodal agencies.

Critical issues: While SAPs are being prepared for 14 themes at a national level, some issues were felt to demand consideration across all levels of action plan preparation:

- people's participation (already listed as a central tenet of the NBSAP)²⁰;
- empowerment and equity, including the use of indigenous knowledge and practices;
- gender;
- participation by the private and public sectors;
- international concerns, including transboundary cooperation for conservation and benefit-sharing

Detailed notes on these issues have been prepared and published (as part of the guidelines listed in footnote 16) to help nodal agencies integrate them into SAP preparation. Nodal agencies are asked to consider both the effect of these factors on the conservation or destruction of biodiversity, and the ramifications of the conservation or destruction of biodiversity for them.

Cross sector participation: Biodiversity is a concern that needs to be considered by many sectors. In the administrative set-up of the Indian government, Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs) are required for all projects and the government strives to engage as many relevant agencies as possible in environmental planning efforts. There is, however, disharmony at various levels of governance between the objectives of different sectors. The NBSAP sees coordination between different sectors' policies and programs as imperative for conservation, and has asked nodal agencies to involve all relevant sectors of governance in the planning process, as part of working groups, steering committees or experts consulted as the need arises.

A precedent for this was the consultations that MoEF held with ministries dealing with health, commerce, agriculture, tribal affairs and biotech in development of its Macro Strategy. Coordination is also enhanced by the fact that the NBSAP's National Steering Committee consists of representatives of all relevant ministries.

Another step toward cross-sector consideration of biodiversity is the request from MoEF to the Planning Commission that NBSAP elements and conclusions

be included in budgets presented by states for the next Five-Year Plan. The Planning Commission coordinates and oversees budgetary allocations for various sectors from central and state governments. It considered, but decided against, setting up a working group dealing with biodiversity (as an inherently cross-sectoral issue) for the next Five-Year Plan Period.

Setting priorities: The NBSAP recognises that recommending actions for conservation involves choices; for example, deciding which elements of biodiversity are most important to save; how they should be saved; who should save them; and which methods should be used. The NBSAP also recognises that these choices are often made for subjective reasons, despite every effort to maintain objectivity. The NBSAP central team has developed a workable approach to setting priorities for use at the central level and by the nodal agencies. Agencies are requested to state as clearly as possible the reasons for the choices they have made. This approach drew heavily on methods developed through the BCPP.

Monitoring and evaluating NBSAP implementation are important elements of the plans (at local and national levels), and guidelines on integrating monitoring and evaluation (M&E) methods in the SAPs have been prepared for executing agencies. Criteria for selecting these methods are as follows:

- reliability and replicability;
- cost effectiveness;
- feasibility;
- appropriateness; and
- participatory nature²¹.

Documenting the process: It was recognized early on in the NBSAP process that there was a lack of information about other countries' experiences with biodiversity planning, and about the form the India NBSAP would take. With policy-making exercises or large-scale research and information projects, it is often difficult to gauge how the project was created and conclusions were reached. This being the case, it was important to document the NBSAP process at all levels. Guidelines were issued to all executing agencies, who were asked to note why certain actions were taken, and to keep minutes and memoranda of all meetings.

Listening to the executing agencies: It is important for the nodal agencies and working groups to maintain a common vision of the NBSAP. Regular communication by these with the TPCG and among themselves is of crucial importance.

An inaugural national workshop was organised in June 2000 to introduce the concept and vision of the NBSAP to the executing agencies. This two-day workshop included presentations on the strategy's concept and method, as well as extensive discussions between executing agency representatives and members of the central team. Recommendations were made by the agencies on the following topics (many of them have been included in the process):

- making implementable action plans (including integration of biodiversity into development plans of various sectors, and methods of determining action priorities);
- ensuring participation of all sectors of society in the NBSAP process;
- linking to ongoing processes and leveraging additional funds for the NBSAP process;
- coordination between executing agencies of the NBSAP; and
- deciding what the next steps would be.

The Kalpavriksh offices in Delhi and Pune disseminate information and provide other support for the executing agencies; BCIL supplies ongoing administrative support. Each executing agency has regular liaison with one TPCG member, who is chosen based on geographical location and expertise. A website for the India NBSAP is now online at <http://sdnp.delhi.nic.in/nbsap>. A bi-monthly newsletter, *NBSAP News*, is published by the central team and enables executing agencies to keep abreast of NBSAP developments across the country.

Reducing overlap: A working group made up of Thematic Working Group (TWG) coordinators felt that there was considerable potential for overlap between the themes. These overlaps needed to be clearly identified ensure that work was not being duplicated. It was important for the TWGs to maintain close links to streamline their efforts and obtain the best results. The coordinators of the TWGs met in early November 2000. They identified areas of overlap between various themes, and discussed mechanisms to coordinate efforts and minimise duplication.

Special activities

Biodiversity affects many aspects of life in practical ways, and the NBSAP process plans some events to bring out the spirit of this concept. One such event is a biodiversity festival, another is a film on the process. Funds needed to be obtained for these events, since they are not budgeted for in the NBSAP.

Another significant event was a workshop on adivasis (India's indigenous peoples), including their rights and their links with biodiversity conservation.

This was intended to raise levels of awareness and discussion among the adivasi peoples and enhance their participation in the NBSAP. The workshop was organised by the All India Coordinating Forum for Adivasi/Indigenous Peoples, and was attended by adivasi peoples themselves, not just their representatives.

Box 2. Overcoming constraints in the process

The central team managing the NSBAP process took into account certain constraints when preparing the planning process. Ways of dealing with these constraints were proposed when the NBSAP was initiated. From time to time various participant groups (e.g. the National Steering Committee, expert groups or individuals experienced in biodiversity conservation in the country) were also asked to suggest ways of overcoming existing or potential difficulties. The concerns and some of the methods for dealing with them are listed below.

1. Involving ministries/departments other than those responsible for the environment

The Planning Commission could be involved at the central level and State Planning Boards (equivalent to the Planning Commission) at the state level. Coordination with the Planning Commission on biodiversity and the NBSAP has been initiated as described earlier. All state nodal agencies have been advised to work with the Planning Boards in the preparation of the SAPs. This has been initiated in at least one state (Himachal Pradesh). The possibility of future funding for the states could be linked to the NBSAP and its implementation, and EIA clearances and procedures should be used more stringently to integrate biodiversity into sectoral plans.

2. Ensuring participation at state level

Making careful choices of Steering and Advisory Committee members and nodal agencies, and insisting on involving all sectors can help accomplish this. If state-level processes are insufficiently participatory, they could be contacted directly by the TPCG or National Project Director. There is not yet enough momentum for plan preparation to know whether this will be necessary.

3. Involving the greatest number of local people, given the difficulties of language, distance and logistics

Methods attempted to date include translation of all key documents into various languages and asking grassroots groups to mediate. There has been some progress made in identifying key local actors, a factor intrinsic to the structure of the NBSAP. Public hearings and meetings held at the sub-state sites have involved a wide range of local stakeholders and actors.

4. Assessing the reliability and authenticity of information

All executing agencies have been asked to focus on this concern, and guidelines have been issued by the TPCG. These guidelines relate only to formal and academic sources; however, and do not deal with the reliability of local community knowledge.

5. Reconciling fundamental differences in goals, approaches and strategies

Recognising the likelihood of divergent interests and opinions in the SAPs, the structure of the NBSAP process strives to nurture dialogue. Genuine differences need to be clearly stated in the SAPs where it has not been possible to reconcile them in the plan preparation process.

6. Effective follow-up mechanisms

Guidelines to the executing agencies indicate that follow-up and implementation of the SAP should be discussed from the start. Indeed, without such discussion informing plan preparation it will be difficult for the executing agencies to come up with implementable action plans. Specific action proposals are visualised as another integral part of the SAPs. After the completion of the SAP/NBSAP, acceptance of SAPs into state and national plans and budgets may be attempted by the agencies involved. The NBSAP has also aimed to strengthen people's mobilisation processes and to build large-scale support for the plan and follow-up processes so that the NBSAP and other SAPs do not gather dust in godowns.

Provisions for implementation

The NBSAP's main implementation thrust is likely to emerge only towards the end of the preparatory process, as actions suggested at various levels and by different agencies become clear. Nonetheless, implementation of the plan has already been discussed. Some characteristics of the NBSAP and its implementation efforts are as follows:

1. Action plans will be as concrete as possible, with identified actions, resources, institutions, responsibilities, and time frame, so that implementation

can proceed immediately. As SAPs are developed, institutions, funds, and other resources necessary for eventual implementation will be identified.

2. The NBSAP central team will identify an institutional mechanism for overall implementation. This could, for example, be a state biodiversity board, which might also be authorised by the proposed Biological Diversity Bill (this provides for such boards and bodies at local, state, and national levels). The NBSAP could also conceivably specify composition, including cross-sector representation, and the roles and responsibilities of the institutional mechanism.

3. Integration of the action plan into the overall planning process of the states and of the country is being attempted. The proposed working group on integration of biodiversity into the tenth five-year plan is one such step; similar steps could be suggested at state levels.

4. There is an attempt to get the central government to tie funding to states (in some sectors) with implementation of the SAPs.

5. Some actions might be pursued for implementation while the SAPs are still being formulated. One such issue is changes in EIA procedures to more comprehensively incorporate biodiversity issues.

6. Given the diverse nature of the agencies involved in drawing up the plan, the SAPs might incorporate substantial elements of actions by civil society, either with or independent of the state, to reduce the dependence on the state's commitment to implementation.

7. Efforts will be made to maintain the network of people who participated in the exercise, so that advocacy for implementation can take place.

Lessons and recommendations

The NBSAP is a planning process

It is important to be clear about the nature of the NBSAP as a planning process and to create a vision of it. Given the extent of the NBSAP process, it was often thought of as an implementation device rather than a planning exercise. This had to be clarified at many junctures and with many audiences. It is too soon to say whether this misconception will affect the content of the action plans in any way. The inaugural national workshop helped a great deal in building a common understanding of the process and concept of the NBSAP. A midterm workshop will be held to review the progress of the various SAPs, and a final national workshop will discuss and review the draft national SAP.

Monitoring and coordination

The TPCG and the central team need to be involved closely with the executing agencies and their work. Clarification is needed at many points, from the selection of the steering committees to the topics covered by the nodal agency/working group (the TWG coordinators' meeting is a case in point²²). Given the existence of working groups on the 14 national themes, it is useful for the other executing agencies to gain from and feed into the work of the TWGs. The central team often has to play a facilitating role in coordination.

Outreach works

Although the media campaign was unstructured at first, and participants were not trained in outreach or awareness building, the responses received to the Call for Participation have been heartening. Respondents are being directed to the relevant nodal agencies and, where pertinent, their contributions are being absorbed at the central level. It is too soon to know what the precise contribution of these respondents — and thus of the outreach exercises — will be, but the range and number of respondents is promising.

Government support and engagement is essential

While the NBSAP is a planning exercise that goes beyond government circles, feedback from the executing agencies indicates that, unless support is forthcoming from the government, SAPs will not be able to come up with meaningful recommendations. A certain understanding of ongoing exercises/projects, and of the feasibility of suggested course of action in a given administrative setup, must come from the government or its representatives. Significantly, in many places where the action planning process is well advanced, there is strong support from the governmental sphere, including departments other than the environment department. At the same time government participation has not been forthcoming in the case of certain other executing agencies.

Balanced representation

It is difficult to obtain a full range of representation. Clear guidelines have been issued about who should be represented on the committees and working groups. The central team also suggested the composition of certain working groups. Supervision from the central team is still needed, however, to ensure that all stakeholders are represented in the committees and working groups. Composition of committees often becomes weighted towards government representatives or scientific/academic expertise. In states where government agencies have been appointed the nodal agency for plan preparation there is a preponderance of government representatives on the steering committees, in some cases to the exclusion of other sectors.

Support for participation

Participation is a new concept for many people and may have only limited success. Many of the executing agencies are not familiar with reaching to other groups and eliciting their inputs. This can constrain the participatory nature of the NBSAP exercise. In some cases, even though public hearings and other participatory exercises are being attempted, it is not clear whether the goal is to obtain information from people or engage them in developing options. It is necessary to build the consciousness that local people have an important contribution to make, but the constraints they face also have to be identified and strategies developed to overcome them.

In certain cases, participation and public hearings may achieve sympathy for the idea of consultation but not the specific ways of how to go about it. The mechanisms for seeking such input and making use of it might not be entirely clear. In the words of one TPCG member reporting on a public hearing, "I am sure most people left the meeting with a greater awareness of the need to work with villagers in a totally different manner. But how clear they were about HOW to do so is another matter."

Linking with ongoing activities

The systematic search for ongoing processes has been beneficial. In some instances, partnerships on specific issues are being developed, and the awareness of ongoing projects has led to alterations in the NBSAP work plan at the central level. The Thematic Group on Wild Animal Diversity, for example, is linking with a program on rainforest research, and an intended sub-state site was delisted after it was learned that an action plan for the site had already been prepared under a different project.

Giving direction and impetus to conservation activities

At least four sub-state sites have become part of the NBSAP at the suggestion of agencies active in conservation work in the area. These organisations have voluntarily offered to prepare the SAP for the area. In the words of one agency, "preparing the SAP will give greater direction to work we might have done in any case". It is highly likely that plans prepared in these sub-state sites will comprise realistic actions that are able to be implemented.

Distinguish between administrative and technical activities

There are considerable administrative and technical tasks involved in a project of this magnitude. The administrative work includes financial disbursements, organisation of large workshops, arranging for printing and maintaining a database. Technical tasks include conceptualisation of the levels at which

SAPs will be prepared, choice of sites and agencies, preparing concept notes and guidelines and providing guidance to executing agencies on issues relating to biodiversity and, more specifically, to plan preparation. The division of labour between administrative and the technical aspects took some time to work out, as the nature of the process was itself evolving in the first few months. Having administrative responsibility lie with an agency experienced in such tasks has allowed the TPCG to devote more attention to technical aspects. The administrative and technical inputs of the administrative team have helped make the NBSAP feasible and practicable. Administering the NBSAP has been more thorough and efficient than might have been possible if a single agency had been responsible for technical and administrative tasks.

It is difficult as yet to foresee the efficacy or impact of the NBSAP (document or process). Observations on the process suggest, however, that while it may not achieve all that it intends, it will serve as a useful learning experience for the benefits and constraints in formulating policy in such a decentralised and participatory manner.

Box 3. Innovations in the NBSAP process

Since this chapter was written, the India NBSAP process had made further progress in various aspects of biodiversity planning. First, there has been progress in many areas which had been mere ideas in the early part of the process. There were more than 500 responses to the Call for Participation. The Adivasi (Indigenous People's) Workshop was held in January of 2001, helping to give voice to and to generate concern among India's indigenous peoples about issues related to their own biodiversity. Funding was also obtained for the filming of the NBSAP process, part of the documentation effort, and has been underway since March 2001. The Biodiversity Festival idea was kicked off in various sub-state sites and states (see below), and a festival on a slightly larger scale was arranged in New Delhi in early 2001 in collaboration with an annual crafts fair.

BSAP preparation began in the newly formed states of Jharkhand, Uttaranchal and Chhatisgarh, and expedited procedures, along with additional assistance for preparing BSAPs, have been suggested. A variety of methods for action plan preparation are being used, including village-level public hearings, questionnaire surveys and orientation and information-gathering through rural school networks, roaming meetings (both public and with experts) throughout the region. These different methods of plan

preparation will doubtless give invaluable insight into their relative merits. A mid-term national workshop pointed out areas in which greater attention was needed, and five regional workshops are now being held. Many draft action plans from the executing agencies are now coming in to the central team, and will undergo review. The process has also had its disappointments. The theme of technology, industry and biodiversity, as well as the research theme, have not taken hold, and are likely to now be dealt with as sub themes. The suggestion to have a special working group on biodiversity in the Planning Commission has also apparently been turned down.

Other developments relate to some of the process innovations which have come up as part of the NBSAP, or have been affiliated with it in some way. Some interesting advances are listed below:

- a 45-day mobile seed festival on bullock carts at the Deccan Substate Site, Andhra Pradesh, travelling through 65 villages in Medak district, stopping at each one to discuss seed diversity, biodiversity-based livelihoods, the Public Distribution System, and organic farming. A people's action plan for reviving and maintaining agro-biodiversity is ready.
- a biodiversity exhibition by children was mounted at the Vidarbha Substate Site, Maharashtra. It was presented by ten teams from ten villages, with each group concentrating on one aspect of biodiversity. Workshops have also been held with children at the Nahin Kalan substate site. A one-day workshop with disabled children was also organized at the Spastics Society offices in Chennai.
- a cycle rally to create biodiversity awareness through 400 villages at Simlipal Substate Site, Orissa was organised by the executing agency for the substate site. Called "LIFE-2001", the main objective was to create awareness and build institutional strength for biodiversity conservation and management of natural resources.
- orientation sessions for schoolteachers across 17 districts, including aspects such as preparing biodiversity registers, have been held as part of the Karnataka state plan. In addition, 13 radio programs were broadcast, on various themes, asking for people's input into the state-level action plan.
- biodiversity festivals were held at New Delhi, Uttara Kannada, Karnataka, and the Rathong Chu Valley and Chungthang in Sikkim. These regional-level festivals focused on issues of particular significance at the local level; for example, indigenous foods in Sikkim. The

primary aim was to generate greater awareness of the ongoing process and thus encourage broader participation.

- boat rallies in different parts of the East Coast Ecoregion have been held to emphasize the need for conservation of marine biodiversity and for protection of the livelihoods of local fisherfolk.
- questionnaires on the valuation of various aspects of biodiversity have been prepared by the Economics and Valuation of Biodiversity Thematic Group. The group is also planning a training course for senior government officials and NGOs on this issue.
- at the request of the Health and Biodiversity Thematic Group, the all-India Ayurvedic Drug Manufacturers' Association held a workshop to discuss issues of biodiversity related to traditional medicinal systems.

Chronology

1992	Consultations by MoEF, including other stakeholders, on implications of CBD Review of legal structure concerning biodiversity
1993	India becomes signatory to CBD
1994	Core Group set up in MoEF to discuss how to implement CBD Notice on Transfer of Indigenous Genetic Material drafted. Drafting of Biodiversity law begins
1996	Discussion paper on CBD and its implementation circulated to state governments and other stakeholders. Internal workshop in MoEF on CBD and its implementation
1997	National Consultation held to discuss a law on biodiversity. Committee set up to draft biodiversity law.
1998	Advisory circular issued regarding the transfer and exchange of biological material and information pertaining to it. Comments invited on draft Biodiversity Bill as developed by the Committee Second National Consultation held to discuss draft.
1999	National Policy and Macro-level Action Strategy on Biodiversity issued. NBSAP process initiated within MoEF
2000	NBSAP process begins Biodiversity Bill placed before Parliament, Parliamentary committee accepting depositions.

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Annex 1. Profile of TPCG members

Affiliation	Expertise	Region
Biotech Consortium India Ltd. (BCIL)	Biotechnology and biosafety	North
Independent consultant	Biodiversity-based enterprise; community based conservation	Delhi, Gujarat
Zoology Dept, Guwahati University	Wildlife and community based conservation; Biodiversity in North-East India	North-East India
Wildlife Institute of India	Wildlife Conservation; Conservation Training	Gujarat, Tamil Nadu
BCIL	Biotechnology	Uttar Pradesh
Kalpavriksh	Conservation and people's livelihoods; Community-based conservation; Impacts of river valley projects	Maharashtra
IFAD Assisted Tribal Development Program, M.P.	Joint Forest Management; Integrated land-use management	Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh
Independent development planner	Gender and equity; Livelihoods; Community Institutions	Chandigarh, Punjab, Haryana
Deccan Development Society	Agro-Biodiversity; Indigenous Knowledge	Andhra Pradesh
Foundation for Revitalisation of Local Health Traditions	Medicinal Plants; Indigenous Knowledge	Karnataka
Himachal State Council for Science, Technology and Environment	Himalayan Biodiversity; Community-based conservation	Hill States of the North
All India Coordinating Forum for Adivasi/ Indigenous Peoples	Adivasi environmental and human rights issues in North East India	North East India
Advocate and legal consultant	Environmental laws and policies	Orissa, Andhra Pradesh

continued

Kalpavriksh	Water harvesting and biogeography; Community-based conservation	Rajasthan
National Institute of Oceanography	Islands/Coastal and Marine Biodiversity	Goa, Island States, Kerela

Annex 2. Guidelines for plan preparation

All executing agencies are expected to carry out the following activities in the preparation of the plan.

- assessment of existing reports, action plans;
- identification of available information and data;
- identification of available expertise and experience, both in formal and informal sectors;
- soliciting input from a wide range of individuals/agencies, through letters, public meetings, workshops, advertisements, and print, radio, TV, and electronic media;
- capacity-building exercises where relevant (e.g. for the local/sub-state/state level participants, on authentication of data and monitoring); and
- assessing all relevant sectoral plans and policies.

Annex 3: National level thematic areas

1. Economics and valuation of biodiversity (quantitative and qualitative assessments of the value of biodiversity, biological resource budgeting)
2. Livelihoods, lifestyles, and biodiversity (livelihoods based on biological resources, biodiversity enterprise, poverty and biodiversity links, impacts of consumerism)
3. Culture and biodiversity (indigenous knowledge, links between cultural diversity and biodiversity, the role of spiritualism and religion in conservation)
4. Health and biodiversity (biological resources as a base for human and animal health, biodiversity and nutrition, medicinal plants and traditional systems of medicine)
5. Domesticated biodiversity (crop, livestock, and cultured fish diversity, agro-ecosystemic diversity, agricultural practices relevant to biodiversity, in situ and ex situ conservation)

6. Wild animal biodiversity (fauna species diversity/endemicity/threats, in situ and ex situ conservation, sustainable use)
7. Wild plant biodiversity (flora species diversity/endemicity/threats, in situ and ex situ conservation, sustainable use)
8. Natural terrestrial ecosystems (ecosystemic diversity; threats to, conservation of, and sustainable use of forests, grasslands, mountains, coasts, deserts, and other ecosystems)
9. Natural aquatic ecosystems (ecosystemic diversity; threats to, conservation of, and sustainable use of marine areas and freshwater bodies)
10. Micro-organism diversity (diversity in situ and in culture collections, their conservation and sustainable use)
11. Policies, laws, and institutions (policies/laws relating to biodiversity and biological resources; national and state planning processes and institutions, including cross-sectoral integration of biodiversity; EIA procedures, decentralised planning and institutions)
12. Access, benefit-sharing, and IPRs (controls over biodiversity and biological resources, sharing of benefits arising from use of genetic resources and related knowledge, protection of indigenous knowledge vis-à-vis intellectual property rights systems)
13. Education, training, awareness, and research (spreading awareness at all levels and sectors of society, participatory research and training on biodiversity issues, traditional and new approaches)
14. Technology, industry, and biodiversity (implications of conventional and new biotechnologies, other technologies related to biodiversity, impacts of conventional and alternative industrial processes)

Annex 4. Inter-state ecoregions

1. West Himalayan
2. Central Forest Belt/Gondwana
3. Eastern Ghats
4. Western Ghats
5. Gangetic Plains
6. North-East India
7. West Coast
8. East Coast
9. Aravalli Range
10. Shivalik Range

Annex 5. Sub-state sites

1. **Karnataka:** Uttara Kannada
2. **Andhra Pradesh:** North Coastal belt
(including Vishakhapatnam and Srikakulam)
3. **Andhra Pradesh:** Deccan area (Zaheerabad region)
4. **Maharashtra:** Vidarbha region
5. **Uttar Pradesh:** Munsiri
6. **Uttar Pradesh:** Nahin-Kalan, Dehra Dun dist.
7. **West Bengal:** Sunderbans
8. **Assam:** Karbi-Anglong region
9. **Meghalaya:** West Garo Hills
10. **Sikkim:** Rathong Chu Valley
11. **Madhya Pradesh:** Bilaspur Region (Raigadh, Sarguja, Jashpur)
12. **Gujarat:** Kachchh
13. **Himachal Pradesh:** Lahaul-Spiti-Kinnaur
14. **Rajasthan:** Arvari basin
15. **Nagaland:** Chedema region
16. **Orissa:** Simlipal Tiger Reserve and Mayurbhanj region
17. **Jammu and Kashmir:** Ladakh
18. **Maharashtra:** Nagpur City

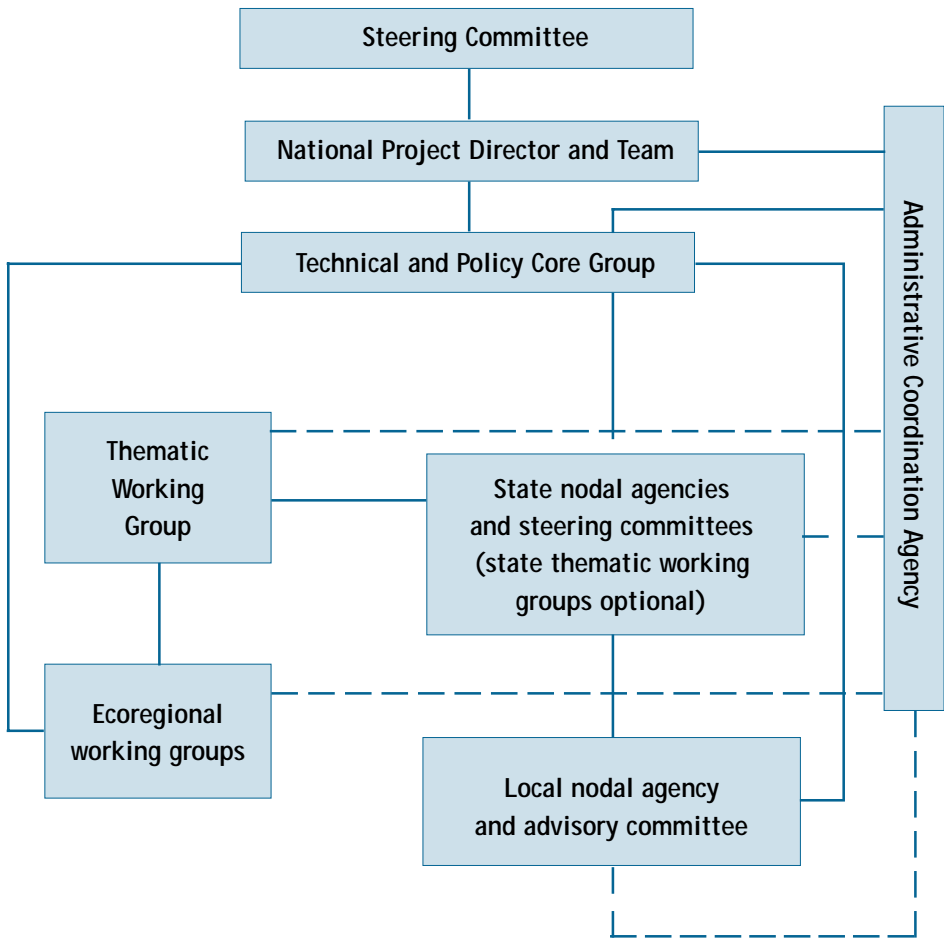
Annex 6. NSBAP process institutional structure

See also flow chart below²³

Level	Functions	Composition	Frequency of work/ meetings
National			
Steering Committee (SC)	Overall guidance and monitoring	Relevant GOI ministries/agencies, independent experts, NGO representatives	Meet once in 3–6 months; inputs to the TPCG and NPD as and when required
National Project Director (NPD) and Team	Overall execution and direction	MoEF Joint Secretary and team	day to day
Technical and Policy Core Group (TPCG)	Conceptualisation, execution, monitoring and finalisation of process; integration of all SAPs	Thematic and geographically representative experts headed by Kalpavriksh	Meet once a month; a week's work every month spread out in day-to-day interaction and follow up

Administrative Coordination Agency (ACA)	Administrative and financial execution of process	BCIL	day to day
Thematic Working Groups (TWGs)	Preparation of thematic SAPs	Relevant govt. and non-govt. experts, geographically representative (including local communities)	as needed
Inter-state, Ecoregional Working Groups (EWGs)	Preparation of ecoregional SAPs	Relevant govt. and non-govt. experts, geographically representative (including local communities)	as needed
State			
State Steering Committee (SSC)	Conceptualisation, guidance and monitoring	Relevant state govt. agencies, NGO representatives, community/grassroots representatives	as needed, input to the Nodal Agency and the national teams as and when required
State Nodal Agency/ies	Overall execution, substantive and administrative	Relevant state agency and/or NGOs	day to day
Local/sub-state			
District/Local Advisory Committee (LAC)	Conceptualisation, guidance, and monitoring	Relevant govt. and non-govt. experts, particularly local community and grassroots organisation members	as needed
District/Local Nodal Agency	Execution, substantive and administrative	Relevant district-level or local agency, particularly people's representative agencies, grassroots organizations	day to day

Annex 7. NBSAP Institutional Structure



Endnotes

1. Norman Myers (Myers 1988) identified ten regions in the world deemed to have the largest surviving concentrations of biodiversity and therefore imperative to conserve.
2. A report completed in March 2000 by one of the authors and R.V. Anuradha on the preparation of the Biodiversity Bill in India describes these processes in more detail.
3. The two levels recognised prior to this enactment are the Central and State Governments.
4. The *Panchayats (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act, 1996* provides that the Gram Sabha is empowered to safeguard the traditions and customs of the people, their cultural identity, community resources and customary mode of dispute resolution. It has the power to approve plans, programs and projects for social and economic development, and is responsible for identification of beneficiaries under different programs. It is endowed with ownership over minor forest produce. It is also empowered to prevent alienation of land in the scheduled areas. Consultation of the Gram Sabha is mandatory before making acquisition of land in scheduled areas.
5. These included the Zoological Survey of India, the Botanical Survey of India, the Forest Survey of India, Council of Scientific and Industrial Research, National Bureau of Plant Genetic Resources, National Bureau of Fish Genetic Resources, Department of Biotechnology, and Ministry of Environment and Forests, representatives from NGOs and academia including Prof. Madhav Gadgil from the Centre for Ecological Sciences, Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore, Dr.Darshan Shankar from the Foundation of Revitalization of Local Health Traditions, Bangalore, Mr.Shekhar Singh and Mr.Ashish Kothari from Kalpavriksh, both of whom were also lecturers at the Indian Institute of Public Administration, Prof.Anil Gupta from the Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad, Dr.C.K.Varshney, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, Ms.Seema Bhatt from WWF-India, Dr.Vandana Shiva from the Research Foundation for Science, Technology and Environment, and Dr. Usha Menon from the National Institute of Science, Technology and Development Studies, New Delhi.
6. The six agencies were the Tata Energy Research Institute (based in Delhi), the Centre for Environment Education (with headquarters in Ahmedabad), World Wide Fund for Nature-India (based in Delhi), the Ashoka Trust for Research in Ecology and Environment (headquartered in Bangalore), the Biotech Consortium India Limited (based in Delhi and now the administrative agency), and Kalpavriksh.
7. An illustration explaining the institutional structure of the NBSAP and the composition of the TPCG is provided in Annex 1.
8. There are nine union territories in India, which are administered directly by the Central Government. Some of them are located within a state.
9. It is not yet decided whether plans will be prepared independently for the three new states of Uttaranchal, Jharkhand and Chhatisgarh.
10. See the list of national level themes in Annex 3.

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11. See the list of ecoregions in Annex 4.
12. See the list of sub-state sites in Annex 5.
13. The institutional arrangement for the preparation of the SAPs and the NBSAP, and responsibilities of the nodal agencies/working groups are explained in Annex 6.
14. The basic guidelines in plan preparation provided to executing agencies are given in Annex 2.
15. A taluka is an administrative unit below the level of a district.
16. The media campaign is coordinated by a designer and consultant based in Delhi, and advised by two senior media campaign advisors.
17. These methodological guidelines, along with a series of concept notes, have been compiled and published in October 2000 as "National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan-India: Guidelines and Concept Papers" by the Ministry of Environment and Forests and Kalpavriksh.
18. The policies reviewed by the TPCG are: Implementation of Article 6 of the Convention on Biological Diversity in India, 1998; the National Level Policy and Macro-level Action Strategy on Biodiversity, 1999; the National Forestry Action Plan 1999; the National Conservation Strategy and Policy Statement on Environment and Development 1992; and the Environment Action Program 1993.
19. The Biodiversity Conservation Prioritisation Program was a nation-wide exercise carried out from 1996-1998, the aim of which was to set priorities for conservation using biological and socio-economic criteria. Sites, species and strategies for conservation were ranked.
20. This includes participation at all stages, including defining objectives and goals, conceiving plans, and implementing them.
21. A sub thematic review on Community Monitoring of Biodiversity resources is also being prepared under the NBSAP.
22. A web-based discussion forum or listserve for enhanced coordination between the TWGs has been suggested.
23. It is also necessary to clarify the links among these various agencies, in terms of reporting, communication and accountability.